

Spanish Civil War 1936-1939

In July 1936, a right-wing army revolt against Spain's left-wing Republican government sparked a civil war. The conflict quickly drew in foreign powers and became a testing ground for brutal modern warfare that would shape the 20th century

COMBATANTS

REPUBLICANS

Government, led by Socialist premiers **Largo Caballero** and **Juan Negrín**, and liberal president **Manuel Azaña** (left)

NATIONALISTS

Led by rebel army of **General Francisco Franco** (right) and supported by conservative clergy, landowners and fascist **Falange**

FOREIGN AID: Both Fascist Italy under **Benito Mussolini** and Nazi Germany under **Adolf Hitler** sent troops, tanks and planes

Supported by urban workers, majority of educated middle class, and militant communists and anarchists

FOREIGN AID

Due to arms embargo by France and Britain, government could receive aid and purchase arms only from Soviet Union. Aid included planes, trained pilots, tanks and crew

Soviet T-26

International Brigades
Up to 60,000 volunteers from 50 countries fought in Spain against Fascism, including U.S. **Abraham Lincoln Brigade**

Prominent intellectuals on Republican side included American novelist **Ernest Hemingway**, British author **George Orwell** (right), and French writer **André Malraux**




Guernica, Apr 26, 1937: First town in history to be destroyed by aerial bombing, attacked by Germany's **Condor Legion**




100km
60 miles

SPANISH MOROCCO (1912-1956)

Airlift of Franco's army

Area conquered by Nationalists

-  July 1936
-  Aug 1936-Oct 1937
-  1938
-  Jan-Feb 1939

-  **Main battles**
-  **Main Nationalist offensives**
-  **Main bombings of civilians**

KEY EVENTS

- **1931:** **Second Spanish Republic** proclaimed. **Alfonso XIII** abdicates
- **1936, Feb:** Left-wing party coalition regains power from right in elections
- **Jul 17-18:** Army uprising – rebels gain control over about one third of Spain
- **Jul 28:** Italian and German planes airlift **Franco's** army from **Spanish Morocco** to mainland in first significant military airlift in history
- **Nov:** Republican forces withstand major Nationalist offensive on **Madrid** following arrival of aid from Soviet Union and International Brigades
- **1937, Jan-Mar:** Despite support from Italian troops, Franco fails to capture Madrid in two separate offensives

- **Apr:** **Guernica** destroyed
- **May:** Infighting among Republican groups in **Barcelona** weakens city
- **Jun:** **Bilbao** falls to Nationalists
- **Jul:** Nationalists repulse Republican counter-offensive at **Brunete**
- **Oct:** **Gijón** falls – war in North ends
- **1938, Feb-Apr:** After battle for **Teruel**, Nationalists reach Mediterranean, cutting Republican zone in two
- **Jul-Nov:** **Battle of Ebro** – Republican forces launch all-out, but unsuccessful, campaign to reconnect territory
- **1939, Jan-Feb:** Nationalists conquer **Catalonia** in whirlwind campaign
- **Mar 27:** Madrid falls to Nationalists
- **Apr 1:** Nationalist victory proclaimed

Casualties: ~500,000