

DAM BURST DESTROYS VILLAGE:

A raging torrent of water all but annihilated the remote village of Ribadelago in the Zamora province of Northern Spain. At four o'clock in the morning, as the village slept, the Vega de Tara dam burst without warning and eighty million tons of water cascaded down the valley with these appalling results. It took only ten minutes to complete the destruction. Eighty houses were wrecked. Before the disaster a great lake of water was impounded by the dam in the mountains, 1,400 feet above the village, part of a hydro-electric scheme designed to bring prosperity to this region. Instead, came this catastrophe.

When the fifty foot high wave had passed down the valley to the lake below, all available troops were rushed to the village by raft and boat. Troops and civil guards joined the search for bodies amongst the pathetic debris. It is estimated that, of the 500 inhabitants of the village, more than 200 lost their lives. Whole families were swept away, and not a single family escaped without loss of at least one of their number.

The Government has ordered a complete investigation into the causes of this disaster which has shocked and angered all Spain.