

## Franco's Victory Draws nearer: Prospects of Peace and Progress [mid-Oct. 1936]

By Professor Allison Peers

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[...] [A]t length, after a campaign of exactly three months, conducted with a deliberateness born of confidence and experience, General Franco's troops are knocking on the gates of Madrid and its early fall, whether with or without a struggle, seems certain.

In Spain, where everything just now is of necessity either black or white, there will be intense exaltation and profound depression at the prospects of a nationalist dictatorship. Over here, the vast majority of sensible people are uninfluenced by Spanish party slogans: they desire, not the complete and overwhelming victory of one of the two ideals, but the return of peace to Spain, followed by an epoch of steady progress.

Can it be said that peace and progress will be brought nearer by a victory for General Franco's forces? I hope and believe it can.

As far as peace is concerned, it was clear from the beginning of the war that its sole chance lay in an insurgent triumph. Was the Popular Front to win, the only possible result would be a long period of dissension, disruption and anarchy. [...] One shudders to think what would have happened if these men had become the rulers of the new Spain. [...] With a victory of General Franco we may at least look for unity and pacification. The strict discipline inseparable from military rule may be irksome but most Spaniards will find it preferable to a new civil war or even to a *régime* of growing license into which the Second Republic was fast degenerating. All patriotic Spaniards willing to conform to the regime will find a home in Spain; those who have occupied themselves in supplanting their national flag by the red flag which has done duty for Socialism and Communism and the red-and-black flag of Anarchism can hardly complain if they are invited to look for homes in a country where one of these symbols reigns supreme. [...]

While they will have no use for the destructive elements which endeavoured to ruin Spain by creating revolution within the Republic, [the future rulers of Spain] will surely respect the position of those who demand higher standards of wages for the agricultural worker, a permanent reform of the Civil Service, gradual introduction of women's suffrage and improved facilities for education. I do not say that all these things are desirable in Spain but say that they are things which Spaniards who wish for them have a perfect right to advocate by legitimate methods. I may be wrong, but I cannot believe that Spain's new rulers will wish to implant a dictatorship indefinitely. Even if they did, it would be preferable to indefinite anarchism, but there are lessons to be learned from the fall of Primo de Rivera which stare the intelligent man in the face and I do not think that General Franco is lacking in intelligence. [...]

*Handwritten draft, probably Oct 1936. Transcriptions from the Edgar Allison Peers Papers. BOX XXI, envelope 1. University of Liverpool, UK.*