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Chamber of Deputies

Session of Friday, August 28, 1942

Speeches from Deputies Uranga Elejalde, Saavedra Pinon, Urquieta, More, Luna, Gorriti, Andrade del Valle y Rodríguez (don Luis), referring to the upcoming arrival of the President of the Former Basque Government, Don José Antonio de Aguirre.

Mr. URANGA ELEJALDE.- Mr. President: On Sunday the 30th of this month, the President of the former Basque Government, Don José Antonio de Aguirre, will arrive at Lima by air. He is one of the figures who is a symbol of Democracy at the current time, having fought such hard and heroic battles in Spain. A prestigious internationalist, outstanding figure in Industry and Commerce, Catholic of the highest virtues, during his public interventions, always an example of honor and civic responsibility. Deputy for Bilbao before the Spanish Parliament, the “Diary of the Debates” reports very important speeches given by this prestigious public man against the extremes on the right and the left, defending the principles of Catholic Socialism. In his factories, he practiced the organizational systems advocated by the famous Rerum Novarum circular. The American Government has given him several awards. He is currently touring on vacation, visiting several Basque residents in Latin American countries. He has been received by the President of Uruguay and received an invitation from the President of Colombia. Therefore, I ask, Mr. President, that you consult the Chamber regarding how best to pay homage to this illustrious man of the people who is a symbol of Republicanism and Democracy, and to remember the Homeland of his forebears.

I hope, sir, that my distinguished colleagues in National Representation will have no issues with approving my petition.

Mr. SAAVEDRA PINON.- I would thank our colleague, Mr. Uranga Elejalde, to please clarify what, he believes, this homage he is requesting of us should look like.

Also, as we, the members of this chamber, well know, every illustrious person who visits Peru always has our esteem, our respect; therefore, the important role we play places us in a position that we must find the way to pay the homage due.

Mr. URQUIETA.- There are many of us Representatives, sir, in this Chamber, who, quite honorably, have Basque ancestry in a greater or lesser degree: Pinillos Goicoechea, Ganuza Chopitea, Belaunde, Ruiz de Somocurcio, Castro Agustí, Boza



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Aizorbe, Boza Ezeta, Fontcuberta Mendizábal, Aranburu Salinas, Checa Eguiguren, Garmendia, Sayan Álvarez, Gómez Azcárate, Iparraguirre, González Orbegozo, Gorriti, Pardo Lezameta, Portocarrero Ojave, MacLean y Estonbe, Urganga Elejalde, Urquieta, and many others. In Peru, sir, as in almost all the Americas, the Basque memory is perennial and profound. Even our Andes Mountains have immortalized this memory. “Andia” in Basque, means big and tall thing, and “Andino”, People up High. Deputy Uranga Elejalde has done very well in bringing to this Chamber the name of José Antonio de Aguirre, President of the Basque Country. Aguirre, sir, is the symbol of a racially heroic People, irreducible in their passion for freedom, whose last epic tragedy shook the work just four years ago.

I would like, sir, by making the most of the opportune words spoken by the Deputy for Pisco, to express my sympathy for all the Basques who are spread throughout the Americas today, and to renew my faith that soon, Republican Spain will know how to shake itself free of the Nazi-Falangist nits that infest and shame it today and which are also spreading throughout the Americas, protected by a suicidal tolerance. (Applause).

Mr. MORE.- Mr. President: I consider that those of us who come here defending the Democratic Creed have the inescapable duty to give all relief possible to those people who, having eminent prestige within the International Democratic Ranks, visit our Homeland. I know the personage of Mr. José Antonio de Aguirre and his unarguable merits in the struggle that freed the Basque People, and therefore, even though I am not of Basque origin, but I am a firm defender of Democracy, I join in with all enthusiasm and sympathy to the words spoken by my distinguished colleagues, Messrs. Uranga Elejalde and Urquieta.

Mr. LUNA.- Mr. President: I also join in with all enthusiasm to the initiative of Deputy Uranga Elejalde and the eloquent sentences shared by Dr. Urquieta; and I add to them my own reasons which, in my view, oblige us to pay the most appropriate and opportune homage to the Basque President who will visit us in just a few days. I believe, sir, that the fact that many of our colleagues, many Peruvians, are of Basque ancestry is not the only reason for this; I believe that this homage will be a reason of democratic affirmation for all men who agree with the thinking of the Basque heroes who, alongside President Aguirre, fought for the freedom of their Country, and with that, for the Freedom of the World.

Moreover, as Mr. Uranga Elejalde has not presented a specific formula for what shape this homage should take, allow me to suggest that we leave this point to the Board of the Chamber, if the Deputy who made this proposal and all those who have joined him so agree.

Mr. IPARRAGUIRRE.- I would also like to join in with Mr. Uranga Elejalde's petition, Mr. President.

Mr. GORRITI.- Mr. President: I cannot, in any way, stop hearing my own voice in these moments when the President of the Basques is so close to arriving at our shores, because Aguirre represents the spirit and the action of this virile People. Aguirre at the head of the Basques fought daringly against the Nazi-Fascist



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make visible the democratic positions of the Countries of the Americas and the democratic position of José Antonio de Aguirre. And I find it very interesting, sir, that in Peru, a Democratic Republic by constitutional definition, resolutely amongñ the Anti-Totalitarian Ranks, cannot pay due homage to a high and resolute Representative of Anti-Totalitarian Democracy, in order to not offend the Totalitarian and declared Anti-Democratic Government of Mr. Franco. Indeed, it has not occurred to Mr. Uranga Elejalde or indeed anyone else to request that this Chamber receive Mr. Aguirre in an official and public session. The formula proposed by Mr. Luna, therefore, appreciating the reasons given by the President of the Diplomatic Commission, reconciles different points of view, and it shall be the Board that decides how to receive the Basque President.

Mr. URANGA ELEJALDE.- We have a defined democratic situation and, therefore, I believe that we can pay homage to the illustrious Mr. Aguirre in the way the Board judges most proper.

Mr. LUNA.- Mr. President: I have stated my thoughts with utmost clarity; I have not made any request, but simply a suggestion; I have expressed my personal opinion, in order to ease finding an appropriate way to pay an homage that, happily, has not been contradicted.

Mr. GORITI.- Actually, I have not made any request; I have only offered my support to mere suggestions. Therefore, it would be a good idea that it not be the Chamber that is consulted, but rather the Board who decides, in accordance with the opinions expressed by the Deputies, what the best way to pay homage to Aguirre is. I rather request, Mr. President, that the words expressed by the Representatives who have taken part in this debate be published.

Mr. President.- The statements regarding the personality of Mr. Aguirre have not been contradicted. They shall orient the Board as to what attitude to take. (Applause).

Lima, August 29, 1942.

Agrees. A seal of the Office of the Chamber of Deputies.

(In our last issue, we gave an account of the reception and homage paid to President Aguirre in Peru, where the aide-de-camp of the President of the Republic, representatives of the government, and a large group of deputies and intellectuals, and the Basque community as a whole, came to receive him. He held a large conference with the President of Peru, Mr. Manuel Prado Ugarteche).

...with thunderous applause from those present and with a special sympathy throughout all Peru.

At five in the morning, President Aguirre left on a plane for Santiago de Chile, with the brevity of his stay being greatly lamented everywhere.