

Letter from the Chairman of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement to the Chairman of the European Movement (9 February 1951)

Caption: Salvador de Madariaga, Chairman of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement, submits the conclusions of this body's meeting, held in Paris on 3 and 8 February 1951, to Paul-Henri Spaak, Chairman of the International Council of the European Movement, in order to study the issue of Spanish cooperation in the defence of Europe.

Source: Historical Archives of the European Union, Florence. Relations entre le ME et des associations et personnalités en Espagne, notamment avec le Conseil fédéral espagnol, ME-2195 1948 - 1951.

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http://www.cvce.eu/obj/letter_from_the_chairman_of_the_spanish_federal_council_of_the_european_movement_to_the_chairman_of_the_european_movement_9_february_1951-en-e9a3ca48-6a50-4f81-9866-c3a49336e53c.html

Publication date: 21/12/2013

ME 2195

BE/P/5

Letter from the Chairman of the Spanish Federal Council of the
European Movement to the Chairman of the European Movement,
9th February 1951.

The SPANISH FEDERAL COUNCIL of the European Movement at its last meeting which was held in Paris on the 3rd and 8th February, examined the problem of Spanish collaboration in the defence of Europe. We have been instructed by the Council to submit the results of these discussions to the Executive Committee of the European Movement.

1. THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW: the incorporation of Spain in the defence of Europe demands the elimination of its totalitarian regime for the following two reasons:

a) if the present regime were to become part of the Western system, this system would cease to represent liberal democracy as opposed to totalitarianism, and would thus declare itself champion not of the freedom of all, but of an accomplished fact and of the interests of the few.

b) this incorporation would amount to the forced conscription of the Spanish people as cannon fodder to defend not their own freedom but that of others, an insult which the Spanish people would never forgive.

2. THE MILITARY POINT OF VIEW: the strategical importance of Spain as a territory demands the elimination of the present regime in the interests of European defence, since the territory is only strategically important in relation to the attitude of its inhabitants; the people of Spain being opposed to the regime (this is proved by the regime itself in depriving them of political liberty); all military operations based on Spain are doomed to defeat as long as it looks for support to a regime which the people hate.

3. THE FINANCIAL POINT OF VIEW: considerable help will be needed in the industrial and military reconstruction of the country; but these loans will only increase the corruption and misery in the absence of any real parliamentary control and of a free press which can denounce abuses and other offences. From this point of view, therefore, the elimination of the regime is imperative.

The SPANISH FEDERAL COUNCIL recognises that the situation is serious and demands instant action; it considers it indispensable, moreover, for the country to express freely its will to associate itself with the European effort. It has been said that there is no alternative to the present regime. This is completely false. The scale of political opinion in Spain has not changed. It is still composed of the same political groups which are clandestine inside the country, but outside are publicly active. Men will surge forward as soon as armed oppression has ceased. The Federal Council is at the disposal of the European Movement for the study of the

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procedure to be adopted and the immediate steps to be taken for the restoration of political freedom in Spain by a process of peaceful and rapid evolution which will enable her to play her part in the defence of Europe.

The SPANISH FEDERAL COUNCIL recommends that the following resolution be adopted by the Executive Committee of the European Movement -

In view of the essential role which the territory and the people of Spain will be called upon to play in this defence, considering that General Eisenhower has stressed that the European forces must only be composed of contingents of men who have freely expressed their desire to serve in them, and that the defence of Europe cannot have any strong moral foundation if allied to a totalitarian regime, the Executive Committee of the European Movement recommends to the Council of Europe the immediate study of the best means to facilitate the transition of Spain from the present totalitarian regime to a democratic one, in compliance with the wish expressed by the Consultative Assembly at Strasbourg in August 1950.
