

The History of the Twentieth Century

Episode 296

“Request Instructions as to Bodies”

Transcript

[music: Fanfare]

“The outcome of the Spanish [civil] war was settled in London, Paris, Rome, Berlin—at any rate, not in Spain.”

George Orwell, “Looking Back on the Spanish War.”

Welcome to *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

[music: Opening Theme]

Episode 296. Request Instructions as to Bodies.

Last week, I left you at a dramatic juncture in the narrative, just as a group of disgruntled right-wing nationalist military commanders were about to attempt a coup against Spain’s five-year-old Republican government.

There’d already been one coup attempt, four years earlier, when the Republic was new, the existence of which was known to the government at the time. This was the Sanjurjada, named for its leader General Sanjurjo. The government found it expedient to allow it to proceed. It did, it failed, General Sanjurjo was sentenced to death, which was commuted to life in prison, then he was granted amnesty and left the country for Portugal.

That coup had never seriously threatened the new Republic, and it is likely that its ignominious failure led to overconfidence among the civilians leading the government in Madrid. In 1936, when rumors of coup talk among the generals reached the civilians in government again, they went so far as to transfer a few generals deemed suspect into distant postings where they would be less able to cause trouble.

Among the generals transferred were three major figures in the coming coup. General Manuel Goded Llopi, once chief of staff of the Spanish Army of Africa, and then of the Central Army, had been posted to the Balearic Islands, in the Mediterranean. General Francisco Franco, former head of the General Military Academy and the leader of the force that crushed the 1934 leftist

uprising in Asturias, had been consigned to the Canary Islands, in the Atlantic. General Emilio Mola y Vidal, the leader of the coup, was sent to Pamplona, up in the Basque country.

Alas for the government, this would not be nearly enough.

The Spanish Army had about 100,000 soldiers under arms at this time. Of these, 30,000 were stationed in Spanish Morocco. These African soldiers were the cream of the Spanish Army: the best trained and the most experienced. These were not conscripts, but career soldiers, who were far more likely to have right-wing nationalist sympathies. For these reasons, step one in the coup plan was a revolt in Spanish Morocco set for July 18, 1936, with Army garrisons in peninsular Spain to rise up the following day. The 24-hour head start in Morocco was intended to allow time for these soldiers to be transported across the strait into Spain by the Navy, where they would then support the peninsular uprising.

But the coup plotters were forced to act a bit prematurely when on the afternoon of the 17th, the day before the coup was set to begin, the military commander in the Spanish town of Melilla, on the Moroccan coast, General Manuel Romerales, learned of it. Romerales was loyal to the government, but hesitant to move against the officers involved. This proved his undoing. When the rebel leader in Melilla learned that the general was on to them, he decided to move at once; never mind that the other rebel leaders wouldn't be ready.

The rebels declared martial law. General Romerales and the civilian mayor of Melilla were taken prisoner and shot. Messages were sent to the coup leaders in Ceuta, the other Spanish town on the Moroccan coast, and to Tetuán, the capital of Spanish Morocco, and to General Franco, in the Canary Islands.

At this moment, the commander-in-chief of the Spanish Army in Morocco, General Agustín Gómez Morato, was gambling at a casino in the town of Larache. He had only recently been appointed to his post by the prime minister, replacing the previous commander, Francisco Franco. This was part of the government's pre-emptive reshuffling of the military commands. Gómez Morato was trusted by the government, and therefore viewed as an enemy by the coup leaders, who had successfully kept him in the dark regarding their plans. He learned of the unfolding coup when the Spanish Prime Minister, Santiago Casares y Quiroga, telephoned him at the casino and filled him in on what had just taken place in Melilla. Gómez Morato immediately went to the airport and took a plane back to Melilla, but as soon as his plane landed, he was arrested by the rebels. He was taken into custody, but his life was spared, possibly because his three sons were also Army officers and they were supporting the coup.

This mercy did not extend to other opponents of the coup. Civilian government officials and union leaders were rounded up and shot or interned in concentration camps. By the morning of July 18, Spanish Morocco was in rebel hands, except for the governor's residence and the air force base, both in the capital city of Tetuán. Both surrendered after artillery guns were moved into position and the rebels threatened them with bombardment. Loyalist officers were then

executed, including air force officer Major Ricardo de la Puente Bahamonde, whose execution was ordered by his own first cousin, Francisco Franco. In all, 189 soldiers and civilians were executed by the rebels in the course of the takeover of Spanish Morocco.

Franco, you'll recall, had been sent—or exiled—to a military command in the Canary Islands. The coup plotters had hired a civilian transport plane in England to fly Franco back to Spanish Morocco when the coup began. On the 18th, Franco declared for the uprising on behalf of the garrison in the Canary Islands. That afternoon, he switched to civilian clothes and met his plane at the airport in Las Palmas. The English pilot had been given half of a torn playing card, which he was supposed to match against the other half, which had been given to the general, but Franco scoffed at this melodramatic touch. The pilot took him anyway and delivered him to Casablanca, in French Morocco. The following day, the 19th, Franco flew from Casablanca to Tetuán, changing into his Army uniform in flight. At Tetuán, he declared himself the new commander-in-chief of the Spanish Army in Morocco. That's when he was briefed, and learned that the coup was in deep trouble.

[music: "El Pajarico"]

The civilian government in Madrid learned of the coup on the evening of the 17th. Remember it was the prime minister who notified the now-former commander-in-chief of the Spanish Army in Morocco that something was up.

But at this point, the government still felt confident, as illustrated by this anecdote: when the prime minister first learned of the coup in Morocco, he is supposed to have replied, "They are rising? Very well, I shall go and lie down."

The following morning, after rebel control over Spanish Morocco had been secured, the government publicly announced the coup, emphasizing that it was restricted to Morocco and that "absolutely no one on the mainland had joined this absurd venture."

This claim was not true, although the coup was definitely in trouble. In the major cities, leftist and anarchist labor groups began organizing militias to oppose the coup. General strikes were declared, and the workers called on government officials to supply them with arms so they could defend the Republic, but the central government in Madrid ordered that the workers' militias not be armed, which in hindsight looks like a crucial mistake.

Some workers' groups had kept their own arms, hidden away against the possibility of a right-wing crackdown. The memory of the 1934 uprising in Asturias, the one put down by soldiers from Morocco led by Francisco Franco, was still fresh in their memory. It looked as if 1936 might be a replay.

In Spain's major cities, it was often a three-way confrontation between the local Army garrison, the leftist groups, and between them, the paramilitary Guardia Civil. The workers' groups were

typically untrained and poorly armed, or even unarmed, but the local Guardia Civil were likely to be the best-trained and most experienced fighters in town, more so even than the local Army garrison, which was typically composed of poorly motivated conscripts. Even so, the decisive factor was usually not the relative arms or fighting skill of the three forces, or even their degrees of loyalty to the government or to the rebellion. When a coup is declared, in these first moments of uncertainty, most people succumb to the temptation to wait and see before choosing sides. Those who do not hesitate, but move quickly, decisively, and with confidence, often win the day.

In the city of Jaén, in Andalucía, for example, the proactive provincial governor ordered the Guardia Civil to surrender their arms, which they did, even as they protested their loyalty to the government. The surrendered arms were then distributed to workers' militias in defiance of the order from Madrid.

But most local authorities lacked the nerve to go that far. In the port city of Almería, the governor refused to arm the local militias. The Guardia Civil declared for the rebels, but backed down after the timely arrival of the loyalist Spanish Navy destroyer *Lepanto*, which threatened to shell their barracks unless they surrendered. In Málaga, the workers' militias were similarly unarmed but they had contacts among the local police and paramilitaries. When the Army garrison tried to move to the center of the town, they were attacked and promptly changed their minds and retreated back to barracks. When the commander of the local Guardia Civil declared for the rebels, he was arrested by his own troops.

To give you an idea of how far someone can get by acting quickly and decisively—not to mention audaciously—during the early hours of a coup d'état, consider what happened in the city of Seville on the arrival of General Gonzalo Queipo de Llano y Sierra. As you may remember from last week, he was the one military officer trusted by the government who was nevertheless part of the coup. He traveled to Seville on the 17th, and first thing on the morning of the 18th, appeared unannounced at the office of the local military commander with three of his aides. The hapless commander was told to decide on the spot whether he was with the revolt or against it. When the commander hesitated, Queipo de Llano placed him under arrest and confined him to his office. A soldier was told to kill him if he attempted to leave.

Next, Queipo de Llano went to the infantry barracks, where he found a regiment already armed and assembled. The general congratulated the colonel in command on his decision to join the coup. The colonel replied that he was not part of the coup and that this was a routine exercise. Queipo de Llano suggested they discuss it further in private. Once he had the colonel in private, he had him arrested as well. They had to go through quite a few officers before they found one willing to take command of the unit on behalf of the rebellion, but eventually they found one. Then they recruited an artillery unit, which was enough firepower to force the surrender of the governor and the local police commanders under threat of artillery barrage. They were promised their lives in exchange for their surrender, but after they surrendered, Queipo de Llano had them all shot anyway. That was enough to convince the local Guardia Civil to join the coup.

Workers groups organized and called a general strike, but it was ineffective. Crucially, Queipo de Llano's forces captured the local radio station, which he used to great effect, broadcasting threats against anyone in the city who resisted the coup and, crucially, using the station to contradict the Madrid government's claims that the coup was restricted to Morocco and had failed in peninsular Spain. This is perhaps history's first demonstration of the power that control over mass media offers during an uprising.

As a result, Seville, the center of the failed Sanjurjado uprising of 1932, became the first peninsular Spanish city to fall to the rebels. In Madrid, the Guardia Civil sent a unit to retake the city, but on their arrival in Seville, they joined with the rebels.

By nightfall on the 18th, the government in Madrid was in chaos. Prime Minister Casares called on everyone to "trust in the military powers of the state." He continued to insist that the uprising in Seville had been suppressed by General Queipo de Llano, even as the same Queipo de Llano was broadcasting his support for the rebels.

Labor leaders in Madrid called a general strike in opposition to the coup, but the prime minister continued to refuse repeated requests to arm the workers' militias, going so far as to warn that any government official who did so in violation of orders would be executed.

At 4:00 AM the following morning, the 19th, Casares resigned. He had been prime minister for 36 days. President Azaña tapped the president of the Cortes, Diego Martínez Barrio, to succeed him. Martínez assembled a new Popular Front cabinet that omitted the Communists, which was intended as an overture to the right-wing coup leaders.

On the 19th, the coup leader, General Emilio Mola, publicly announced the revolt. You may recall that Mola had been transferred to a remote posting in Pamplona, which lies in the Basque country of northern Spain. It was remote, but it was also a region of diehard Carlists with right-wing sympathies, who sided with the coup.

The new prime minister telephoned General Mola to negotiate an end to the uprising, but the general refused the invitation. He told the prime minister, "If you and I should reach agreement, both of us will have betrayed our ideals and our men." Certainly government supporters in Madrid felt that way. After watching Casares dither all day yesterday and Martínez attempting to negotiate with the rebels today, the Popular Front's supporters in Madrid had had enough. Crowds of demonstrators rallied outside the Ministry of War shouting "Traitors!" and "Cowards!" The Martínez government fell, just hours after it had been appointed.

The President next appointed José Giral y Pereira, a liberal university professor. With Giral, the Republic finally had a prime minister who grasped the extent of the crisis. He issued a decree ordering the dissolution of military units that joined the coup and ordered that arms be distributed to workers' militias. Alas for the government, by this time it had trouble enforcing its will. In Madrid, Army commanders had to be specifically ordered to hand over weapons. Sixty

thousand rifles were delivered to labor union offices, but on closer examination only 5,000 of them had bolts. The rest were useless.

The removed bolts were in the Montaña barracks in Madrid. The commander there refused to hand them over.

The real prize for the coup leaders was naturally Madrid, the capital city, but here the coup plotters had to contend with the fact that the government had already transferred out of the capital any military commander whose loyalty was suspect. Coup participation was limited and scattered. The refusal to hand over the rifle bolts was the first open display of resistance among the Army in Madrid. This made the Montaña barracks the center of the uprising in the capital. Rebel soldiers and their civilian sympathizers flocked to the scene.

So did supporters of the government. Thousands of workers and paramilitary police surrounded the barracks and laid siege. The following day, the 20th, after a loyalist airplane dropped a bomb on the barracks, white flags of surrender appeared. The civilians outside rushed toward the buildings, only to be met with machine gun fire from other soldiers who were not ready to surrender. This happened twice. Then a sympathetic soldier inside the barracks opened the gate, allowing the crowd inside, where they took their revenge. That was the end of the uprising in Madrid; the capital was secure. Hundreds of rebel soldiers in the barracks were killed, as were smaller numbers of civilians. Some of the surviving leaders of the coup in Madrid were later executed.

Meanwhile, on the island of Mallorca, in the Mediterranean, General Goded declared for the coup in the Balearic Islands, just as Franco had in the Canaries. The following day, the 19th, as Franco flew to Africa to take command of the soldiers there, Goded flew to Barcelona.

Barcelona. A difficult place for the rebels. You will recall from our earlier episodes on Spain that Barcelona was Spain's second-largest city after Madrid and the nation's industrial center. It had the most workers, and therefore the greatest numbers of worker militias, socialists, Communists, and anarchists. Moreover, Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, and the Second Republic had granted Catalonia its own autonomous regional government. When you consider all of this, you'd have to conclude that Barcelona would be a tough nut for the coup plotters to crack.

But despite these obvious problems, the coup plotters were certain of their ability to seize the city. There were some 12,000 Army soldiers in the region commanded by sympathetic officers, and the coup leaders felt confident they could take the city before the government could react, hence the decision to send Goded there immediately to take command.

But as late as the evening of the 18th, the president of Catalonia, Lluís Companys i Jover, like the prime minister in Madrid, resisted calls to arm the workers' militias. This despite the worrisome news of events in Spanish Morocco and Seville, and evidence the Catalanian government had in hand of Army plans to seize control of Barcelona. Police even arrested civilians carrying arms.

But the workers' committees in Barcelona were mostly anarchists, and do you seriously expect anarchists to lay down their arms and sit tight just because the government told them to? Are you kidding me? Of course they didn't. They spent the night of July 18-19 arming themselves. They broke into military and police armories and seized weapons, often with the assistance of sympathizers within. Members of the dockworkers' union knew of a shipment of dynamite stored at the port. That was seized and fashioned into hand-made grenades.

By an unlikely coincidence, Barcelona was also housing hundreds of athletes who had come for the People's Olympiad. As you know, Berlin would host the Summer Olympic Games in August 1936. Back in 1931, the IOC had chosen Berlin over a competing bid from Barcelona. After the Nazis took control in Germany, there were calls by some to boycott the Games. After the Popular Front was elected in Spain, earlier this year, the Spanish government opted to embrace the Olympic boycott and host a competing competition, the People's Olympiad, in Barcelona, scheduled to begin today, July 19. Left-leaning organizations in a number of countries sent athletes, including the Soviet Union, which was not participating in the official Olympics. Also represented were to be the United Kingdom, the United States, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, among other nations. There were also teams of political exiles from Germany and Italy, and a Jewish team.

The military coup forced a cancellation of these games, but a couple hundred athletes already in Barcelona took up arms alongside the workers to oppose what was about to come.

What was about to come began at dawn on the 19th, when a unit of soldiers stationed in Barcelona were given rum to drink and then told that the government in Madrid had ordered them to put down an anarchist uprising that had broken out in Barcelona. But soldiers who entered the streets found themselves facing barricades and stiff resistance from the workers' militias. Those who managed to seize government buildings downtown soon found themselves under siege.

General Gode's plane landed just before noon. He went to the headquarters of the local division commander, who was a loyalist, and placed him under arrest. But by two in the afternoon, it had become clear that the rebels were barely holding their own. Reinforcements from outside the city had been blocked by anarchist barricades. At one key confrontation, with an artillery unit, a few of the militia fighters crossed the lines, holding their rifles above their heads to show they were not attacking, demanded that the rebel soldiers not fire on their own people, and told them their officers had lied to them. The artillery unit then trained their guns on rebel positions.

By this time, the commander of the local Guardia Civil could see which way the wind was blowing, and put his 4,000 police onto the streets to support the loyalists. Crowds on the streets cheered as members of the Guardia Civil marched past, making this the first and only time in history that anarchists cheered the police.

It didn't take many artillery shells to convince the rebels in the center of the city to surrender. Some loyalists wanted to shoot General Goded on the spot, but he was spared after pleas from a Communist. They handed him over to the Catalanian government instead; they persuaded him to make a statement over the radio announcing his own capture and calling on other rebel forces to lay down their arms. The statement was a big boost to the loyalist side, though it did not save Goded's life. He would be court martialed and executed in less than a month.

[music: "El Pajarico"]

This brings us back around to sundown on July 19, and the dramatic moment I left hanging earlier in the podcast: when General Franco, who has assumed command over the Spanish Army in Africa, was briefed on the situation in Spain.

As you now know, the coup leaders have secured Spanish Morocco, the Canary Islands, and the Balearic Islands. Well, they've secured Mallorca and Ibiza anyway. Loyalists are still in charge on the island of Minorca. No word on the situation on Formentera.

On the Spanish mainland, however, the rebel situation was insecure. Wide swaths of the conservative and Carlist rural north were supporting the coup, although the cities and towns on the north coast of Spain were loyalist. The government was secure in Madrid and in Catalonia. Most of the south of the country was also in government hands, with the notable exception of the city of Seville.

But remember what I said at the beginning of the episode, when I outlined the coup plot. About a third of the Spanish Army is stationed in Morocco, and these soldiers are unquestionably the best trained, most committed, not to mention the most right wing and therefore most supportive of the coup. The plan was to take command of these soldiers, ship them to peninsular Spain, and use them to help take over the country. Any location in Spain that the coup leaders can seize without help from Africa is gravy. It is these fighters who are meant to turn the tide.

Only...how are the coup leaders going to ship them to Spain?

The plan was to use the Spanish Navy, and here is the worst news General Franco was receiving. The coup plotters had counted heavily on the fact that Spanish naval officers were virtually all right-wing monarchists from aristocratic families. Unfortunately for the coup plotters, they had underestimated support for the Republic among the sailors. In the days leading up to the coup, rumors of an impending uprising circulated aboard a number of Spanish Navy vessels and sailors were already debating among themselves whether they would obey orders from mutinous officers.

When the coup came, a telegraph operator at the Admiralty in Madrid was asked to signal the start of the coup to ship commanders. The telegraph operator refused and arrested his superior officer instead. Loyalists in the Admiralty sent out orders that all naval communications be in the

clear, since only officers had access to the code books. This way, if a ship's officers joined the coup, its sailors would know at once what was going on.

And it worked. Most of the Spanish Navy remained loyal. Officers who attempted to bring their ships over to the rebel side found themselves staring down armed and angry sailors who relieved them of command when they surrendered, or shot them dead if they resisted.

The biggest prize for the loyalist side was the Navy's biggest ship: *Jaime I*—that would be *James I* in English. It was the Navy's only seaworthy dreadnought battleship at the time. A famous radio message from the ship to the Admiralty in Madrid read: WE HAVE HAD SERIOUS RESISTANCE FROM THE COMMANDERS AND OFFICERS ON BOARD AND HAVE SUBDUED THEM BY FORCE...URGENTLY REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS AS TO BODIES. They were told to give the officers dignified burials at sea.

The Admiralty in Madrid understood perfectly well the need to blockade Army units from Morocco before they could make the crossing to Spain and ordered every ship in the Navy to head immediately to the Strait of Gibraltar.

This might very well have spelled the end of the uprising. It should have spelled the end of the uprising. General Mola, up in Pamplona, decided the coup had failed, and fought on only because he saw no other option.

But the rebel cause was not yet lost.

The first problem for the loyalist Navy was that, their ships having been cleared of experienced officers, the sailors' committees now in control could not operate their vessels at anything like full efficiency.

The second problem was that loyalist Spanish naval forces got a distinctly chilly reception from the British Royal Navy, who saw Spanish sailors shooting their officers and drew the conclusion that at least mutiny, and possibly a *Battleship Potemkin*-style Bolshevik uprising within the Spanish Navy was taking place, and refused to support it. Spanish naval vessels were denied refueling at Gibraltar, and were barred altogether from the Moroccan port of Tangier. Tangier was at this time part of an international zone that was jointly administered by France, Britain, and Spain. Officials in Tangier decided that permitting Spanish naval vessels to dock there would violate the city's neutrality.

And the rebels did control a few ships and some planes in the Spanish air force; enough to credibly threaten loyalist ships in the region of the Strait, so blockading Spanish Morocco was not as easy as it should have been. And there was more bad news to come.

Rebel military officers reached out to sympathetic foreign governments, especially Portugal, Italy, and Germany. In Italy, officials in the military and the foreign ministry were well-acquainted with the coup plotters, who had been coming to them regularly to ask for help in

overthrowing the Republic since 1932, and they gave the Spanish officers the same noncommittal replies they were accustomed to giving them. Ditto in Berlin, where the German Foreign Office gave their Spanish petitioners the brush-off. But they gained a sympathetic ear from Rudolph Hess, who sent them on to meet with Hitler himself.

The German *Führer* was in Bayreuth at the time, as he was every summer, to attend that city's annual Wagner Festival. On July 25th, Hitler received a briefing from the German ambassador in Madrid, warning that if the coup failed, Spain would go Communist. That evening, after taking in a performance of *Siegfried*, Hitler received representatives from the coup leaders to discuss the situation. Despite the reservations of some of the senior members of his own government, including Luftwaffe commander-in-chief Hermann Göring, Hitler ordered twenty Junkers-52 aircraft, along with six fighter escorts, deployed to Spanish Morocco. The Junkers-52 had been part of Germany's secret rearmament plan. Ostensibly designed as a newer and larger passenger airplane, the Junkers-52 could also serve as a military transport plane or as a bomber. Over the next four weeks, these Junkers-52s would ferry over 7,000 soldiers and their equipment from North Africa to rebel-controlled Seville, over the heads of the loyalist ships sent to stop them, as well as occasionally bombing those ships. This was the first large-scale transport of military forces by air in history, and it was a resounding success.

Similarly, in Italy, Benito Mussolini decided a few days later to send 12 Italian bombers and 27 fighters to Morocco to aid the uprising, along with £1,000,000 in financial support. In both cases, the motives of the two fascist leaders seem to have been to prevent a leftist Spain from going Communist or allying with France, which at this time had its own leftist Popular Front government.

Thanks to the troop shuttle, Franco was able to move enough forces to Seville to secure the city and march north through western Spain to link up with other rebel-held positions. Then the port city of Cádiz fell to the rebels, facilitating the crossing by sea. By September, the Republican Navy was forced to abandon the Strait of Gibraltar and restrict its operations to the Mediterranean.

The timely fascist aid saved the coup. Adolf Hitler later quipped that Francisco Franco ought to have raised a statue to the Junkers-52.

By September 1936, it was clear that the coup had neither failed nor succeeded. What it had done was divide Spain into two warring parts, condemning the nation to a terrible civil war. The rebel forces would style themselves the *Nacionales*, which is usually translated into English as the Nationalists, although a better translation would be the Nationals. In Spanish, the name does not so much suggest they were literal nationalists, but that they were fighting for the nation, and they would frame the war as a struggle by Spanish Catholic traditionalists to resist a Marxist government bent on a Communist takeover and the eradication of the Catholic Church.

The Republican, or Loyalist, side would frame the war as a defense of freedom and democracy against a military cabal bent on establishing a dictatorship.

On the face of it, the Republican side should still have the upper hand. They controlled a larger share of Spain's land area and population, and most of its industry. The government in Madrid has survived and it controls Spain's gold reserves. And the Republicans control the port of Valencia, from which flow Spain's exports of citrus fruit, its most important source of export income.

But against all that, the Nationalists have the support of Germany and Italy, which means this conflict is far from over. In fact, it's just beginning.

But that is a story for a future episode. We'll have to stop there for today. I thank you for listening, and I'd especially like to thank Martin for his kind donation, and thank you to Forrest for becoming a patron of the podcast. Donors and patrons like Martin and Forrest help cover the costs of making this show, which in turn keeps the podcast available free for everyone, so my thanks to them and to all of you who have pitched in and helped out. If you'd like to become a patron or make a donation, just visit the website, historyofthetwentiethcentury.com and click on the PayPal or Patreon buttons.

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I have a new partial to fill in the gap in my teeth, so I don't sound like Sylvester the Cat anymore...exactly...I still sound like...something...not quite myself, but I guess the partial is an improvement. What do you think?

And I hope you'll join me next week, here on *The History of the Twentieth Century*, as we consider the political situation in the United States, and the Presidential election of 1936. Does this generation of Americans face a rendezvous with destiny? That's the question next week, here, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

Oh, and one more thing. The coup's most spectacular mishap was surely the untimely death of its nominal leader, General José Sanjurjo. He attempted to return to Spain in a small aircraft to join the uprising on July 20. The pilot warned the general that he was bringing too much luggage. Sanjurjo refused to leave any of it behind, famously telling the pilot, "I need to wear proper clothes as the new *caudillo* of Spain."

The airplane crashed shortly after takeoff. The pilot survived, but General Sanjurjo was killed, depriving the Nationalist side of its nominal leader. Who will be the face of the uprising now?

[music: Closing Theme]

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