

*And now in English:*

Your Excellency Ambassador Carlos Miranda, friends and family, ladies and gentlemen;

I wish to thank you for this honour of receiving the Medal of Civil Merit, which I do in memory of my parents, Juan and Salome Moreno, who passed on important ideas teaching me to value and learn not only at school but also at home and in society generally.

My parents founded Moreno Wines at the end of the 1960s serving the Spanish community in London, which I chose to continue in the 80s after some turbulent experiences teaching sociology, at University and schools.

Then, the world of Spanish wine in England was dominated by those with similar views as during the dictatorship. The Spanish and their wines were under valued and not appreciated.

It is true that the image of Spain was poor; the Spaniard was not proud of their wines and they lacked marketing experience. This was a situation produced as a result of so many years of dictatorship, which suppressed not only workers, but professionals, the culture, the artists, the creativity of wine, and also entrepreneurial confidence. We must be aware that 40 years of dictatorship do not disappear in a day or a decade.

This was the situation I found myself in and I chose to make my own road in the wine making world, with the idea of selecting and progressing with the best wines Spain had to offer, with the idea of helping wineries and their wine makers to be more creative, appreciated and proud.

Today I am happy to say that many positive things have happened in the world of Spanish wines and we must continue to defend it, enjoy them and improve them.

The values of my parents, which I always carry with me, was always to participate and organise to make changes and to combat injustices in the world and to improve the world for all. In the 1950s and 1960s they showed me a Spain without justice, of fear and hunger but also one of human potential and creativity, artistically and economically. They knew that only together we could make changes and for this we knew it would take a long time. And we all did it together: some here in London, outside this Embassy, and others in the streets, institutions and factories in Spain.

The history of Spain and its liberation is our history. We don't want to forget it; we should not forget it. We must transmit it and teach others as we have been doing through the Guernica Children and the Basque Children 37 Association, the heroes of the International Brigades and the International Brigades Memorial Trust; those who made the mosaic on Portobello Road in London, the commemoration in Jersey to the Spanish Slave workers, the Spanish Republicans who fought and supported as anti fascists the British armed forces during the second World war, and the many studies, books, films of our war, the Spanish Civil War.

There are always those who see the light, who do not change their principles and who know what needs to be done. One of these principles is not to separate oneself too much from others but rather to include them in the advances of life.

My participation has been to try to follow this course and I wish to continue doing this. As such I wish to thank all those Spanish republicans who came to Britain as exiles and the progressive British who together continue to wish for a Spain with liberty, social justice and equality.

Much has changed, and there is much we need to defend and also to continue progressing.

We have waited nearly 70 years for the Spanish government to include us in this process. We must all thank the Ambassador for his inspiration for including us, the Spaniards and British of the war, in the new Spain.

Many thanks for this honour.

Thank you for coming.  
Thank you for your support.