



CATALAN *Newsletter*

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Significant News Items
From Catalonia
Ignored or Overlooked
By The American Press

CATALANS DEMONSTRATE ON HISTORICAL DATE

Important Manifestation
of Resurgent Catalan National Spirit

Barcelona, Sept. 11 -- Despite extraordinary police precautions, Barcelona commemorated this year the 250th Anniversary of September 11, 1714, with the most important demonstration in the past twenty-five years.

The occasion was the anniversary of the fall of Barcelona, capital of Catalonia, to the combined Franco-Spanish armies of Philip V, after nine years of war and fourteen months of implacable siege, in which half of the population of the city perished in defense of the Catalan national freedoms. Catalonia was thus militarily conquered and centralist Spain abolished all Catalan national institutions (partially regained during the Republic and again abolished in 1939 by the present Spanish regime.)

Traditionally the Catalan people, when free to express their feelings, have held mammoth demonstrations on September 11th before the monument to the Head of the Catalan Government in 1714, Rafael de Casanova, emplaced on the spot where he fell wounded during the last battle.

One of the first acts of the present Spanish regime was to remove the monument and to prohibit all public gatherings on that historical site, a wide triangular intersection in the center of the city.

This year, coinciding with the 250th anniversary of that historical date, and despite the efforts of the police, more than 3,000 persons gathered on that historical intersection in an impressive manifestation of Catalan solidarity.

While the police completely occupied the area, it could not prevent the great crowd from forming a continuous parade around the triangular plaza. For about half an hour the people quietly paraded in silence, some dropping flowers where the monument had been. The crowd kept growing. As the police tried to force the crowd into the side streets, away from the area, the demonstrators, suddenly and spontaneously, turned en masse towards Catalonia Square shouting "Long Live Catalonia!", "Freedom...Freedom!"

The police raced with jeeps to block their path, charging violently with billy clubs, finally dispersing the demonstration.

The number of wounded and arrested is not known.