

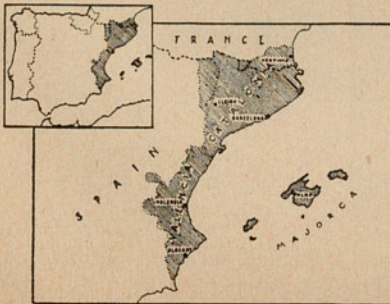


FREE

CATALONIA

No. 12

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CATALONIA is situated on the northeastern side of the Iberian Peninsula, as shown in the above map. Catalan territories include all the shaded areas, which together form Greater Catalonia, with a population of over 6,000,000 people.

CATALONIA existed as a free Nation until 1714, when she was incorporated by force into the Spanish unitarian State.

CATALONIA has a language of its own—Catalan—belonging to the Romance group or neo-Latin languages and as independent from Spanish as French is from Portuguese or Italian.

CATALONIA aims to be again a Free Nation and to freely govern herself. After regaining her national independence, she will be in a position to consider a Confederacy of Iberian Free States, on the basis of a voluntary association of free peoples of the Iberian Peninsula, which would include Catalans, Basques, Galicians, Spaniards, and Portuguese, if they so desire. Catalonia identifies herself with the cause of the United Nations.



SMALL NATIONS AND CONFEDERATION

DR. HUBERT RIPKA, Minister of State of the Czechoslovak Republic, in a lecture delivered at Oxford University, discussed the problems of the small nations in the light of the latest international developments. Since many of Dr. Ripka's views may apply to Catalonia as a small nation, we will quote from his interesting lecture:

"There is a theory that small nations cause wars. But the two great wars of the twentieth century were caused not by the existence of the small nations, but by Germany's aggressive spirit directed as much against the small nations as against the large ones."

"It is said that narrow economic policy of the small nations was the root of many economic difficulties. But economic nationalism is certainly not the prerogative of small nations. The great powers have pursued it in a narrower and more radical manner than have the small countries."

"Small nations are reproached still more for their political than for their economic nationalism. I believe that the small nations are neither more nor less nationalist than the large nations and that none would renounce their national sovereignty without struggle. The root of evil is not the narrow nationalism of the small countries but the chauvinism of large and small alike. The nationalism of the oppressed peoples has alone prevented Hitler from organizing his European fortress. Only exalted patriotism and ardent nationalism can account for the enormous sacrifices which the subjected peoples agreed to make in their desire to regain their national independence."

Regarding the confederation of small nations Dr. Ripka offers splendid suggestions. Many of them are in line with our views when we advocate a Confederacy of the Iberian nations (Catalonia, Basque Country, Castille, Galicia and Portugal).

"The economical and political organization of Europe cannot be based on a union of de-nationalized states, but only on states which are national, free and strong."

"We have every reason to believe that when war is over we shall find a more satisfactory solution to the problem of minorities. It is unlikely that we shall simply return to the principle of the protection of minorities which produced disastrous results that cannot be forgotten."

Dr. Ripka warns against the return to such forms as the famous *Volksgruppen* or *Volksgemeinschaften* or against such immense and incongruous blocks as the old Austro-Hungarian Monarchy or (we may add) the unitarian Spanish State, not to speak of the extremely dangerous concept of "Hispanidad".

According to Dr. Ripka the right solution seems to be (and we fully agree) the confederation of peoples or small nations. He establishes, however, a few basic conditions to the effect that such confederations must be spontaneous and not imposed and that the confederated groups should not remain economically and politically isolated but should collaborate with the rest of the world.

This is exactly the kind of Confederation we look forward to for Catalonia and the rest of the Iberian nations.

"Spain is a collection of small, mutually hostile or indifferent republics held together in a loose federation".

Gerald Brenan—"The Spanish Labyrinth"