



## SOLEDAD CASILDA HERNÁEZ VARGAS AKA LA MILICIANA

(Zizurkil, Gipuzkoa, Spain, April 9, 1914 — Biarritz, France, August 31, 1992)



Soledad Casilda Hernández Vargas, aka 'La Miliciana' (the militia woman), was a **militant anarcho-feminist and anti-fascist resistor**. She didn't like the nickname. She preferred to be considered a fighter or a revolutionary. Besides being a militia, she was a standout unionist, a pioneer of feminism and an advocate for living in close alignment with nature. The two great struggles of her life were the defense of equal rights between men and women, and the social values in which she believed.

As Vargas explained, her political commitment was driven more by intuition than reflection: "In my family, everyone was of libertarian or anarchist leaning, so these tendencies came naturally to me."

From a very young age, Vargas was exposed to an anarchist and revolutionary environment. She explored the Communist Party but, too authoritarian for her liking, she chose to enter the **Youth of the National Confederation of Labour** (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo; CNT), the **biggest anarchist trade union**. From there on in she was more than just another militant, she was an active and engaged feminist.

Vargas actively participated in the Revolutionary General Strike of 1934 during the Second Spanish Republic. Taken to court for her actions, she was sentenced to nine years in prison for distributing leaflets, and 20 more for carrying explosives in a basket. Pardoned in 1936, she returned to San Sebastián/Donostia. There she actively **participated in the defense of her city during the Spanish Civil War**: fascist soldiers reached number 43 Urbieta Street but were unable to advance any further as Vargas and her husband were throwing grenades from rooftops, forcing them to retreat.

After the fall of Irún, Vargas crossed to Hendaye (France) and from there she left for Catalonia and, later, the Aragón Front, where she achieved the rank of lieutenant.

Before the end of the Civil War, she crossed the border through France again and was held in the Gurs concentration camp.

Vargas settled in Biarritz and **her home became a center for anti-German and anti-Franco operations**.



**Sources and further information:**

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