

Spain's Opus Dei

*An elite
working for
scientific progress*

Beginning on Jan. 29, high-ranking delegates of the Ibero-American countries will convene in Madrid for the first Ibero-American Conference on Science and Technology. The conference follows by three months a meeting of Spanish and Arab representatives held in Madrid to discuss financing of development projects for Latin America, and represents the next step in consolidating Spain's role as the "bridge" between the European Monetary System and the countries of Latin America.

On Jan. 6, the Spanish news agency EFE reported that the Ibero-American Conference will "translate science and technology and its significance in the new international economic order into a program of concrete actions." The delegates will also study the juridical and technical issues raised by "joint scientific investigations between the Ibero-American countries and Spain as well as the financial aspects" of the "concrete projects" to be discussed.

To those who remember Spain's days as an international pariah under the regime of Francisco Franco, such an up-front role by the Spanish in international affairs may seem incongruous. But it is rapidly becoming the order of the day under the government of Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez and King Juan Carlos I.

In a new year's day address, Spanish Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja stated that "in 1979 Spain will expand its cooperation with Africa and Latin America," and announced that his ministry is "preparing a foreign aid law which will enable Spain to have a more forceful presence in Africa."

On Jan. 7, Oreja left for a tour of four African countries: Egypt, the Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Although Oreja had to interrupt his trip unexpectedly — to go to France for discussions on joint French-Spanish action against terrorism in the Basque region bordering on southern France — he was able to broaden Spain's bilateral relations with the Sudan. The Spanish government has opened up a credit line to the Sudan and has sent a team of Spanish technicians, on Jan. 10, to con-

duct a research project on the development of the Sudan's agriculture. The project will include joint cooperation in investigations of various cultures, irrigation systems, and agricultural equipment.

After his visits to Africa and France, Oreja plans to go to the Soviet Union for an official visit, which, the Spanish press reports, may include a meeting with Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev.

One of the topics likely to be discussed with the Soviets is the next Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, scheduled to be held in Madrid in 1980. According to Oreja, the Spanish government "intends to prepare this conference seriously and it hopes to achieve concrete results from it as regards disarmament and detente," reported the Spanish daily *El País*.

In Latin America, a Mexican dele-

gation, headed by Jorge Diaz Serrano, general director of Mexican Oil (Pemex), arrived in Spain this week for talks with its Spanish counterpart, Campsa, aimed at establishing closer collaboration between both countries' oil industries. Besides supplying Spain with 100,000 barrels of crude oil per day starting in 1980, Diaz Serrano is discussing plans for Pemex to buy up to 30 percent of Spain's biggest refinery complex Petroner. "Should the plans go through," reported the Spanish ABC Jan. 10, "Spain will turn into Pemex's beach-head for its operations in Europe."

At the same time, Spain is evolving progressive domestic policies focused on a high rate of industrial development — including one of Europe's most vigorous nuclear energy programs. Once caricatured as the model for European peasant backwardness, Spain now has several

nuclear power plants in operation, five nearing completion, seven awaiting approval of construction, and 15 others in various stages of planning, aiming for mid-1980s start-up dates.

The responsibility for Spain's progressive international and domestic role — as for the surprisingly peaceful transition from Francoist dictatorship to democratic rule — lies largely with the European (as distinct from the Latin American) branch of the Catholic organization Opus Dei. In the following report, the first in a series on Spain, we present the history of Opus Dei's role in post-Civil War Spain, and describe the forces which worked to put Spain on the path to becoming a modern industrial democracy. ■

Spain's Opus Dei and the Spanish Civil War

Contrary to what is generally believed, the forces that emerged on the side of Francisco Franco after the Civil War were not an undifferentiated pack of "pro-German Falangists." In fact, until the very day of his death, Franco was confronted with three main tendencies within his ranks:

- 1) the ultra-Nazi Falange, of British inspiration, which wanted to impose the Mussolinian model;
- 2) the similarly inspired Carlist movement that worked for a restoration of the Borbón-Parma line of the Spanish monarchy, or in view of the virtual impossibility of that option, to strike an agreement with the legitimate Borbón y Borbón line;
- 3) the traditionalist monarchists who aimed at a restoration of the legitimate monarchy.

This third tendency was divided into a so-called liberal pro-British faction, represented by individuals such as the Marqués of Valdeiglesias, Gil Robles, Sáinz Rodríguez, and Salvador de Madariaga; and an anti-British Catholic-conservative faction around *Acción Española*. The anti-British monarchist faction was represented in government beginning in 1941 by Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco. It is this faction with which the Opus Dei is associated.

The Civil War left Spain an economic wreck in the hands of general Francisco Franco and the Falange. Spain, according to British designs at the time, was to play a role in the propagation of fascism in Europe along with Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. During the war, the Falange received material aid from

Italy and advice from Great Britain. The Falange's founder, Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, not only had been studying in England before he set out to organize the Falange, but was welcomed in the circles of British fascist Sir Oswald Moseley and the British aristocracy.

As Franco rose to power, steps were taken by the Falange to constitute itself as the one and only party or political organization that would define the new regime and institutionalize it officially as a fascist state. Under such a Falangist state, Spain would close ranks behind Hitler and enter the Second World War. The Falange's attempts were strongly opposed by monarchical-military elements, most notably, Admiral Carrero Blanco, who advised Franco against the Falangist designs. Compromising, Franco established *El Movimiento* (The Movement) as the political institution of the country. Although largely led and controlled by the Falange, The Movement was loose enough for other political colorations to be a part of it. The Germanophile Movement, however, was not going to be the official representative image of the regime. In a first defeat for the Falange, Admiral Carrero Blanco was named Undersecretary of the Presidency in 1941 after writing a strategic document for Franco — "Considerations about the International Situation" — which dashed any hopes the Falange had about getting more than a token Spanish division into World War II.

A year later, Franco was suggesting in public that a restoration of the Monarchy would be the only viable solution for Spain in the future, but not the "liberalist monarchy" under which Spain had begun disintegrating at the beginning of the century. As Carrero made clear to Franco in his 1944 report, "Spain In Front of the Current World Situation":

“Liberalism, with or without Crown, would deliver us in the hands of England, not as an ally, but as a lackey. . . . If Spain returns to a Monarchy, it cannot be the Monarchy that England wants, but the traditional Monarchy; one thing is certain, if the Monarchy were already restored it would be receiving from the British press the same attacks as the actual regime does. . . .”

The Opus Dei

While Admiral Carrero and others were securing for themselves strong and influential positions within the otherwise bloody dictatorship, a small organization, the Opus Dei, was laying the groundwork for one of the biggest “white coups” in recent history.

The Opus Dei was founded by Father José María Escrivá de Balaguer in 1928 under the protection of the Bishop of Madrid, Alcalá, Monsignor Eijó y Garay. From the beginning, Father Escrivá saw the Opus Dei as an educational organization in the tradition of the Brotherhood of the Common Life that not only would prepare priests in the Apostolic principles of St. Augustine, but would also educate professional lay cadre. From 1928 to 1936, the Opus Dei was a small group of 12 university students from Madrid and Aragón, Father Escrivá’s native region. They met in the Father’s apartment in what he ironically called the Academy for Law and Architecture. Father Escrivá’s Academy was recognized as a deployment against the Jesuit-dominated Instituto Libre de Enseñanza and the Jesuit Center for University Studies because it was moving to recruit the best from among Catholic students in several institutions.

The Opus Dei was devoted to “regaining the intellectual elites for catholicism” and, for Father Escrivá, the only way of doing so was by “forming an intellectual elite convinced of the coherence between God and scientific knowledge.” Such an elite was not conceived in a mystical, self-flagellating way, but as a “third force” that would actively participate and intervene in world affairs. Self-perfection was not something achieved in isolated meditation, but by acting in the real world to change it and aiming at being the “best apostle” in whatever field the individual moved, on the basis of true scientific and Christian knowledge. With these ideas, recollected in Father Escrivá’s book *Camino (The Way)*, the Opus Dei carried out factional organizing among Catholic students and religious congregations.

The clashes with the Jesuits could not be avoided. A Jesuit ideologue went so far as to state that those in religious congregations who joined or wish to join the Opus Dei “would be considered traitors.” Vicious slander campaigns against the Opus Dei were the order of the day.

With the outbreak of civil war in 1936 and the mass assassinations of priests which followed, Father Escrivá and some of his students escaped to France and later returned to the zone occupied by Franco. Among those priests killed was Father Escrivá’s protector during the time he was a student in the seminary.

The end of the civil war came in 1939. Some two million people had been killed, including much of the intelligentsia. Spain was in desperate need of building and educating its human resources. As Education Minister, Franco appointed Ibáñez Martín, who was closely associated with Opus Dei members dur-

ing the war. The same year — 1939 — Ibáñez created by decree the Superior Council of Scientific Investigations (CSIC) and appointed José María Albareda, his close friend and an Opus Dei member, as its president.

The idea behind the CSIC was clear. One Opus Dei member put it this way: “The important thing is that we have to convince the young generation that neutrality in science does not exist . . . the young generation must be possessed with ideas of Augustinian principles, that is to say, ‘the closer we are to God, the closer we are to science.’” The CSIC, and the magazine it published, *Arbor*, led the Opus Dei effort to train an elite in all fields that could in time take over the reins of power and lead the country toward progress and development.

Working through the Superior Council, the Opus Dei was able to place professors in all fields in nearly every major university, create research institutes to unite “the natural and the speculative sciences,” and establish its own university in Navarra. The Opus Dei recruits included a rich cross-section of men and women from all social strata.

In 1947, the Vatican issued the encyclical *Povida Mater Ecclesia*, specifically to allow for the creation of special secular institutions that would permit the Vatican to officially recognize the Opus Dei. Father Escrivá was simultaneously made monsignor and up to his death in 1975 was a friend and ally of Cardinal Montini (Pope Paul VI), playing an important role in the Vatican II council.

Franco Must Go!

The reaction was not late in coming. A plot to kill Franco and install the Falange chief, Arrese, in power was uncovered and defused in 1943. A second plot was uncovered in 1947. The 1943 plot was organized by none other than Otto von Hapsburg and his liaison in Madrid, Leon Degrelle, who lived in Madrid with his Austrian aristocratic wife. Degrelle’s house became the conspiratorial center for Franco’s Falangist opposition. “Degrelle,” wrote the German weekly *Der Spiegel* in 1959, “found refuge in a circle that was in opposition to the Franco regime and which enjoyed not a little popularity among the Anglo-Saxon military.”

The first plot a failure, the second was organized in 1947 under the direct supervision of the British Foreign Office. General Beigbeder y Atienza was to negotiate an agreement between the Socialist Party of Indalecio Prieto, the Carlists, and the pro-British monarchist elements around Gil Robles and Salvador de Madariaga. Under Beigbeder, a provisional government was to be formed that would “initiate a period of conspiracy and subversive activity, the success of which would depend on obtaining foreign support,” according to a U.S. State Department document that year. All important negotiations by the parties in exile after the civil war were conducted out of the British Foreign Office under Prime Minister Atlee’s government.

For several years, Franco had been conducting delicate negotiations with Don Juan de Borbón for a possible restoration of the monarchy. Don Juan, however, was in exile and under British influence mediated through Madariaga, Gil Robles, and others. A restoration of the monarchy under those circumstances would have meant handing Spain on a silver platter to the British. Don Juan was pushed by his “advisors” to demand an immediate restoration, organize international opinion in his favor, and

openly defy Franco through manifestos circulated inside Spain. The danger was all too clear to Carrero who, although loyal to Don Juan, advised Franco:

“Don Juan’s manifesto shows, besides ignorance of the Spanish domestic situation, an enormous lack of vision regarding the international situation . . . The inspiration of the manifesto has two origins:

- Vegas Latapié and Gil Robles and
- Sáinz Rodríguez, Madariaga, et al., who act under non-Spanish criteria.

“The fact that Don Juan signed a document born out of these two sources shows his lack of political vision. But we must not dismiss him or abandon him to his actual mentors. . . . Nothing better than having some people loyal to him, but they at the same time should be intelligent and catholic men with strong convictions agreeable to the Movement’s postulates, to move to his side and undertake the difficult task of pulling him away from all the influences to which he is today submitted. Don Juan must be placed on the road to a radical change . . . *or resign himself to the idea that it will be his son who will reign. It is also necessary to start thinking in the preparation of the young Prince for being King. . . . He will be a good King with the help of God, but only if we begin to take on the problem now.* I suggest the following: that a few trusted monarchists go to Lausanne (Don Juan’s place of residence — ed.); that utmost care be placed in the selection of the (Prince’s) teacher and that he be sent perfectly instructed. . . .” (emphasis added)

Prince Juan Carlos arrived in Spain on Nov. 10, 1948 to begin his education. His teachers were carefully selected and “instructed.” Prominent among them was Angel López Amo, a high ranking Opus Dei intellectual.

Opus Dei’s “White Coup”

As it became clear after 1947 that the Franco regime could not be easily toppled, isolation was imposed upon it from abroad. It should be clear that the British government had no distaste whatsoever for Franco or the Falange. Britain’s so-called opposition to the Franco dictatorship stemmed from the fact that the dictator had been “captured” to a large degree by the anti-British monarchist-Opus Dei tendencies on virtually every issue of foreign policy. The “opposition” was intent on preventing those tendencies from taking over the internal apparatus and policies which were in the hands of the Falange. Spain was not allowed to participate in the Marshall Plan, nor to participate in or be recognized by the United Nations. Only Salazar’s Portugal and Perón’s Argentina would recognize the Spanish regime. Spain underwent a period of “autarky” which allowed for little if any development and which threatened widespread and explosive social ferment

The international blockade was broken by the Vatican in 1953 with the signing of a Concordat negotiated by Opus Dei men which recognized the Franco regime. Later that year diplomatic relations were established with the United States. An important role in that development was played by Juan Carlos’ teacher, López Amo. In 1955, Spain was admitted into the United Nations.

With the acquisition of a small bank in 1955, the Opus Dei began to create an impressive financial network that in the short period between 1957 and 1973 turned Spain from a technically backward country into the ninth largest industrial power in the world. This entrance into the financial world was secured by the Opus Dei in 1946 when they began to gain increasing influence over financial and industrial layers through the state industrial holding, INI.

A cabinet reshuffle in 1957 brought the first two Opus Dei men into the government in the important ministries of finance and trade. Although still a minority within the cabinet, the ministers began to open up foreign markets and credits for Spain, including the Comecon countries. In the following years, the “Technocrats of God” — as they were called — took over every important ministry under the protection of Carrero Blanco, who came to be known as the regime’s “eminence grise.”

A “development plan to promote policies that would bring foreign exchange in order to purchase needed machinery” was drafted in 1957 with the “backing of the United States.” But international “liberals and leftists” forced the “United States to refuse further direct aid,” wrote Richard Herr in his *Modern Spain*. Spain was momentarily forced to impose a “stabilization” plan dictated by the International Monetary Fund. But not for long. An Office of Economic Planning and Coordination was created following the French model of economic development established by General de Gaulle, himself a member of the Opus Dei. De Gaulle’s top economist, Jacques Rueff, was “loaned” to Spain to help draft a development program and reorganize several planning, industrial, and economic institutions along French lines.

In 1962, another cabinet shakeup brought three more “technocrats” to the government and the development plan was launched. Six major Spanish banks influenced by Opus Dei bankers formed a consortium to procure foreign aid. The plan envisaged a six percent annual growth of the national product based on investments on the order of \$5.5 billion over a four year period. Easy credits were provided for industries that would move into seven “poles of development” in order to end the concentration of industry in the northern areas. Land was to be redistributed and, in some cases, small plots were to be grouped into larger holdings. Agriculture was to be mechanized. Projections were made for 75,000 hectares of new irrigated land per year. The program also allocated funds for the construction of hydroelectric plants. The program’s ambitious nuclear energy component has already turned Spain into an exporter of nuclear technology and know-how.

The year 1969 has been called the year of the “Opus Dei white coup.” A government reshuffle handed nearly all cabinet posts to Opus Dei or Opus Dei-linked men. That same year, Prince Juan Carlos was sworn in as King Juan Carlos I of Spain for the post-Franco period. By 1973 — when oil prices quadrupled — the annual rate of growth of Spain’s GNP was 7.6 percent, while industrial production was increasing at more than 11 percent annually, according to the French paper *Les Echos*. in the early 1950s.

The pro-British elements were not idle all this time. Destabilization attempts were kicked off simultaneously with the development plan. In 1962, one of the many plots to kill General de Gaulle was organized out of Spain in an attempt to wreck relations between the two nations. The Basque terrorist organization, ETA, was created with heavy input by ultraleft nationalist

priests, NATO agent Ernest Mandel's Fourth International "Trotskyist" organization, and part of the Carlist movement which had decided to "go left." A strong campaign against the "technocrats" was launched by the Falange, the Socialist and Communist parties, and the British Labour Party for attempting to "restore capitalism in Spain!" Actively participating in the campaign were the now die-hard opponents of the Suárez government: Manuel Fraga Iribarne and José María de Areilza, Count of Motrico. Both men were the British monarchy's preferences for becoming prime minister after Franco's death.

But Franco, gravely ill, contravened those wishes by appointing Carrero Blanco president of the government in early 1973. Six months later, the new prime minister was assassinated by an ETA commando. His assassination prompted a serious government crisis which was "resolved" with the appointment of Arias Navarro — the "minister of repression" — to the presidency. Prominent in Arias's government were Fraga Iribarne as ambassador to London, and the Count of Motrico as foreign minister, both of them posed as spokesmen of a "civilized right." (Carrero was assassinated less than 24 hours after he met with U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Carrero denied Kissinger permission to use Spanish military bases for transporting weapons to Israel during the 1973 Middle East war.)

With Franco's death two years later, Prime Minister Arias Navarro intended to keep the monarchy in the background, as it had been since 1969. Together with Areilza and Fraga, Arias's plans were to engage in a series of "reforms" that would give his regime a "civilized" face. His plans contradicted those of King Juan Carlos, who was not about to be the King of the regime, but, in his own words, the "King of all Spaniards." The two opposing views led to a government crisis in mid-1976. In an emergency meeting called by Arias to hand in his resignation, King Juan Carlos appointed Adolfo Suárez as the new prime minister. Suárez, who had been in the Carrero Blanco networks within the Franco regime, and is linked to Opus Dei, was unknown to many, but not to the pro-British oligarchy: Areilza and Fraga resigned from the government and have become Suárez's staunchest opponents. The political personality of Adolfo Suárez was best described by a former cabinet member: "As a colleague I used to tell him that he had something of a machiavellian... Politically, he has carried out extraordinary operations... Machiavelli said that the ability of provoking 'expectation' was one of Ferdinand the Catholic's best virtues. President Suárez has that virtue..." Under Suárez and key members of his cabinet also linked to Opus Dei, Spain has continued its march forward.

—*R.D. Cedeño and Antonio Juárez*

Basque ETA terrorists

The Spanish government's diplomacy on behalf of the EMS has been answered with a renewed wave of terrorism from the British intelligence controllers of the Basque separatist movement, ETA. The ETA group interfaces with British intelligence and NATO through "Trotskyist" networks associated with NATO's Ernest Mandel (German), and through the Carlist movement.

Six people have been killed since Jan. 1, the date originally marked for the European Monetary System to become operational. Among those murdered were General Constantino Ortín Gil, military governor of Madrid, and Supreme Court judge Miguel Cruz Cuenca.

Most of the ETA terrorism had been previously confined to the Basque region. The assassination of General Ortín and judge Cruz Cuenca opens a drive to create chaos in Spain on the Italian model and provoke the army into a coup.

Unable to prevent (via terrorism) the approval of a progressive constitution last December — due to the strong security measures taken by the Spanish government — the British have opted for destabilizing the country as it gears up for its general elections next March 1.

With the Constitution approved, President Suárez had the options of seeking a vote of confidence in Parliament or calling general elections. Although there was no question that Suárez would have won the vote of confidence, the President went on national television Dec. 29 to announce that rather than going into parliamentary alliances that could keep the government in constant blackmail, he would seek a clear "popular mandate" for the government policies.

The murder of General Ortín activated the Francoist-Falange networks inside and outside the military. Some 200 junior officers broke discipline at Ortín's burial, chanting slogans demanding the immediate resignation of President Adolfo Suárez and his Cabinet. They were joined by elements of the neofascist organization, Fuerza Nueva, and more discreetly, by Manuel Fraga Iribarne, spokesman of the so-called "civilized right" and the Spanish black nobility. Fraga — who carries a long time pedigree as an Anglophile and is in an electoral alliance with neofascist José María de Areilza, Count of Motrico — branded Suárez and his government as "incompetent" in dealing with terrorism.

King Juan Carlos and his Interior Minister Rodolfo Martín Villa immediately moved to make clear that the reaction of the junior officers did not express the sentiments of the government — and would not be tolerated. Dressed in full uniform as supreme chief of the military, King Juan Carlos gave a strongly worded speech (see box) condemning the "shameful spectacle" of undisciplined "soldiers who are not soldiers," adding the warning that in "no way can the terrorism of a few prevail over the desire for peace and freedom of a whole nation." The Interior Minister reported to the nation on the government's policy for dealing with terrorism (see box) warning that the government intends to put an end to ETA terrorism. This intention was underscored by Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja's trip to France aimed at securing French collaboration in dismantling ETA sanctuaries in