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Spain and a Weakened UCD: Downhill Toward an Election

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An Intelligence Assessment

State Dept. review completed

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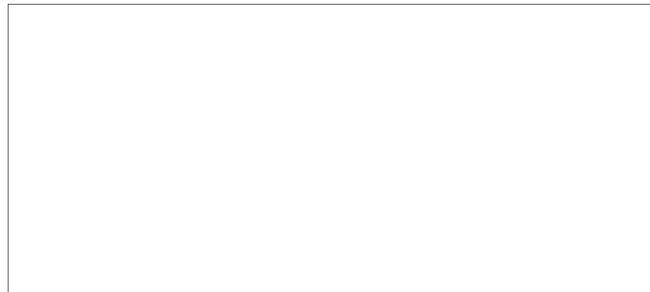
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The paper has been coordinated with the
Directorate of Operations and the National
Intelligence Council. 

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Key Judgments

The Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), the center-right party that has governed Spain throughout the transition to democracy, is showing increasing strain and is not likely to hold together. The UCD is weak partly because it is young and has never really achieved unity; partly because its left and right wings disagree on the social issues the government is only now beginning to address; and partly because its leaders have neglected development of the party base, preferring instead to rely on such traditional power centers as the Church, the military, and other vested interests. The party's poor showing in the Andalusian election in May will aggravate its problems.

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Former Prime Minister Suarez, who was a key figure in the formation of the UCD, is poised to play a decisive role in the future of the party. Since he lost control of its hierarchy late last year, Suarez has been considering formation of a new centrist party that could join a postelection coalition with either the left or the right.

The party, plagued by continuing weaknesses, may be forced to call an election before its mandate expires next March. It would have to compete against a Socialist Party that now leads in the polls. Despite party chief Felipe Gonzalez's persistent efforts to give the Socialists a moderate image, the conservative military, which has a long history of intervention in politics, remains extremely suspicious of the Socialists. Indications that the UCD was about to break up or stronger signs that the Socialists would win a general election would increase the chances of military intervention.

To banish that specter, increased pressure is being put on Prime Minister Calvo Sotelo to move toward a coalition with rightist parties, especially the Popular Alliance of Manuel Fraga Iribarne. A defection by Suarez would practically force Calvo Sotelo to move in that direction, because the Spanish electoral system tends to favor large parties. A UCD/AP coalition probably would be well bankrolled and could win a respectable vote total.

Information available as of 13 July 1982 has been used in the preparation of this report.

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If Suarez succeeds in retaking control of the UCD, he will probably reject a rightist coalition in favor of an eventual alliance with the Socialists. This, too, could split the party if its right wing finds an alignment with the moderate left unacceptable.

If the UCD becomes more conservative, some domestic policies would change, but foreign policies probably would not. The party would continue to espouse a European, Western outlook and stand behind NATO and European Community membership, as well as the bilateral treaty with the United States. Should Suarez increase his influence and the UCD ally itself with the Socialists, on the other hand, Spanish foreign policy would place more emphasis on good relations with Third World countries but would continue to pursue ties with Europe. Spain could become a less cooperative NATO member and would be more independent of Washington.

Whatever party or coalition of parties wins the next election, the outlook for Spain is for continued instability. Whether the government is Socialist or conservative, the political atmosphere will continue to be strained.

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The Transition:

From Franco to Democracy

Spain has avoided most of the purges and upheavals that often accompany the transition from dictatorship to democracy. This is largely a reflection of the continuity provided by the leaders of the transition, particularly King Juan Carlos and Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez. Although most of the transition leaders had been closely associated with the Franco regime, they quickly demonstrated they had no intention of defending the status quo.

As Spain's first post-Franco Prime Minister, Suarez had the monumental task of dismantling the old system and building the new. He did this with skill and style, even managing to convince the Franco-era Cortes to dissolve itself in favor of a new, democratically elected institution. Suarez led both his party—the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD)—and the government from 1976 to 1981, relying mainly on his forceful personality and the rewards of power and office that flowed from the party's electoral victories (see appendix A).

The King's role was, and still is, just as important as the prime minister's. As Franco's designated successor, Juan Carlos claims the loyalty of members of the old regime; as a staunch supporter of democratic institutions, he has won the loyalty of those—like the once-outlawed Socialists (PSOE) and Communists—who benefit from the new order; and as a commander in chief who works hard at maintaining close personal ties with the armed forces, he has been extremely important in promoting acceptance of democratic reforms within the ranks of the conservative military. A constitutional monarch, the King has had to balance the need to be more than a figurehead against the need to avoid overtly active participation in government. He shuns any appearance of politicking and plays a key behind-the-scenes role, working for the overall stability of Spain.



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The transition to democracy has been eased by the moderate and supportive role played by Spain's political parties, including the opposition Socialists and Communists.¹ Both of these parties took pains to

¹ For a further discussion of the opposition role during the transition, see John F. Coverdale, *The Political Transformation of Spain After Franco*, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1979, pp. 65 and 126. Another excellent source is Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1979, pp. 236, 239, 240.

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cooperate with Suarez's center-right government, helping it to promulgate a new constitution, adopt labor and economic reforms, and work out the methods for transforming Spain's highly centralized political system into one that permits a large degree of regional autonomy. This era of "consensus politics" contrasts sharply with the pre-Franco polarization that led to the civil war of 1936-39. In fact, the new penchant for compromise is based partly on the dark memories of that disastrous time. [redacted]

Even so, the avoidance of extremism in post-Franco Spain has not brought political tranquility. Expedience, political infighting, and sharp clashes on government policy are at least as common as in other West European parliamentary democracies, at times provoking the disdain of those Spaniards—particularly in the military—who cherish stability and order. Political tensions are heightened by economic recession and the persistence of terrorism, especially in the Basque region. [redacted]

As documented in the press [redacted] some of the fiercest and most freewheeling political battles occur inside the political parties. The Communists are fighting over the relative merits of internal democracy and democratic centralism, and to some extent over Eurocommunism as opposed to pro-Sovietism. The regional parties are divided internally over how hard they should push for greater autonomy. Even the Socialist Party is in danger of alienating its left wing as a result of efforts to move to the right and soothe the fears of conservative sectors in Spain. But because the UDC has been governing Spain since 1977, the squabbling among its members clearly has the greatest impact on the country. (See appendix B for biographical information on political figures.) [redacted]

Intense factionalism inside the UCD,² for example, has already led to 20 defections from the government's parliamentary ranks, thus reducing its plurality and its effectiveness. Further splits in the party would make it extremely difficult for the center-right to compete successfully against a unified Socialist Party in the next national election, which must be

² The UCD has fought over specific legislation (such as divorce), as well as party direction (centrist or rightist) and more petty concerns such as personal position. [redacted]

held by the spring of 1983 and is likely to take place this fall. A wide range of Embassy [redacted] reports indicate that many members of the political establishment believe a peaceful change of government will be the litmus test for Spanish democracy but that they worry that the military, with its history of political intervention, would not countenance Socialist rule. [redacted]

[redacted] we believe the breakup of the UCD would sharply increase the chances of military intervention [redacted]

The UCD Under Calvo Sotelo

Prime Minister Calvo Sotelo, inaugurated after Suarez resigned in January 1981, has had the unenviable job of trying to hold the UCD together while coping with the other problems of Spain. He had little or no base of support in the UCD and made no effort at first to take control of the party apparatus. [redacted]

Calvo Sotelo [redacted] has had to cope with worsening problems that threaten to break the UCD apart. The tenuous cohesion of the transition period has not withstood the challenges of social and economic problems that have accentuated the differences between the UCD's Christian Democrats on the right and its social democratic faction on the left. Personality conflicts and ambitions have added to the dissension. In fact, a key problem for Calvo Sotelo has been the continuing loyalty of the party organization—especially in the provinces—to Suarez. And Suarez has done his best to retain control that could provide a base for a comeback. [redacted]

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The Coup Attempt

Before the Cortes had even installed new Prime Minister Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo y Bustelo—Suarez's own nominee—an event occurred which has shadowed Spain ever since. On 23 February 1981, while the Cortes was meeting to vote on Calvo Sotelo's candidacy, a band of paramilitary Civil Guards headed by Lt. Col. Antonio Tejero Molina burst into the parliament building and briefly took it over. The bloodless coup attempt failed, largely because King Juan Carlos stood against it and persuaded wavering military leaders to back him. It ensured, however, that future governments will be especially mindful of any military unhappiness over the direction of Spanish democracy.

Disgruntlement with several aspects of democratic Spain—pornography, street crime, terrorism, economic decline, and the trend toward regionalism in particular—spawned the coup attempt. As widely respected writers on military affairs such as Julio Busquets have noted, the military establishment's focus on such issues reflects its traditional view of itself as a major arbiter of Spain's internal policies. When in its oath of allegiance it promises to defend the state, it sees this more readily as a defense against internal disruption than as a mission against outside aggressors.

Although the straightforward desire for power was undoubtedly a factor in the plotting, most of the ringleaders insisted at their trial that they acted out of patriotism and solely for the good of Spain. Tejero became a folk hero of the right almost immediately, entertaining visitors, giving interviews, and enjoying

kid-glove treatment in his prison quarters. Even when he was moved to a prison in far northwestern Spain, he continued to receive a steady stream of visitors lauding his effort to "save" the country.

During the year and a half since the coup attempt, the UCD leadership has taken steps to attend to some of the strongest military concerns and to reach agreements with the other political parties—particularly the Socialists—on other issues. The government has expanded the role of the military in the fight against terrorism; worked out a new economic agreement with employers and unions; and agreed with the Socialists on provisions of a new bill to "harmonize" the regional autonomy process. 25X1

The King joined the political parties in the campaign to assuage the concerns of the military. Although he had suffered some damage in his relationship with the military, particularly due to rumors that he first condoned and then betrayed the coup attempt, the King has worked hard to rebuild his rapport. In his speeches on military occasions he has encouraged the military to bring their frustrations to his attention at the same time he has enjoined them to maintain discipline. 25X1

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Late last year, with [redacted] intraparty tensions at an alltime high and defections from both wings weakening the UCD in Parliament, Calvo Sotelo pitted himself against Suarez for control of the party hierarchy—and won. The Secretary General and the President of the UCD—both Suarez cronies—resigned and were replaced with a Christian Democrat and by Calvo Sotelo himself, respectively. Suarez immediately resigned from the Executive Committee but announced that he would remain in the party. [redacted]

Party to share office with a party to its right should it win a plurality—or even a majority—in the next election.³ [redacted]

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Where Does the Electorate Stand?

There have been too few elections in post-Franco Spain to permit a confident estimate of the strengths and weaknesses of various parties and coalitions ranged across the political spectrum. So many elements are either new or in flux that electoral outcomes have yet to settle into any predictable pattern. [redacted]

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[redacted] Suarez had several reasons for not simply walking out. Still a young man (49), Suarez wanted to prepare an avenue for his eventual return to politics. Involved in a lucrative law practice, he thought a walkout would jeopardize some of his firm's cases. Most important, he was aware that his resignation the previous January was often blamed for precipitating the coup attempt and he hesitated to jeopardize the government's staying power. [redacted]

A study on party preferences done under a grant from the National Science Foundation a few months after the most recent general election in March 1979, however, gives some clues about the electorate. The profile of UCD voters that emerges is that they are religious or at least sympathetic to the Church, come from many classes of Spanish society, and usually think of themselves as centrists. Of the seven economic classes named in the study, the UCD drew its greatest support from a category labeled "owners, small businessmen, and independent artisans," who made up 17.6 percent of the party. Over half of all people in this category voted for the UCD. Of even more interest, however, is the percentage of small farmers—over 65 percent—that voted for the UCD.

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[redacted] He still holds open the option of leaving the party to form a centrist "hinge" party, capable of forming an alliance with either the UCD or the Socialists after the next general election. [redacted]

The electoral system is skewed slightly in favor of rural areas, so if the UCD can retain the allegiance of these farmers it should have an advantage when seats are distributed. [redacted]

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The concept of a hinge party is gaining popularity, and not just with Suarez's supporters. Liberals and social democrats openly state in the press that they too are tempted by this potential avenue to power. According to press discussion, the idea's attraction stems from several factors: belief that the bulk of the Spanish electorate stands in the center of the political spectrum; a perception that the UCD has been slowly shifting rightward and may leave a "vacuum" in the center; and the acknowledged desire of the Socialist

On a left-right continuum, the same study shows that over 50 percent of the respondents place themselves in the center and center left with another large group just to the left of them (see the figure). This seems to justify Suarez's early insistence on making the UCD

³ This intention by leaders of the Socialist Party has been reported repeatedly, [redacted] and is designed to assuage conservative power centers and to provide the moderate leadership with an excuse to its left wing for any failure to follow party platform positions. [redacted]

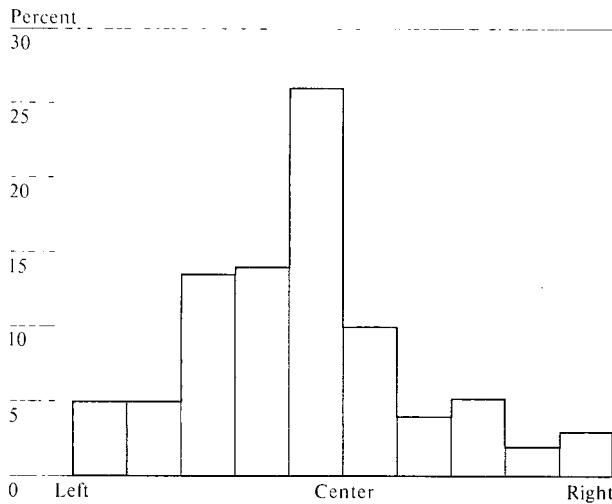
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Distribution of the Electorate on the Left-Right Continuum



Source: A study under a National Science Foundation grant authored by Richard Gunther, Giacomo Sani, and Goldie Shabad.

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“centrist” and Felipe Gonzalez’s strategy of dragging the Socialist Party rightward. Leaders to the right of center, however, such as Manuel Fraga of the Popular Alliance (AP) would appear by their statements to the press to believe there is a great untapped pool of more conservative sentiment which would provide support for a mass party of the right. Hence Fraga’s call for the UCD and the AP to coalesce into the so-called *gran derecha* (grand coalition of the right).

It is dangerous to read too much into Spanish polls, but recent surveys suggest continuation of the center/center-left tilt among the electorate since the cited study. The Socialist Party consistently outpolls the UCD, and the largest group of respondents continues to characterize itself as left of center. The polls may underestimate the size of the conservative vote, however, because the rural areas—which are most likely to be conservative—are those least likely to be polled.

Scenarios, or

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Can the Center Hold?

The UCD fabric, already fraying at the edges, has come closer to ripping apart since the Andalusian regional election in May. Although national leaders stumped the hustings frenetically for their regional colleagues, the UCD limped to a third-place finish behind Fraga’s Popular Alliance—which quadrupled the vote it won in 1979—while the Socialists swept to an unprecedented solid majority.

The results shocked the UCD.

internal squabbles erupted into public recriminations, which were followed by a defeatist attitude regarding the party’s future. With a national election less than a year away, the UCD publicly dithered over how to recoup, reorganize, and mold new alliances. One UCD leader even gave an interview proclaiming that the party would benefit from losing the general election and taking on opposition status.

We see three trends emerging so far from the turmoil.

A leading Christian Democrat told US Embassy officers that a large section of the party’s Christian Democratic wing, seeing the surprising gains of the right in Andalusia, is making plans to join Fraga’s Popular Alliance, probably in the late summer or early autumn. On the other hand,

Sotelo and many others in the UCD have apparently concluded that the party lost ground because it moved too far right and insist that they will move it back toward the center. And Suarez supporters, calling a strong, popular leader, have come out in the press for the return of the former Prime Minister to a position of power. For the short term, everyone is likely to make contingency plans but keep all options open.

We believe that the departure of a large part of the Christian Democratic faction is one of the strong possibilities. Even before Andalusia, the Embassy reported that some Christian Democrats were thinking of a move to the right and a coalition with Fraga. But whereas before 23 May these reports showed that

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most of them assumed that the UCD would be an equal if not the senior partner, their more recent plans concede Fraga a stronger hand. [redacted]

no financial aid to the UCD if it aligned itself with the Socialists. Financial circles would probably conclude that any return of Suarez to influence would mean a UCD-Socialist pact. [redacted]

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How Strong the Right?

Among informed political observers, estimates vary as to how well a coalition of moderate rightist parties could do in a general election. Even Oscar Alzaga, who plans to lead any Christian Democratic switch to Fraga's camp, told Embassy officers that he believes the Socialists will win easily next time. Fraga himself is more optimistic; [redacted]

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[redacted] he believes that without CEOE financial support the UCD will lose so many votes to the AP that he can come within range of the Socialists' seat count in the Cortes. But he stops short of predicting a rightist win. [redacted]

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In our view, the position of Calvo Sotelo looks increasingly shaky. His influence within the party has waned drastically in the aftermath of Andalusia, and he is only rarely mentioned in the press as someone expected to exercise real power in the months ahead. He was replaced by Landelino Lavilla as party president on 13 July and with only a small personal following and a demonstrated lack of voter appeal, Calvo Sotelo may be unable to maintain his position even in the government beyond the end of this legislative session. Paradoxically, however, his very weakness could keep him in place as a compromise among the various competing factions. [redacted]

Other parties of the moderate right are also sorting out their prospects. Antonio Garrigues Walker, organizer of the Spanish liberal movement, has said openly he intends to contest the next election with a party drawn from the much-publicized "clubs" he has been setting up around the country plus whatever liberals he can attract from the UCD. The moderate regional parties, such as the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and the Catalan Convergencia i Unio (CiU) are sure to be assiduously courted by both the UCD and Fraga. Maneuvering and negotiation will intensify as an election approaches, but there is no indication that a grand coalition of the right is in the making. [redacted]

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Another possible configuration revolves around the return of Suarez. This development would almost guarantee the departure of the party's right wing, which deplores his leftwing tendencies and authoritarian style. Even should Suarez restrict himself to being the power behind someone more acceptable to these Christian Democrats—Lavilla, for instance—it seems unlikely that they would be fooled by this ploy. What the UCD would then become, in effect, is the centrist "hinge" party that Suarez had already planned to form. Party strength could decrease dramatically, but this rump UCD would still be in a position to stay in power by putting together a postelection coalition with the Socialists or, less likely, the right. [redacted]

That situation could change by autumn as pressures build to combat the advancing Socialist tide. The business community, the military, the Church, and even King Juan Carlos will probably be adding their combined influence toward the forging of a conservative electoral pact. [redacted]

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A *suarista* party, however, would face serious problems trying to finance a successful election campaign. The UCD has depended heavily on donations from business circles in the past, but these sources have come to distrust Suarez. The Spanish Confederation of Businessmen (CEOE), besides ostentatiously bankrolling the AP in the runup to the Andalusian regional election, has [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] A preelection coalition is especially

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[redacted] let it be known that it would provide

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tempting because of the Spanish electoral system. A party with 30 percent of the vote wins more seats than two parties with 15 percent each, reflecting a bias built in to discourage the proliferation of small parties. [redacted]

It is impossible to predict the electoral appeal of such a rightist coalition. One prominent American political scientist told US officials that he saw no signs of much depth in the rightist gains in Andalusia, since most of the electorate still considers itself centrist. He explained Fraga's success as a rejection of cynical maneuverings within the UCD rather than as a swing to the right. Nevertheless, there appears to be a sizable portion of the center-leaning electorate that will vote for the party of the moderate right that looked most viable no matter how mild the brand of socialism being espoused by Gonzalez and his colleagues. [redacted]

Significance for the West

Spain has already traveled a long way from the authoritarian era of Franco. Its outlook has become European, Atlantic, and democratic, and we believe most Spaniards want to continue on this path. But we think, too, that Spain has not yet achieved the kind of stability that ensures a peaceful change of government in the event influential groups, particularly the military, see some danger in the change. [redacted]

[redacted] most military men still see the Socialists as the enemy of the civil war period. Even if the military does not act [redacted]

[redacted] the climate in Spain would probably be so marked by suspicion and countersuspicion, rumor and counterrumor, that a Socialist government would find it difficult to provide stability. A Socialist coalition with a Suarez-led UCD to its right would be little better, in the military's view. The much less likely option of a wider coalition between the PSOE and parties to the right of center might be somewhat more palatable to the military. Such a coalition would have great difficulty working out a cohesive program, however, despite the recent history of consensus governance in Spain. [redacted]

A government with Socialist participation would pose difficulties in the NATO arena. Although the Socialists have backed off from their earlier public statements about pulling Spain out of NATO, we believe they probably would be less cooperative and more demanding with the United States than a conservative government. Attitudes toward the Third World and the Arab world are sure to diverge from those of the United States as well, although we believe Spain would continue to move toward closer cooperation with its European partners, particularly once it has entered the European Community. [redacted]

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Should the UCD retain a governing role in coalition with conservative parties, we believe foreign policy differences with Washington would be less evident. More important, a continuation of conservative government in Spain would allow time for the military to evolve into a more outward-looking, modern force, less inclined to interfere in the political process. The UCD left wing would probably leave rather than ally with Fraga, however, thereby weakening UCD clout within the coalition. If no one party were able to dominate, a rightist coalition would face inevitable struggles for power and position among the various factions—that is, a reprise of recent UCD history. [redacted]

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We believe the most likely prospect for Spain thus becomes a choice of two types of instability—on the one hand, a relatively cohesive, moderate, Socialist-led government rendered fragile by the uncertainties of military and other conservative reaction; on the other, a government led by a coalition of moderate rightist parties of questionable cohesion. Either scenario would involve severe economic and social problems that would aggravate the difficulties of governing. Of the two choices to win the election, we now believe a Socialist coalition the more likely. Even though the Socialists have worked for consensus while in opposition, there are disturbing signs in the press and elsewhere that the conservative parties might not reciprocate if they take on opposition status. Such a polarization could only add to the tensions within Spain and increase the levels of military restiveness in the coming months. [redacted]

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Appendix A:

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The Union of the Democratic
Center Under Suarez []

In 1977, Spain held the first free national election since the beginning of the Franco dictatorship nearly 40 years earlier. Franco had forbidden even his own supporters to form political parties, and as a result only underground parties had developed any kind of organization. The National Movement had been the only recognized political organization in Franco Spain, but it was not a political party in the usual sense. The Movement had no formal ideology and represented a cross section of those willing to work within the regime. The year after Franco's death saw the demise of the National Movement and the appearance of numerous centrist and conservative parties—many of them created by regime leaders jockeying for position. None of these parties enjoyed any broad-based support. []

To avoid splintering the moderate vote, 15 center and center-right parties patched together an electoral alliance—the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD)—during the runup to the June 1977 parliamentary election. Adolfo Suarez, the dynamic and charismatic Prime Minister who had been appointed by King Juan Carlos in 1976, agreed to run as the head of the party. The alliance succeeded in winning a plurality of the seats (165 of 350) in the new Cortes. Shortly thereafter, Suarez insisted that the individual parties within the UCD formally shed their identities and unify as a single party. []

Two aspects of the UCD's formative period were keys to what has gone wrong with the party. First, the UCD was troubled from the beginning by internal divisions drawn largely along the lines of the original party orientations—either liberal, Christian Democratic, social democratic, or independent—with subdivisions grouped around prominent personalities, otherwise known as the party “barons.” Given the lack of consensus, Suarez, the acknowledged leader of the party, used his power to force party policies in the direction he favored. This created further tension because his inclination was to push the party toward the center-left on some issues, even though the UCD

had emerged from the election with a popular image as the representative of the moderate center-right. The more conservative elements complained, but they decided to go along, given the overriding need to move Spain toward democracy and their personal desire to remain in office. []

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The second key feature of the young UCD was the absence of party machinery. Gradually a party apparatus did come into being, but in reverse order from the usual procedure. Thus, the UCD began by winning power and then built downward to form local committees, a membership base, and the other accoutrements of a modern political party. Progress was erratic, however, and depended to a great degree on whether Suarez devoted time to the organizational process—and Suarez was concerned mainly with the effort to achieve consensus on a new constitution. Moreover, we think that Suarez and his close advisers, whose outlook had been formed during the Franco regime, probably did not fully appreciate the need for a well-developed party infrastructure, preferring instead to depend on the government ministries as sources of power. While it neglected grass-roots affairs, the UCD did keep its lines open to power centers such as the Church, the Employer's Federation, and the elite landholding classes.⁵ []

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By the time of the first UCD congress in October 1978, Suarez, apparently recognizing the need for an improved party structure, had expanded the Executive

⁵ Some scholars go so far as to argue that all parties and party systems in post-Franco Spain were created as a concession to foreigners—that is, that the parties are merely synthetic creations designed to satisfy the conditions for US aid and entry into NATO and the European Community, while the real focus of power still lies elsewhere. See *Western European Party Systems* edited by Peter H. Merkl, New York, 1980, pp. 298-328, Howard J. Wiarda, “Spain and Portugal” for a further analysis of this view. Wiarda acknowledges that there is some truth to the argument but makes a convincing case that Spain has a dual system of political power and authority: new institutions such as the parties, Parliament, and an electoral system maintain an uneasy balance with traditional institutions including the army, the state structure, and a variety of vested interests. []

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Committee and given the secretary for organization the additional title of "coordinator." The congress provided some structure by approving statutes and what Secretary General Rafael Arias Salgado called "a catalogue of principles," but it failed even to try to draw up a detailed program. [redacted]

Instead, Suarez was at pains to emphasize that the UCD intended to attract support from a broad political spectrum between the Marxist left and the authoritarian right. The party defined itself as an organization that aimed at harmonizing the disparate claims of different socioeconomic classes and regional groups. It gave particular emphasis to the security of society through maintenance of public order and the struggle against terrorism, and its spokesmen talked vaguely about achieving "social efficiency" through a mixed free market economy. [redacted]

The party articulated its foreign and defense policies more clearly, declaring Spain's basic foreign policy option to be "European, Western, and democratic." The UCD aspired to NATO entry, integration into the European Community, and an active presence in the Council of Europe. Its program gave high priority to relations with Portugal, Latin America, and the Mediterranean basin, and even allowed for the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel provided the government decided this was in the Spanish national interest. [redacted]

To demonstrate independence of the United States, the UCD criticized the defense agreement with this country as "marred" by the weakness of the previous Spanish regime (Franco) on the one hand and by "a mercantilist view of renting" on the other. At the same time, the party called for increased emphasis on trade, cultural, and scientific/technological relations with the United States. UCD policy was closely attuned to the Suarez government's program. [redacted]

Another Election

By December 1978, the Prime Minister had negotiated a new democratic constitution with the other political parties and had seen it approved by a referendum. Suarez was up in the polls again, and he used the excuse of the new constitution to call an early election to "ratify" the UCD's continued leadership. Suarez's gambit succeeded; the election in March 1979 gave the UCD almost the same plurality it had enjoyed two years earlier—168 out of 350 seats—and Suarez again became Prime Minister. [redacted]

But internal struggles over perquisites and policy continued to weaken the UCD and divert it from problems such as terrorism, the economy, the regional autonomy question, and military unrest. By March 1980, for the first time since Suarez became Prime Minister, a public opinion poll showed that more people disapproved of his performance than approved. Press and Embassy reporting indicated that UCD leaders, King Juan Carlos, and the military all were critical of the government's performance as 1980 drew on. Suarez [redacted] now felt besieged and unsure of his ability to control the party. He met with the King on 29 January 1981 and resigned as prime minister, saying that he had lost his moral authority with the Spanish people. [redacted]

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Fernando ABRIL Martorell
Deputy, Cortes

Fernando Abril Martorell, 45, was once widely regarded in Spain as the second most powerful member of the government and of the UCD. The key to his influence was his longstanding personal friendship with Suarez. Martorell served in a variety of posts in governments headed by Suarez and was assigned to handle matters that were of personal interest to Suarez. As Suarez became more unpopular with UCD "barons," we believe Abril was targeted for removal from the Cabinet as a first step toward attacking Suarez. Abril left the government in September 1980, but he still belongs to the party's Executive Committee. As reported by the press, his behavior in the Executive Committee meeting following the regional election in Andalusia indicates that he may no longer be the Suarez booster he once was.

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Camera Press ©

Jose Luis ALVAREZ Alvarez
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food

Jose Luis Alvarez Alvarez, 52, is the only prominent Christian Democrat in the Cabinet. He is a leading conservative spokesman who, according to US Embassy officials, believes in free enterprise and a humanistic variety of Christian Democracy. A former law professor and a highly respected notary, Alvarez helped to organize the Popular Party (the nucleus of the UCD) in 1976 and is widely regarded as the architect of the UCD's electoral success in the 1977 election. Alvarez has a reputation for being decent and hard working, and US officials in Madrid have said he may be too good natured for the rough and tumble of politics. According to press reports, Alvarez does not belong to the secessionist wing of the UCD Christian Democrats and has expressed his support for Calvo Sotelo since the Andalusian election debacle. Nevertheless, according to press reports he tends toward an electoral coalition with the Popular Alliance.

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Fernando ALVAREZ de Miranda
Deputy, Cortes

One of the most respected figures among the Christian Democrats in the UCD, Fernando Alvarez de Miranda, 58, is an attractive personality who is well liked by his UCD colleagues, according to Embassy reports. As president of the Popular Christian Democrat Party in the early post-Franco years, he ultimately was the force behind uniting the various factions of the Christian Democrats with the UCD. In mid-1981 he joined with others in that faction to form a "moderate platform," a "group within a group" that tried to influence Calvo Sotelo toward more conservative policies. US Embassy officials regard him as generally conservative, but he has made statements that transcend the ideological spectrum.

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Tempo ©

Oscar ALZAGA Villamil
Deputy, Cortes

One of the Young Turks (at age 39) of the UCD, Oscar Alzaga Villamil, has become increasingly critical of the party apparatus, which he feels is too much under the control of the followers of Suarez. He has told US Embassy officials that he sees a UCD/AP pact as the only chance for thwarting a Socialist victory in the next general election and has already made plans to lead the Christian Democrats into such a coalition if the UCD will not swing to the right. Alzaga has always been extremely outspoken and candid in his criticisms of how the party is run, and there is considerable press speculation about his intentions and the number of deputies he could take with him if he were to leave the UCD. Alzaga accepted an appointment as adviser to Calvo Sotelo in December 1981 but [redacted]

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[redacted] thinks his government is "ineffective." Embassy reporting indicates that Alzaga is pessimistic by nature, is an acute observer of the political scene, and has excellent contacts with the Church. He was one of the party leaders who worked for Suarez's resignation last year, and the two dislike one another intensely. [redacted]

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The Diplomatic Yearbook ©

Rafael ARIAS-SALGADO y Montalvo
Minister of Territorial Administration

Rafael Arias-Salgado y Montalvo, one of the bright young men (age 40) of the UCD, served as party secretary general from 1978 to 1980. He flirted with Christian Democratic politics in the mid-1970s before helping Francisco Jose Fernandez-Ordonez found the Social Democratic Party, which became part of the UCD. Salgado gravitated to the team of Adolfo Suarez and became a protege of former Economics Minister Fernando Abril Martorell. He is still in the social democratic wing of the UCD and is counted as a Suarez loyalist. [redacted]

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Franz Furst ©

Pio CABANILLAS Gallas
Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development

Lawyer, author, and professor, Pio Cabanillas Gallas, 58, was a firm supporter of former Prime Minister Suarez during the early post-Franco years and probably still pays him some allegiance. He has also been close to Calvo Sotelo. Cabanillas is regarded as a UCD "baron," but his power base is Galicia and his influence diminished after the UCD did poorly in the regional election last year in Galicia. Although he has past ties to Manuel Fraga, [redacted] Cabanillas has recently expressed doubts about the wisdom of a UCD/AP alliance. [redacted]

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Camera Press ©

Leopoldo CALVO SOTELO y Bustelo
President of the Government (Prime Minister)

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A former businessman, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, 57, advised Suarez during the creation and formation of the UCD. Although slightly to the right of Suarez, Calvo Sotelo is basically a nonideological moderate with no identifiable power base within the party. [redacted]

Calvo Sotelo dislikes political infighting and has tried to remain above the fray during the party bickering that has plagued the UCD since before he became Prime Minister in February 1981. Suarez personally chose Calvo Sotelo as his successor, probably in the expectation that he could manipulate the new Prime Minister, but the two have become estranged as each jockeyed for power within the party. Calvo Sotelo tends to stand pat and appear calm in the midst of turmoil, a trait that has alternately been described in the Spanish press as "inward tranquility" and "paralysis." Such aloof behavior successfully reduced the tensions of the postcoup months last year and won the Prime Minister high praise. The same behavior has been inadequate to deal with party dissension since the regional election debacle in Andalusia this May. [redacted]

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Actualidad Economica ©

Francisco Jose FERNANDEZ-ORDONEZ
Leader, Democratic Action

Francisco Jose Fernandez-Ordonez, 52, was regarded as the leader of the leftwing social democratic faction of the UCD until he left in November 1981 to form a new party, Democratic Action. He refers to himself as either a "social democrat" or a "left liberal." His decision to leave the UCD came after a long history of widely publicized struggle against Suarez's control of the party and criticism of what Fernandez-Ordonez characterized as the increasingly rightward shift of the party. [redacted]

he has garnered the support of only a handful of senators and Cortes members for Democratic Action. He has good contacts with the PSOE, and the program he favors—tax reform and modernizing the public sector while reducing government subsidies to the private sector—would place him ideologically on the UCD left or the PSOE right. For now he is sticking with his independent course, but his viable alternatives seem to be to seek closer ties (or even integration) with PSOE or to ally with other leftwing dropouts from the UCD. [redacted]

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Manuel FRAGA Iribarne
President, Popular Alliance Party

Former diplomat, law professor, and author Manuel Fraga Iribarne, 59, leads the basically conservative reformist Popular Alliance Party (AP). In 1979 the AP received less than 5 percent of the vote and, together with its allies in the Democratic Coalition (CD), had only nine seats in the Cortes. Recent UCD defections have increased its parliamentary faction, and both the success the AP has enjoyed in regional elections—in particular Galicia last fall and Andalusia this May—and recent opinion polls indicate that it will become one of the major parties of the right following the next general election. [redacted]

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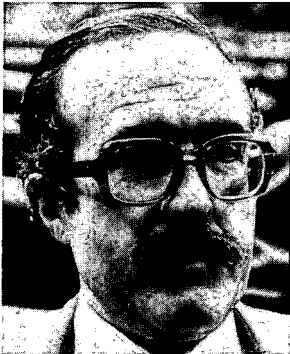
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[redacted] he is acknowledged to be one of the most brilliant politicians in Spain. Fraga was part of the first post-Franco government but left in a huff because he was not selected to be prime minister. It was then that he founded the AP and began his maneuvers to return to power. [redacted]

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Camera Press ©

Juan Antonio GARCIA DIEZ
Second Vice President for Economic Affairs

Juan Antonio Garcia Diez, 41, is a member of the left wing of the UCD and considered loyal to Calvo Sotelo. Garcia Diez was Minister of Commerce and Tourism in the first UCD government. He is credited with lifting many of the protectionist restrictions on trade and opening Spain up to foreign trade and investment. He is now the third-ranking member of the government—Minister of Economy and Commerce—and, because of his falling out with Suarez crony Fernando Abril Martorell, we believe that he might be in favor of a UCD alliance with the Popular Alliance. [redacted]

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Actualidad Economica ©

Antonio GARRIGUES (gahREEGeez) Walker
Director, J. and A. Garrigues (since about 1972)

Antonio Garrigues Walker, a prominent international lawyer and financier, is well connected to the Union of the Democratic Center but is a member neither of the UCD nor of the Cortes. His political power base consists of a network of more than 50 regional liberal clubs, which he formed in 1981 and which are now a growing political force in Spain. Garrigues's political ideas center on a belief in Christian Democracy and a "moderate socialist" economy emphasizing free enterprise but allowing for state control of certain basic industries. He sees his movement as centrist and, according to the press, intends to convert it into an independent political party capable of allying with either the UCD or the *Alianza Popular*. Garrigues is adept at using the press to keep himself in the public eye, an ability which has greatly helped the development of his liberal clubs. [redacted]

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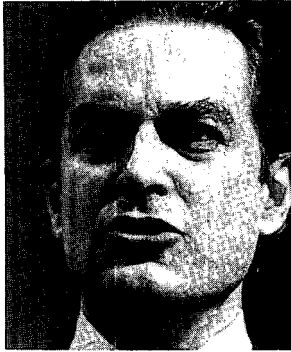
Miguel HERRERO Rodriguez de Minon
Deputy, Cortes

Miguel Herrero Rodriguez de Minon, 41, was one of the drafters of the Spanish Constitution. Once a parliamentary spokesman for the UCD, Herrero belonged to the conservative Christian Democratic faction of the party. An outspoken public critic of the UCD leadership, he became the moving spirit and one of the leaders of the "moderate platform" within the UCD whose purpose was to try to influence party attitudes toward the right. In January 1982 Herrero left the UCD to join the Popular Alliance, and because of the high esteem that others have for him, he could become a magnet for other dissatisfied UCD deputies. [redacted]

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Liaison ©

Landelino LAVILLA Alsina

*President, Cortes
President, UCD*

Landelino Lavilla Alsina, 47, a leader of the moderate Christian Democratic faction of the UCD became president of the UCD in July 1982. Lavilla was once a close ally of Suarez, but he was shouldered aside by former Economics Minister Fernando Abril Martorell. He eventually became a leader of the "criticos" in the party who fought to unseat Suarez and were one factor in his resignation.

According to the press, he is now close to Calvo Sotelo. An elegant, suave, friendly man, Lavilla has been criticized within the Christian Democratic faction for being [redacted] too much under the influence of his wife. [redacted]

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Camera Press ©

Rodolfo MARTIN VILLA

First Vice President for Political Affairs

A "baron" of the UCD and a very influential man among the party independents, Rodolfo Martin Villa, 48, earned his political stripes in the National Movement. During the post-Franco transition, he founded the progressive Francoist Independent Social Front, which eventually joined the UCD. Once a major source of Suarez's support within the party, Martin Villa switched camps and ensured Calvo Sotelo's takeover of the party hierarchy from Suarez late last year. He may now be edging toward support of a Suarez comeback. Martin Villa has evinced no interest in becoming the leader of the party himself, but will probably continue to play an influential role in determining the direction the party will take. [redacted]

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Liaison ©

Aldolfo SUAREZ Gonzalez

Deputy, Cortes

Adolfo Suarez Gonzalez, 49, was a virtual unknown when King Juan Carlos selected him to serve as Prime Minister in July 1976 and to orchestrate Spain's transition from dictatorship to democracy. In the next four and a half years he 25X1 formed a political party, won two elections, and promulgated a new constitution while working to lead Spain out of the isolation it had suffered in the Franco era. By 1980, however, his mishandling of the regional autonomy issue, the growth of 25X1 terrorism, the sagging economy, and his [redacted] decisionmaking style undermined his personal popularity and led to his eventual resignation in January 1981. He maintained control of much of the UCD apparatus, however, especially at the provincial level, and now intends to make a run to regain control of the party hierarchy. Suarez stands to the left of most of the party but [redacted]

[redacted] has been negotiating to keep the right wing from defecting. [redacted]

[redacted] Suarez can be very persuasive when dealing with individuals but has trouble being so convincing with groups. [redacted]

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Suarez does not appear to be firmly wed to any political philosophy, ideology, or concrete set of ideas, but he is a political infighter par excellence. [Redacted]

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