

[The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939](#)

by Antony Beevor

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This encouragement to both the left and the right to create alliances had the effect of emptying the centre ground. Any possibility of compromise had been destroyed by the revolutionary uprising of the left and its cruel repression by the army and Civil Guard.

The depth of feeling was too strong on either side to allow democracy to work. Both sides used apocalyptic language, funnelling the expectations of their followers towards a violent outcome, not a political one. Largo Caballero declared, 'If the right win the elections, we will have to go straight to open civil war.' Not surprisingly, the right reacted with a similar attitude. In their view a left-wing victory in the polls was bound to lead to violent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat which Largo Caballero had promised. - **pg 34**

The Church warned that the enemies of Catholicism, 'under the influence and direction of the Judaeo-Masonic world conspiracy, are declaring a war to the finish against us' - **pg 38**

This liberal government found that it had no influence on its electoral allies, now set upon a revolutionary course, and could not persuade their followers to obey the law. - **pg 40**

Largo Caballero's rhetoric became even wilder. His declaration that 'the revolution we want can be achieved only through violence' was interpreted by the Socialist Youth as Leninist strategy.

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They [conservatives - vs] eyed with mounting alarm the red flags and banners and portraits of Lenin, Stalin and Largo Caballero on huge placards, and listened to the chanting of the demonstrators, demanding the formation of a proletarian government and a people's army.

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The workers in the street had a new confidence or, in their view, insolence. Beggars had started to ask for alms, not for the love of God, but in the name of revolutionary solidarity. Girls walked freely and started to ridicule convention. On 4 May José Antonio delivered a diatribe from prison against the Popular Front. He claimed that it was directed by Moscow, fomented prostitution and undermined the family. 'Have you not heard the cry of Spanish girls today: "Children, yes! Husbands, no!"' - **pg 46**

Black propaganda was being used in a confusing profusion and at times it is hard to know what to believe. For example, the right claimed that the left was spreading rumours that nuns were handing out poisoned sweets to children, while the left claimed that the right itself spread these rumours to provoke anti-clerical outrages. - **pg 48**