

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: MEMORY AND RECONCILIATION IN THE
SPANISH TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY:
1975-1982

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This thesis examines the Spanish transition to democracy from 1975 to 1982. It is an analysis of important political leaders of Spain and important political parties. The research questions are why after the death of the dictator Francisco Franco's did Spain become a constitutional monarchy? How did the political leaders work together towards a consensus to democratic transition without causing another civil war? I analyze three things: political amnesty of prisoners and exiles, the creation and ratification of the 1978 Constitution, and the rise and success of the Spanish Socialist Party. Ultimately, the political leaders worked together and had a policy of reconciliation to move towards a democratic nation.

MEMORY AND RECONCILIATION IN THE SPANISH TRANSITION TO
DEMOCRACY: 1975-1982

by

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List of Abbreviations

AP:	<i>Alianza Popular</i> or Popular Alliance
CCOO	<i>Comisiones Obreras</i> or the Workers Commission partnered with the Communist Party
CEOE	<i>Confederacion Española de Organizaciones Empresariales</i> or Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations
ETA:	<i>Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna</i> or Basque Homeland and Freedom
GRAPO:	<i>Grupos de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre</i> or Antifascist Resistance Groups First of October
PCE:	<i>Partido Comunista de España</i> or The Spanish Communist Party
PNV:	The Basque Nationalist Party
PSOE:	<i>Partido Socialista Obrero Español</i> or The Spanish Socialist Party
UCD:	<i>Unión de Centro Democrático</i> or the Democratic Center Party
UGT	<i>Unión General de Trabajadores</i> or the General Union of Workers partnered with the Socialist Party

Introduction

This thesis examines the history of the Spanish transition to democracy that began on November 20, 1975 after the death of Francisco Franco and ended with the 1982 elections. It describes the history of compromise that made possible the transition away from authoritarian rule without major political turmoil. The Franco dictatorship existed for 39 years from 1936 until his death in 1975. The political leaders of the democratic left and right sought a consensus over the tragic past of Spain dating back to the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). The following pages describe the key decisions made by political leaders during the Spanish transition.

In its history, Spain has had failed attempts of a democracy. This transition succeeded because political leaders understood the past and learned from the 1930s when the Second Republic existed (1931-36). While the transition was not completely peaceful, the Spanish leaders on the left and the right were able to negotiate over freedom, political amnesty, and the 1978 Constitution. During the first years of the transition, Spain went through long and difficult negotiations over political amnesty of political prisoners and the 1978 Constitution. However, the democratic transition would not have been as successful as it was without the decisions made by King Juan Carlos, the resignation of Carlos Arias Navarro (Franco's last Prime Minister), and the leadership of Adolfo Suárez as a reformer. Suárez became prime minister¹ with support from the King on July 3, 1977

¹ In Spanish, the word used in my Spanish sources and translations is *presidente* (president). However, I also use Prime Minister for most of my thesis. Both terms are use interchangeably.

until he resigned on January 29, 1981. The transition's first three years had major success in transforming Spain into a democracy. Since Franco's death, it took almost 3 years for Spain to have its first democratic elections in June 1977 and to approve a new constitution in December 1978.² Suárez and other leaders of the new UCD party (the Democratic Center Party), needed to include all parties on both sides for the transition to succeed. Despite the violence from ETA (*Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna* or Basque Homeland and Freedom), GRAPO³ and a failed coup d'état in 1981, the Spanish transition succeeded.

The sharp divide amongst Spaniards inside and outside Spain showcased the difficulties of the transitional period to democracy. The responses made by the left and the right provided historians and political scientists' key analytical questions. How did Spaniards after Franco's death lead to a consensus amongst the political leaders on both sides? Why did men such as Adolfo Suárez and King Juan Carlos support amnesty? Why did they reinstate the opposition political parties such as the PSOE (the Spanish Socialist Party) and the PCE (the Spanish Communist Party)? How did Spanish leaders become influenced by the memories of the Second Republic and the Spanish Civil War during the transition? What is the Spanish model and how did that model successfully push forward peaceful democratic elections and lead to the rebirth and success of the PSOE in 1982? Lastly, what were the consequences of the transition to democracy in Spain?

² Pamela Beth Radcliff, *Making Democratic Citizens in Spain: Civil Society and Popular Origins of the Transition, 1960-78* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 1.

³ ETA is a Basque terrorist organization. GRAPO stands for *Grupos de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre* (Antifascist Resistance Groups First of October). They are a leftist terrorist organization.

The evidence on which this thesis rests includes the following sources: the Cortes (Spanish parliament) records post 1977, newspapers, magazines, and publications by party leaders. These newspapers and magazines include: *El País*, *ABC*, *El Socialista* (the Socialist Party newspaper), *Mundo Obrero* (the Communist Party newspaper), the *New York Times*, *Diario 16*, and *Ya* (a Catholic newspaper published in Spain). Furthermore, I analyze the reports from the United States embassy in Madrid to the U.S. State Department during the President Gerald Ford and the Jimmy Carter Administrations. While this thesis is about events in Spain and Spanish political leaders, the U.S. Embassy in Madrid had reports of significant during the transition. The U.S. State Department Central Files from the National Archives provides diplomatic statements and concerns over the amnesty debates in 1976 and 1977, specifically about the legalization of the Communist Party. While American diplomatic sources focused on Spain and NATO, these documents have vital information on the Spanish transition. One of the significant aspects of this thesis is the emergence of the free press after Franco's death. Magazines such as *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* (Notebooks for Dialogue) and *Cambio 16* (Change 16) became more comfortable writing critically about the Franco regime. *El País* was born after Franco's death and became a significant source during the transition. These sources are central for the study of Modern Spanish history.

The Constitutional debates in the Spanish parliament contained leaders of the major political parties, except for the Basques, and their arguments about the creation of the Spanish Constitution. These debates have speeches from each major party of Spain during the parliamentary debates in the Congress of Deputies and the Senate. These debates, along with the 1978 Constitution, provides significant information about how

these politicians compromised. Leaders of the Socialist Party wrote a significant amount of publications from 1975 to 1982 about the goals of the party and the debates about Marxism in a post-Franco Spain. For example, Felipe González was the Secretary General of the Spanish Socialist Party. In an essay, González wrote, “How was this unusual transition possible? To the personal and authoritarian regime there has been a monarchy that tries to institutionally connect to the demands of freedom and democracy of the people, facilitating in the political superstructure the precise adjustments demanded by broad popular sectors.”⁴ The monarchy was King Juan Carlos and he proved to support the people’s demands for democracy.

In Chapter One, I examine political reform and political amnesty of prisoners and exiles before and during the presidency of Adolfo Suárez, specifically the restoration of the PSOE and the PCE in Spain as official political parties. Under Suárez’s leadership, the Law for Political Reform of 1976 and the Amnesty Law of 1977 passed, which allowed opposition parties to reengage in political activity. However, it was through political amnesty that the memory of the war and Francoism pacified Franco’s former opponents. Suárez’s leadership led to the successful negotiations of the Moncloa Pacts,⁵ amnesty, and the elections of 1977. In Chapter Two, I describe the history and political discussions of the Spanish Constitution of 1978. A key question of this chapter is why did decentralization and regional autonomy become a major factor on the drafting of the 1978 Constitution? Political leaders of the major parties, minus the Basques, played a role in the drafting and successful ratification of the 1978 Constitution. Furthermore, both

⁴ Felipe González, *España y su futuro* (Madrid: *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, 1978), p. 25.

⁵ The Moncloa Pacts was a political compromise over the Spanish economy led by Adolfo Suárez inside the presidential home in October 25, 1977.

the press and the politicians brought up the comparisons to the memory of the failures and tragedies of the Second Republic. Chapter Three analyzes the consolidation of the Constitutional Monarchy and the rise of the Socialist Party from 1979 to 1982. In this chapter I analyze internal debates within the Socialist Party over the term Marxism. The PSOE's victory in 1982 represented the progress made in a democratic Spain. I conclude with a reevaluation of the significance of this transition and how the American diplomatic sources provide key evidence to Modern Spanish history.

The Spanish Model

Historians and political scientists analyzed the Spanish model as an achievement in what the American political scientist Samuel Huntington calls “the third wave of democratization.”⁶ In this period of the late twentieth century, Huntington lists the beginning of the third wave in Southern Europe which specifically included Greece, Portugal, and Spain.⁷ This wave would later include Latin America, East Asia and Eastern Europe during the collapse of Communism.⁸ Thus, Spain became the blueprint that took a different path towards democracy. For example, the political scientist Richard Gunther argued, “Spain’s transition to democracy is widely regarded as having been extremely successful. In a country completely lacking a tradition of stable democratic governance, it culminated in the establishment of a consolidated democracy that has taken its place within the mainstream of Western democratic systems.”⁹ The Second

⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 21.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21-26.

⁹ Richard Gunther, “The Spanish Model Revisited,” ed. Gregorio Alonso and Diego Muro, *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), p.17.

Republic only lasted from 1931 to 1936 before the Spanish Civil War but the transition proved that Spain could create a democratic state.

Gunther specified that this model is also known as the “pacted” transition.¹⁰ Part of the praise of this model were Spain’s unique circumstances in the 1970s. Franco had been dictator for almost forty years and the state had eased up on restrictions starting in the 1960s. For example, Pío Moa, a historian, argued, “After 1959, the regime changed its political economy by liberalizing it. Franco, reluctant at first, accepted advice from his experts, with spectacular results.”¹¹ Franco listened to his advisors and reformed the Spanish economy. The historian Nigel Townson argues the significance of the Late Franco era in the 1960s and 70s and that the period before the transition had the start of socio-economic and cultural changes in Spain.¹² The foundations of the transition began with small but significant changes in Spain.

King Juan Carlos’s actions had significance in the transition to democracy. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan claimed that Spain was unique because of Franco’s decision to install a monarchy and that the King was the pilot of change in Spain once Franco died.¹³ The King became a unique head of state as the successor of an authoritarian dictator. Furthermore, Gunther added, “The king earned his reputation as *el piloto del cambio*...by dismissing the reactionary Arias Navarro as prime minister and replacing him with Adolfo Suárez in July 1976, thereby setting in motion the democratization process.”¹⁴

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Pío Moa, *Los mitos de la Guerra Civil* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, S.L., 2003), p. 520.

¹² Nigel Townson, “Introduction,” in *Spain Transformed: The Late Franco Dictatorship, 1959-75*, ed. Nigel Townson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.2

¹³ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: John’s Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.89.

¹⁴ Gunther, “The Spanish Model Revisited,” p. 23.

The Spanish model had assistance by Franco's heir because the King did not continue the authoritarian nature of the Francoist regime.

The political scientist Jonathan Hopkin had an alternate view on the Spanish model's success and legacy within Spain. He stated that, "Despite the predominant role played by negotiation and consensus in the process of regime change, by the early 1980s the new political system had developed the key characteristics of a majoritarian democracy."¹⁵ Hopkin analyzed the significance of pacts amongst political leaders for the success of the Spanish transition.¹⁶ The Spanish transition was a competitive battle between the UCD, PSOE, and the PCE. Nevertheless, the Spanish model's strategy for a democratic ending has had praise from many historians and political scientists as the solution to the multiple divisions in Spain.

Debates over Franco's Legacy

Franco died on November 20, 1975 and the following day his funeral brought about divided opinions on his legacy by the press. The Spanish conservative and monarchist newspaper *ABC*¹⁷ covered the life and death of Franco on the day after he died.¹⁸ In the article, the Spanish conservative writer and politician Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora argued, "...Franco was the most important head of state Spain ever had...He

¹⁵ Jonathan Hopkin, "From Consensus to Competition: The Changing Nature of Democracy in the Spanish Transition," in *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, ed., Sebastian Balfour (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2005), p. 6.

¹⁶ Hopkin, "From Consensus to Competition: The Changing Nature of Democracy in the Spanish Transition," p. 7.

¹⁷ In his "Index of Periodicals" from his work, *The Autobiography of Federico Sanchez*, Jorge Semprum labeled *ABC* as the newspaper of the "extreme monarchist right." Today it is the Spanish conservative newspaper that is one of the most popular newspapers in Spain. Jorge Semprum, *The Autobiography of Federico Sanchez and the Communist Underground in Spain*, trans. Helen R. Lane (New York: Karz Publishers, 1979), p. 269.

¹⁸ Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora, "Franco," *ABC*, November 21, 1975, p. 3, <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1975/11/21/003.html> (accessed April 7, 2017).

received an impoverished and invertebrate country and he converted it into a grand potential industry and a kingdom that is institutionally robust. He received a nation with an immense majority proletariat and he then transformed it into middle class societies.”¹⁹ Franco’s legacy was of a dictator that modernized Spain and was an important figure in Spanish history.

Concomitantly, the clandestine newspaper for the exiled PSOE, *El Socialista* (The Socialist), challenged the right’s attempt to downplay Franco’s atrocities during and after the Spanish Civil War. The editors of *El Socialista* denounced Franco’s legacy. They stated that even after Franco’s death, the dictatorship was still alive due to the authoritative legacy he left but history would judge Franco as guilty for war crimes.²⁰ *El Socialista* were correct about the structure of the government. Franco’s successor, Prince Juan Carlos²¹ and his prime minister, Arias Navarro, were still in power. This concerned the Spanish left in whether Spain could ever achieve democracy in their homeland.

What is the legacy of Francoism and why is it important in the Spanish transition to democracy? Franco was dictator of Spain for nearly 40 years and left a Fascist legacy from his ultra nationalist control over the country. This legacy left an impact during the transitional period from the “bunker,” the Spanish extreme Nationalists and the ultra-Francoist supporters during and after his death.²² Linz wrote *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* in 1975 that analyzed multiple dictatorships in the twentieth

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁰ *El Socialista*, November 19, 1975, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Spain, Madrid, 1971-1976, Reel No. 2186.

²¹ King Juan Carlos’s coronation was on November 22, 1975 when he officially became king.

²² The bunker were political figures that wanted to continue Francoism and Falangism. It is based on a comparison to Adolf Hitler’s defeat in WWII when he and his cabinet hid a bunker under Berlin, quoted in: Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution, and Revenge, Revised and Expanded* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), p. 3.

century.²³ In an updated version, he responded to his critics about his labeling of the Franco regime as authoritarian and not totalitarian. He argued, “I would never deny the totalitarian ambitions of the Spanish Falange and the totalitarian tendencies of the Franco regime during the hegemony of the Axis powers in Europe. I would...stress the legacy of limited pluralism in the origin of the regime, which Franco subordinated to his personal power and designs.”²⁴ Linz agreed with some historians such as Javier Tusell, Stanley Payne, and Francois Furet on the distinctions between a totalitarian and an authoritarian state.²⁵ Critics challenged Linz’s because the use of the term limited pluralism gave some democratic legitimacy to the Franco regime.²⁶ Linz’s arguments with his critics showcased the sharp divisions over Franco’s legacy and how newspapers and politicians of the transition had their own ideas of Francoism.

How fascist was Francoism? According to Stanley Payne, Falangism did not have that same lasting power under Franco. José Antonio Primo de Rivera founded Falangism and not Franco. Therefore, did Falangism have a lasting impact in Spain during the later years of the regime? Payne concluded that, “Falangism lived on as no more than an ambiguous residue...the Movement had lost its cultural and social basis long before the physical death of Franco.”²⁷ Payne’s argument as well as some historians of the later

²³ According to the copyright page on page iv, Linz’s first six chapters of *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* appeared first in the Handbook of Political Science, Volume 3, Macropolitical theory, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975, in Juan J. Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2000), p. iv.

²⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 4-5.

²⁶ Nigel Townson, “Introduction,” in *Spain Transformed: The Late Franco Dictatorship, 1959-75*, ed. Nigel Townson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.5.

²⁷ Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain: 1923-1977* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), p. 479.

Franco era point out the shift of Franco's repression once some mild reforms began to take place in the 1960s and 1970s.

Furthermore, Radcliff, who challenged Linz's analysis of the Franco regime, its legacy, and Linz's definition of authoritarianism, argued that, "Linz definition seems to downplay both the brutal repression and the fascist trappings of the regimes origins, especially in the Cold War context in which authoritarianism was being re-classified as the good form of dictatorship in the war against Soviet totalitarianism."²⁸ These debates by social scientists and historians brought forth arguments that Spaniards after the transition to democracy continue to debate. Nonetheless, Franco's impact on the memory of the Spanish Civil War and during the transition showcased his immortality that divided Spaniards. Thus, the leaders of the transition had to absorb the animosity between the two sides (The anti-Francoists and the Nationalists) and to forget the violence and repression of the dictatorship to facilitate compromise for all parties. The memory of the past spilled out years after the transition with new analysis from critics about amnesia²⁹ and collective memory in Spain.

***Pacto de Olvido*³⁰ and Spanish Historical and Collective Memory**

Nigel Townson wrote about the Spanish transition to democracy's impact in Spain's current thoughts about the past. He claimed that the violent crimes during the 1930s and 1940s "...were never addressed in political terms as a result of the overriding

²⁸ Juan Linz, "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain", in *Cleavages, Ideologies, and Party systems*, ed. E. Allardt and Y. Littunen (Helsinki: Turko, 1964) and Michael Mann, *Fascists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 44, quoted in: Radcliff, p. 5.

²⁹ The political scientist Paloma Aguilar in 1996 wrote extensively about amnesia in Spain during the Transition, in Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, trans. by Mark Oakley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008).

³⁰ Carsten Humlebæk, "The "Pacto de Olvido," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 183.

quest for consensus...”³¹ One of the controversies surrounded by the democratic transition was the nonexistence of truth commissions. Furthermore, the change in government was a change from above led by reformers. Some of these reformers were once members of the Franco regime. Scholars such as Carsten Humlebæk and Paloma Aguilar labeled the transition and the Spanish model as *La pacta de olvido* or the pact of forgetting. It was a contract that the Spanish political leaders agreed to avoid the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War and Franco’s crimes.

This pact became a major theme of the Spanish transition to democracy because of the lack of trials over past crimes. The historian Michael Richards said it best when he wrote, “The political ‘pact of forgetting’ has come to be understood as a much broader ‘pact of silence’ than was really the case during the transitional process...”³² Richards, as well as other scholars of Modern Spain, understood that the pact of forgetting had to happen in the creation of the 1978 Constitution. Regional autonomy in areas such as Catalonia had major significance in the pact of forgetting because of the animosity between the provinces and the central government in Madrid.

In addition, the Spanish sociologist Salvador Cardús analyzed the role of memory during the transition in Spain. Cardús listed several points about the “erasure of memory”³³ during the transition. He claimed that had the transition to democracy included a retaliation against the dictatorship, the old divisions from the Civil War would resurface and that the uncertainty of the actors involved avoided a need to instigate the

³¹ Nigel Townson, “Introduction,” in *Spain Transformed: The Late Franco Dictatorship, 1959-75*, p. 8.

³² Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-making Spain since 1936* (New York and Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 279.

³³ Salvador Cardús i Ros, “Politics and the Invention of Memory. For a Sociology of the Transition to Democracy in Spain,” in *Dismembering the Dictatorship: The Politics of Memory in the Spanish Transition to Democracy*, ed. Joan Ramon Resina (Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2000), p. 19.

“rattling of swords” without the democratic institutions.³⁴ Furthermore, the King represented a symbol of “renovation and of political continuity” and that the institutions and apparatuses of the state and bureaucrats of the Franco era continued as part of the pact of forgetting.³⁵ These points are part of Paul Preston’s conclusion in *Triumph of Democracy* that, “...Suárez had done the impossible in overseeing the legal transition from Francoist ‘legality’ to democracy. Thereafter, all the democratic parties had worked together to create the framework of the Constitution and the structures of regional autonomy.”³⁶ Suárez, once a member of the Franco regime, led the task in handling a divided nation over the construction of a democratic system.

Humblebæk, an expert in Spanish cultural studies, wrote about the *pacto de olvido*. He states that Franco’s victory against the Republicans in 1939 led to repression that divided during and after the post war years and that these issues of memory proved to be a dilemma for the construction of democracy.³⁷ The role of memory did not disappear during the transition but the political leaders from the UCD, PSOE, and others chose to reconcile. Other common arguments on memory challenged the old myths concocted by the Franco regime. Julián Casanova’s article, “History and Memory: A New Social Dimension,” focused on the importance of historians that challenged the outdated narratives and myths of the Nationalists and supporters of Franco.³⁸ The Nationalists won the war and had control over the narrative of the Spanish Civil War.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 20-21.

³⁶ Paul Preston, *The Triumph of Democracy in Spain* (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1986), p. 226.

³⁷ Carsten Humlebæk, “The “Pacto de Olvido,” in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 184.

³⁸ Julián Casanova, “History and Memory: A New Social Division,” 2008, *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 21 no.3, 187-202, p. 188.

Furthermore, in Soledad Fox's article "Violence and Silence: The Repressed History of the Franco Regime," the legacy of the Spanish Civil War and the official version by the Francoists hindered the discourses of the war that challenged the official version.³⁹ The repression of the past by the Francoists disrupted any fair debates between the opposing sides. During the transition, Fox argued, "After Franco's death, the process of reconciliation...was defined in terms of forgetting and silence. Taking De la Cierva's cue, the transition to democracy presented itself as a forward-looking process and thus thwarted efforts to understand, let alone come to terms with, the past."⁴⁰ Silence now became the question as to whether this model of democratic transition would cause problems in the twenty-first century such as mass graves excavated.⁴¹ Fox criticized the historian Pío Moa and others about returning to the tragedies of the past due to the rediscovered mass graves.⁴² The debates about reinvestigating the past led to discourse and debate about Spanish history from 1931 to the present.

³⁹ Soledad Fox, "Violence and Silence: The Repressed History of the Franco Regime," in *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*, ed. Carlos Jerez-Farran and Samuel Amago, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), p. 39.

⁴⁰ Ricardo De La Cierva was a Spanish historian and politician who wrote works such as *Episodios Históricos de España de Ricardo De La Cierva: El PSOE De Felipe González, Adiós al Marxismo*. Fox, "Violence and Silence: The Repressed History of the Franco Regime," in *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*, p. 40.

⁴¹ Mass graves were rediscovered in 2000 in such as in Priaranza del Bierzo in León, Spain, a town and province North of Madrid. The argument over memory and the rediscovered mass graves have led to several scholars analyzing the legacy and violence of the Spanish Civil War and the Franco regime. Examples of this scholarly debate can be found in Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-making Spain since 1936* (New York and Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 330, and Michael Richards, "Grand Narratives, Collective Memory, and Social History: Public Uses of the Past in Post-War Spain," in *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*, p. 136. See also, Helen Graham, *The War and its Shadow: Spain's Civil War in Europe's Long Twentieth Century* (Portland OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), p.127, and Ángela Cenarro, "Francoist Nostalgia and Memories of the Spanish Civil War," 2008, *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 21 no.3, 203-218, p. 203 and 205.

⁴² Soledad Fox, "Violence and Silence: The Repressed History of the Franco Regime," in *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*., p. 40-41.

Stanley Payne evaluated the topic of the Spanish transition to democracy. In his chapter, “Controversies over History in Contemporary Spain,” Payne gave his thoughts on contemporary topics of Spanish history and how the Civil War and Franco are one important trend in the field.⁴³ He states, “The Spanish Transition presented the first example of a democratization from the inside out, in which the laws and institutions of the authoritarian regime were used to carry out a complete transformation into a democracy.”⁴⁴ Thus, the leaders of the transition did not want a *ruptura democrática* (democratic rupture)⁴⁵ that brought about overwhelming change in the political system. Payne spent the rest of the chapter chastising the left and the right on the myths about Franco and the Second Republic and that surviving Francoists have continued to promote Franco as a national hero.⁴⁶ However, these subjects of memory and the past legacies of Franco and the Second Republic did not overly distract the transition from the success of the Constitution of 1978. Certainly, the press brought up these topics during the anniversaries of momentous events such as the start of the Spanish Civil War, and the end of the war.⁴⁷

Lastly, the Spanish journalist Gregorio Morán challenged the Spanish model’s praise since the price of the transition was too heavy. Morán’s argument was an analysis of the transition fifteen years later since Franco’s death. On the Spanish model, he argues, “The pedagogical function of the democratic victory over the dictatorship is obscured,

⁴³ Stanley G. Payne, *Spain: A New History* (Madison Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), p. 245, <http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/chapter/51124> (accessed December 30, 2016).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpura, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1979), p. 209.

⁴⁶ Stanley G. Payne, *Spain: A New History*, p. 249.

⁴⁷ Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, p. 211-230.

when not hidden, by the fact that the transition must be focused as a defeat. A defeat of everything that was for many anti-Francoists objectives as an unavoidable future: freedom without oligarchies that limit it, and the social and political transformations as an open activity for the citizen.”⁴⁸ Morán portrayed the Spanish transition through a pessimistic lens from the left. The oligarchs he referred to were Franco’s supporters or members of Franco’s regime that played a role in the Spanish transition. This dilemma would come into fruition once the twenty-first century opened investigations of suspects that committed crimes against the supporters of the Second Republic.

To add to Morán’s criticism of the transition, Alison Ribeiro de Menezes analyzed the transition, the memory debates, and argued that the *pacto de olvido* in the 1970s, “...has been cited as evidence of the limitations of Spanish democracy, which is found wanting precisely in its attitude toward those who suffered at the hands of the Nationalists during the Civil War and the Franco Regime.”⁴⁹ The criticisms towards the Spanish transition derived from the lack of justice against those involved in the Franco regime and the crimes committed by the Nationalist forces. Critics were right because no truth commissions happened during the transition against the military nor the Franco loyalists in politics.

Nevertheless, the Spanish transition to democracy was an achievement and period of political compromise and reconciliation. Still, the consequences included the lack of justice against Nationalists and their atrocities during and after the Spanish Civil War. Furthermore, the rise of ETA and their attacks during the transition showed that these old

⁴⁸ Gregorio Morán, *El precio de la transición* (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, S.A., 1992), p. 31.

⁴⁹ Alison Ribeiro de Menezes, *Embodying Memory in Contemporary Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 14.

wounds would not die so easily. However, through the leadership of men such as Adolfo Suárez and Felipe González, the Spanish model succeeded in moving on from conflict as leaders from each political party sought for an improved future in Spain. This includes: amnesty, the ratification of the 1978 constitution, and the successful elections of 1977, 1979, and 1982 along with the victory of the Socialist Party. However, these political and historical debates on politics, regional autonomy, and historical and collective memory continue to cause controversy.

Chapter 1: Beginning of the Transition and the Question on Amnesty and Legalization of Political Parties (1975-1977)

This chapter is an analysis of the political rise of Adolfo Suárez and later the *Unión de Centro Democrático Partido* (Democratic Center Party), the fall of Carlos Arias Navarro (Franco's last Prime Minister), and the decision by leaders of Spain to provide amnesty, political reform, and to legalize all other political parties in Spain. The central arguments made throughout this period were the decision by Suárez to legalize the PSOE (the Spanish Socialist Party) and the PCE (the Spanish Communist Party). First, why did King Juan Carlos disapprove Arias Navarro as the prime minister and why was Suárez the solution to create a peaceful transition to democracy? Franco groomed Juan Carlos to be the next head of state and to continue his legacy. However, he decided not to continue Francoism and instead chose a reformer within the regime.

Second, what significance did Suárez play in the legalization of the Socialist Party? Suárez, as prime minister, spoke to opposition leaders directly. These leaders included Felipe González, leader of Socialist and Santiago Carrillo, leader of the Communist Party. However, there were conflicts within the government and military leaders in allowing the communists to return as a legal political party, even though the Communist Party had changed its rhetoric of violent revolution and favored democracy. Third, how did the legalization of the PCE in 1977 lead to the success of the June 15, 1977 elections held in Spain. The 1977 election was an event of great significance and it allowed all officially recognized political parties to participate. Thus, the election

provided a substantial step to the Spanish transition as Suárez decided to include former enemies of Franco.

After the coronation of King Juan Carlos in November 22, 1975, the Spanish press, such as *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* and *Cambio 16*, asked if the Spanish citizens wanted to move on to democracy. *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, once a Spanish Catholic magazine that tilted towards the left, entitled its December 1975 issue, “*España quiere Democracia*” (Spain wants Democracy).¹ The editorial directed its attention at the post-Franco leadership, specifically Arias Navarro’s leadership, and the demands for change and reform. It stated, “It is curious to observe the resistance of change of the stagnant conservatives that are in the Arias government as his main source of support. Not only in the imposition of a decree of an unsatisfactory pardon for the nation but a contradiction from the King’s words regarding “the King for all.””² This article was specifically about exiled political leaders of the opposition and political prisoners. The words of Juan Carlos as a King of all Spaniards resonated with the actions by the regime.

The *New York Times* reported that on November 25, 1975, King Juan Carlos pardoned some political prisoners.³ According to the decree, “Several thousand persons are expected to benefit from the decree, which was signed by the King. The pardon, which he hailed as a tribute to the memory of General Franco, was graduated according to the length of sentences, with persons sentenced to less than three years to be freed immediately. The decree does not apply...to crimes of terrorism...”⁴ However, *Cambio*

¹ *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, December 1975.

² Editorial, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, December 1975.

³ “Spain Announces Clemency Move: Pardon for Some Political Prisoners Is Set to Mark Juan Carlos's Accession,” *New York Times*, November 26, 1975, <http://search.proquest.com/proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/120554212/FA6D5D84113F44F8PQ/1?accountid=14696> (accessed January 31, 2017).

⁴ *Ibid.*

16, a magazine that originally centered on economics but shifted more into politics, reported criticisms of this light amnesty. The journalist Marino Barbero Santos argued that, "On 25 November a new general pardon was granted on the occasion of the proclamation of Juan Carlos of Bourbon as King of Spain. The first reactions in legal circles have been frankly disappointment. Greater generosity was expected."⁵ The push for proper amnesty for all political prisoners became the goal of the opposition forces against the Franco regime.

El País, a daily newspaper that started its circulation in May 1976, criticized Franco's legacy. They called for political reform in Spain and became one of Spain's leading newspapers in the coming years. On May 4, 1976, *El País* published an editorial about reform entitled "Ante la "reforma.""⁶ In the article the editors wrote,

Since the death of General Franco, and maybe before, since the assassination of President Carrero, our people remain in a constant and prolonged expectation of political change that has not just taken place...It is not a question of impatience. This country has waited for forty years – exactly since the beginning of the civil war – for the normalization of their political coexistence. This country, whose three-fourths of the population did not participate in that fratricidal struggle, has been searching, for the same reason, for almost half a century for civilized and modern forms of life...⁷

For the press on the left, Spaniards had patiently waited for the return of democracy.

Moreover, this opinion piece from *El País* showcased the memory of the Spanish Civil War and how it lingered in the minds of journalists. The editorial reported on the collective memory of Spaniards in the 1970s when Admiral Carrero Blanco and Franco

⁵ *Cambio 16*, "amnistia e indulto," December 8-14, 1975, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Spain, Madrid, Nos. 187-212, Microfilm No. (0)83/703, July 7-13, 1975 thru December 29, 1975-January 4, 1976.

⁶ Editorial, *El País*, May 4, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/05/04/portada/200008801_850215.html (accessed January 6, 2017).

⁷ Ibid.

died. Part of the theme of the Spaniards of the 1970s was patience for a democratic government.

Arias Navarro's Resignation

Carlos Arias Navarro was Franco's last appointed Prime Minister of Spain from 1973 to 1976. He became prime minister after the assassination of Admiral Carrero Blanco by ETA in 1973.⁸ Unlike Blanco, Arias Navarro was not a military man but he was a supporter of Franco. Once Franco died, the King had to decide: either keep Arias Navarro or move forward with someone that had the qualifications to reform the country. According to Paul Preston, the King and Arias Navarro's relationship started off horribly due to members of his cabinet favoring the continuation of authoritarian rule.⁹ The King knew that Arias Navarro would have to leave his position if the country went through a democratic path.

Moreover, the press continued to pound the 'bunker' or the ultra-conservative politicians and bureaucrats who remained loyal to Franco. *Cambio 16* wrote a piece on the 'bunker' and its leader, Arias Navarro. The editors wrote that, "When democracy rings, the bunker falters. Only words are in the air and those who dwell in this strange citadel of imprecise limits already shake."¹⁰ The 'bunker' represented the last blockade of democracy and they became the targets of *ruptura democracia* (democratic rupture) of

⁸ ETA's assassination of Carrero Blanco was a significant event in Spain during the late Franco years because Carrero Blanco would have been Franco's true successor. See Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, *A Rebellious People: Basques, Protests, and Politics* (Reno and Las Vegas, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1991), p. 188.

⁹ Paul Preston, *Juan Carlos: Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004), p. 331.

¹⁰ "bunker, bunker," *Cambio 16*, January 26-February 1, 1976, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Spain, Madrid, Nos. 213-238, January 11 thru June 28-July 4, 1976, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

Francoism towards a transition to democracy. Democratic rupture was a process of the complete overhaul and eradication of Francoism in the Spanish government.

Furthermore, the editors of *Cambio 16* criticized Arias Navarro's speech to the *consejeros nacionales* (The National Council).¹¹ They wrote that Arias Navarro mentioned Franco and liberty multiple times. The editors wrote,

The head of the government, who used almost as many times the word "participation" (nine times) as "authority" (eight), quoted the "people" in twenty-eight occasions, on "Franco", ten, "freedom", six; "King" in five, and finally, "democracy", in four sections of his speech. Not surprisingly, the prime minister, who did not arouse enthusiasm in the political chamber charged with ensuring the purity of the National Movement's principles, did not set dates for the realization of that reform program that will include free elections and the legalization of two political parties.¹²

The editors of *Cambio 16* called out the prime minister for the lack of substantial reforms that included free elections and the legalization of political parties. The following week, the editors of *Cambio 16* wrote a scathing headline entitled, "The Opposition: Everyone against Arias," that focused on the opposition united against the Arias Administration."¹³ The piece stated, "The reviled speech of President Arias in the Congress and before the country will have had a virtue: to unite in practice all the opposition against the announced program of the government."¹⁴ In that report, the opposition included the socialists, communists, the Christian Democrats, the Catalanian assembly and the UGT.¹⁵

¹¹ The National Council was the first institution created by Franco whose members were appointed by Franco himself.

¹² "bunker, bunker," *Cambio 16*, January 26-February 1, 1976.

¹³ "Todos contra Arias," *Cambio 16*, February 15, 1976.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The UGT stands for the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (Workers General Union). This union was founded by Pablo Iglesias and therefore has a connection with the PSOE.

King Juan Carlos visit to the United States in April 1976 helped the opposition. The King told *Newsweek* about his harsh criticisms of Arias Navarro. According to the report,

Spain's new ruler is gravely concerned about right-wing resistance to political change. The time for reform has come, he believes, but Prime Minister Carlos Arias Navarro, a holdover from Franco's days, has demonstrated more immobility than mobility. In the King's opinion, Arias is an unmitigated disaster, for he has become the standard-bearer of that powerful band of Franco loyalists known as "the bunker."¹⁶

Preston later argued that the King "...allowed himself to be quoted in *Newsweek*."¹⁷ This statement by the King had an impact on Spanish politics because both Arias Navarro and Juan Carlos had been appointed by Franco to continue his legacy. However, the King publicly criticized Arias Navarro.

The King had doubts that Arias Navarro would reform the government into a more open and reformed democratic state. As the historians Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi argued,

On 28 April Arias gave the King every reason to confirm the *Newsweek* article. His televised address to the country to explain once again the future of his political reform sounded like a provocation to the democratic opposition. He mentioned Franco seven times, calling him 'the veteran captain' and 'the provident legislator...' He once again ignored the question of an amnesty and rejected the possibility of opening a constituent period.¹⁸

Under Arias Navarro's leadership, Spain's transition to democracy had been sluggish and obstructed by the last die hard supporters of Francoism. Juan Carlos had lost patience with the Arias Navarro administration.

¹⁶ "Juan Carlos Looks Ahead," *Newsweek*, April 26, 1976, Library of Congress, Microfilm, January – June 1976, Shelf No. 2234.00, Reel No. 01125, see also, Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpura, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1979), p. 215, Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain* (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1986), p. 88.

¹⁷ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 88.

¹⁸ Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpura, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy*, p. 215.

Ultimately Arias Navarro resigned on July 1, 1976. According to Henry Ginger of the *New York Times*, the resignation was unexpected even to the ministers.¹⁹ *El País* reported on the opposition leaders' reaction to the resignation. For example, Felipe González's response was,

We interpret the resignation of Arias as a positive factor, since Mr. Arias symbolized the continuation of a historical stage that the ensemble of all Spaniards wants to see overcome. Based on this analysis we have insisted to other opposition forces on the need to guide pressure of public opinion and all democratic political forces towards the resignation of a government that is compelled on carrying out the reforms back to the people, with a style that we have repeatedly described as despotic.²⁰

González's reaction was optimism after the news of Arias Navarro's resignation.

González, along with the official Socialist Party's newspaper *El Socialista*, denounced the Arias Navarro administration's failure in changing and reforming the government into a democratic nation.²¹ Moreover, Santiago Carrillo, the Secretary General of the Spanish Communist Party, response was, "If Arias Navarro's resignation serves to form a Cabinet that is less repressive, capable of dialogue with the democratic opposition, without discrimination, and to facilitate the expression of popular demands, then it will be a step forward."²² Carrillo understood that in order for the transition to succeed, the government would have to find a leader willing to change Spain from its authoritarian past.

¹⁹ "Spanish Premier Resigns, Apparently at King's Wish," *New York Times*, July 2, 1976, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/122788857/pageviewPDF/B40CB4AC5E054022PQ/1?accountid=14696> (accessed January 6, 2017).

²⁰ "La Dimisión de Arias: reacciones a la dimisión de presidente," *El País*, July 2, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/07/02/espana/205106416_850215.html (accessed January 10, 2017).

²¹ "Nuestra Posicion," *El Socialista*, July 1976, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Shelf No. NP2849, Reel No. 2168

²² "La Dimisión de Arias: reacciones a la dimisión de presidente," *El País*, July 2, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/07/02/espana/205106416_850215.html (accessed April 12, 2017).

On July 2, the United States Embassy in Madrid reported on the opposition's strong response to the failures of the Arias administration. In an excerpt from the memorandum, the American Embassy in Madrid reported to the U.S. State Department on what the opposition stated. On points 2 and 3, the report stated,

2. We are compelled to denounce before the country the so called constitutional reform and the announced referendum, which are nothing but a political masquerade. We denounce the reforms because they are being imposed by the government without the full and free participation of the people. We denounce the referendum because it is nothing more than a mechanism for obtaining popular approval for a unilateral and antidemocratic reform.

3. A democratic future is only possible with: (1) Full and complete amnesty for all those in prison or exile for political reasons; (2) Effective guarantees for the exercise of civil liberties and full freedom for political parties; and (3) The formation of a truly representative government which will initiate, without delay, the "peaceful transition to a true democracy."²³

This statement made by the opposition concluded that Arias Navarro did not allow any members of the opposition to have a voice on the political reforms. It was these grievances that led to the downfall of Arias Navarro's role as prime minister.

Meanwhile, editors of the conservative Catholic newspaper *Ya* wrote a statement that this sudden change should "...have a government that is strong, representative, and open. A strong government that can solve the economic crisis, to contain the irrational extremists on the left and the right... To ask for an open government, we have been calling repeatedly: no rupture nor a constitutional process, which has always appeared as a grave mistake..."²⁴ *Ya* noted that the change to democracy should not happen but it did not need the extremists on the left and the right. Nonetheless, the question for

²³ "Left Opposition Issue Statement," American Embassy Madrid to Secretary of State, Madrid (July 3, 1976) NACP RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, National Archives AAD, Document Number: 1976MADRID05173, Film Number: D760258-0851 accessed February 1, 2017, <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=158393&dt=2082&dl=1345>

²⁴ "Lo que esperamos del nuevo gobierno," *Ya*, July 2, 1976, Library of Congress, Microfilm, July 1, 1976 thru July 31, 1976, Shelf No. NP 397, Reel No. 710.

conservatives was how Arias Navarro's resignation would change Spain into a nation that followed the old Second Republic and react against the Francoists.

Furthermore, the historian Javier Tusell analyzed the significance of the Arias Navarro era and his resignation in history. In Tusell's opinion, "From a historical point of view, what was most relevant about this period was that...it ended all possibility that Francoism could survive in any form, and it contributed decisively towards making a sweeping reform seem inevitable..."²⁵ The decisions made by Juan Carlos proved that he himself wanted political reform in Spain. Arias Navarro's resignation was the end of Francoism as a legitimate ideology for the ultra conservatives in modern Spain. It was a major blow to the 'bunker' and Franco's legacy.

Adolfo Suárez's Leadership, Amnesty and Reconciliation

Adolfo Suárez became the new prime minister of Spain on July 3, 1976. He was prime minister throughout most of the transition. Under his leadership, he legalized the Communist Party, provided significant laws of amnesty, led the negotiations of the Moncloa Pacts that would reform the Spanish economy, and assisted in the creation and ratification of the Spanish Constitution of 1978. To start, Suárez wanted to reassure the people that he was for democratic change. For example, on July 6, Suárez spoke to Spaniards on television about his commitment to obtain a modern democracy.²⁶ Suárez had been a member of the Franco administration as the Director-General of Spanish Television, or Spanish public broadcasting, from 1969 to 1973.²⁷ He later became the

²⁵ Javier Tusell, *Spain: From Dictatorship to Democracy, 1939 to the Present*, trans. Rosemary Clark (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), p. 280.

²⁶ Julián Casanova and Carlos Gil Andrés, *Twentieth-Century Spain: A History*, trans. Martin Douch (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 302.

²⁷ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 71.

Vice Secretary General of the *Movimiento*, a Francoist institution²⁸ and established himself as one of the top members of the Franco regime. Overall, Suárez had the youth, experience, and credentials to push for a faster and smoother transition. While Suárez had previous positions in the Franco regime, his decisions afterwards led to the first free elections in Spain since 1936.

Still the news surprised some Spaniards given Suárez's history. For example, the Spanish journalist Victoria Prego wrote that, "The news of the order by the King of appointing Adolfo Suárez as president of the Government is a surprise for all political observers, without exception."²⁹ The King pushed for Suárez as prime minister of the government. Nevertheless, the editors of *El País* wrote that,

We have always believed that the departure of Arias from the Cabinet was in fact a historic opportunity to implement a policy of harmony and democracy. If the new prime minister is not successful in selecting his team, the damage to the Spanish historical process and, ultimately, to the Crown, will be very difficult to repair. The challenges that Mr. Suárez has encountered and found in cooperating are not the result of any personal rejection but of the conviction that this Government must be able to prepare in the short term a free general election in the midst of an economic crisis and extreme social conflict.³⁰

El País wondered what direction the country would take even though Suárez had the authority to push for free elections in the middle of a political and social conflict. Unlike Arias Navarro, Suárez was not handpicked by Franco to become prime minister but he was not trusted either by the opposition.

Still, the editors of *Cambio 16* had some optimism about Suárez as the new prime minister. In their editorial about the transition from Arias Navarro to Suárez, they

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Victoria Prego, *Presidentes: Veinticinco años de historia narrada por los cuatro jefes de Gobierno de la democracia*, primera edición (Plaza & Janés Editores, S.A., 2000), p. 25.

³⁰ "Editorial: El discurso del presidente," *El País*, July 7, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/07/07/opinion/205538402_850215.html (accessed January 13, 2017).

justified Suárez and stated, “In the possession of the young politician is his youth, his modernist air and his last speech before the Cortes. And not much more. Faced with personalities experienced in long years of battle to bring democracy to Spain without traumas, the new president is bound to have a rare role...”³¹ Suárez, along with other leaders of the opposition parties, was not alive during the Spanish Civil War. The press did have some confidence that Suárez’s youth might be the key to a successful democratic transition.

July 1976 continued to be a significant month in Spain. Suárez proved he was serious in reforming the country. There were two laws that passed and had an impact in moving forward with the transition: reform of the Penal Code and amnesty of some political parties such as the Socialist Party.³² On July 19, according to Casanova and Gil Andres, “...the Cortes passed the reform of the Penal Code that brought about the legalisation of certain political parties...”³³ On July 30, Spain passed an amnesty decree that conceded amnesty to political prisoners in Spain. Before the enactment of the law, the U.S. embassy in Madrid reported that on July 17, the Spanish government was prepared to mobilize a plan for amnesty. The U.S. State Department had great interest in the transition due to the normalized relations during the Cold War.³⁴

According to the referendum the key word was reconciliation, a word that defined the relationship between the opposing parties of the left and the right. In the report from the embassy in Madrid to the State Department, they stated, “But the declaration itself

³¹ “Presidente por sorpresa,” Editorial, *Cambio 16*, July 12-18, 1976, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 239-263, July 5-11, 1976 thru December 29, 1976, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

³² Casanova and Gil Andres, p. 302.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Wells Stabler was the American Ambassador to Spain from February 20, 1975 to May 4, 1978.

reflects a clear reformist bent, on designed to appeal to all sectors in its emphasis on "National Reconciliation", a code word of considerable importance to the democratic opposition."³⁵ In addition. Casanova and Gil Andres explained that, "...on 30 July the government issued a partial but significant amnesty decree and initiated contacts with leaders of the democratic opposition, including nationalists such as Jordi Pujol and socialists such as Felipe González and Tierno Galván, but not with the communists who were still considered to be 'inapplicable for legislation."³⁶ This ruling by the Spanish government paved the way for Suárez to contact opposition leaders such as the Socialist Party.

Bonifacio de la Cuadra, a journalist for *El País*, reported that this amnesty included the potential for political prisoners to be freed,

In response to questions from the special envoy of EL PAIS on the number of prisoners to be affected by the amnesty and on the possible complementary measure of the amnesty, although it lacked exact data, at the moment it would be about 200 prisoners - although the figure was later set by reliable sources at 500 - who would benefit from the amnesty...³⁷

Furthermore, this law allowed some of the skepticism from the left towards Suárez's efforts of compromise to dissipate. *El Socialista* responded to the news with optimism about a successful transition through a democratic rupture. The editors of *El Socialista*

³⁵ The documents from NARA do not have the names of who wrote these reports. However, the American Ambassador to Spain, Wells Stabler, probably ordered these reports about the events in Spain to Henry Kissinger. "Declaration of Government," American Embassy Madrid to Secretary of State, Madrid (July 17, 1976), NACP RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, Document Number: 1976MADRID05505, Film Number: D760276-0666, <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=144959&dt=2082&dl=1345> (accessed April 12, 2017).

³⁶ Julián Casanova and Carlos Gil Andrés, *Twentieth-Century Spain: A History*, trans. Martin Douch (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 302. Enrique Tierno Galván was a member of the PSOE and the future mayor of Madrid in 1979. See also: Victoria Prego, *Diccionario de la Transición* (Barcelona: Plaza y Janés Editores, S.A., 1999), p. 626-630.

³⁷ Bonifacio de la Cuadra, "El Rey concede amnistía para los delitos políticos y de opinion," *El País*, July 31, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/07/31/portada/207612002_850215.html (accessed January 15, 2017).

announced that, “Finally, the government has awarded amnesty for the crimes of political opinion... The transition from a dictatorship to a democracy is in play. The political responsibility of the opposition parties has us think that democracy is next and it will reach peacefully. If that does not happen, the current power will pay for their mistakes.”³⁸ The socialists were optimistic because they no longer had to fear going to prison for their political opinions and that the state was releasing political prisoners. In less than a month in office, Suárez led the first major steps in political amnesty for all.

However, there was criticism by the left that the amnesty was not enough to achieve the full legalization of all political opposition. For example, the Communist Party was still illegal and not all political prisoners were free. Sebastian Garcia, a journalist for *El País*, wrote about the defense lawyers for the remaining political prisoners’ thoughts on the new amnesty. He reported that, in the view of the lawyers,

“the amnesty produced is not complete, as requested, and therefore cannot be the starting point of a government that intends to go to democracy through reconciliation.” This is the first conclusion reached by lawyers of most of the Spanish political prisoners... Second, it was said that the amnesty decreed, with its limitations, to some extent gives the go-ahead to the trials followed under the Francoist legal system, since the limits cited are imposed on the basis of this legality. Thus...the Franco regime is still alive in the amnesty, the lawyers said, since from their laws it has been said who are excludable.³⁹

Political prisoners had hope for a more democratic rupture instead of a compromised negotiation for amnesty. Progress was made but the defense lawyers criticized the political amnesty because of the Spanish government’s call for democracy without releasing prisoners that opposed the Franco regime. The defense lawyers pressured the

³⁸ “Amnistia y Diálogo,” *El Socialista*, August 1976.

³⁹ “Nuevos atentados en la madrugada "Esta no es la amnistía de la reconciliación," *El País*, August 1, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/08/01/espana/207698406_850215.html (accessed January 15, 2017).

government that the amnesty laws had limits even during the change in leadership from Arias Navarro to Suárez. Nevertheless, in one month Suárez and his administration, along with the parliament, started off well in pushing for political reform and change in Spain.

Ruptura Democrática and the Socialist Party's 27th Party Congress

With the legalization of the Socialist Party, how did the socialists respond to not only the reforms made by Suárez, but the creation of the referendum on political reform that would allow free elections? The 27th Congress for the Socialist Party in Spain took place in December 1976 which became a historic moment for the party. It was the first congress by the socialists in Spain since the Second Republic in the 1930s.⁴⁰ The congress was a celebration but also a bold statement for a democratic rupture in Spain. Ideologically, the party wanted to generate success with a strong party platform against the democratic conservatives and the Suárez administration. In the prologue of the congress, the PSOE declared that,

The personality of the Socialist Party is defined by its defense of freedom and by its will to transform capitalist society into a socialist society. Socialism demands freedom, justice, truth, equality. When groups of different ideologies, dominated by conservatism or by years of an authoritarian theory and practice, want to assimilate to the socialist cause, the Congress has indicated with its motto what is the cry of the Socialists: SOCIALISM IS FREEDOM.⁴¹

The PSOE continued to demand democracy in Spain but only through the idea of socialism as the effective ideology to transform the country. Thus, socialism equaled liberty to the Spanish socialist leaders. As the political scientist Paul Kennedy states, "...for the first time in its history, the PSOE declared itself to be a 'Class Party, and therefore a Mass Party, Marxist and democratic' and rejected 'any accommodation with

⁴⁰ Paul Kennedy, *The Spanish Socialist Party and the Moderisation of Spain* (New York and Manchester UK: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 24.

⁴¹ PSOE, *XXVII Congreso* (Madrid, 1977), p. 15.

capitalism or simple reform of the capitalist system.”⁴² The idea was for social democracy and that socialism would win a free and fair election without violence. For the socialists, the memories of the tragedy of the Second Republic lingered on since the last free election took place before the Spanish Civil War and they rejected dictatorship.

In addition, Felipe González, the leader of the Socialist Party, played a significant role of leading the socialists during the transition. In a speech by González to the members of the 27th congress titled “*El proyecto socialista*” (The Socialist Project), he said, “Officially Spain would cease to be a country in which only the triumphant forces in the civil war existed and the existence and the strong implantation of the political forces formally defeated in the contest would be recognized.”⁴³ The winners of the Spanish Civil War were the Nationalists and Franco supporters that for decades glorified Franco.

Furthermore, González spoke about current events in Spain with the December 15th referendum. The referendum was a political reform effort by Suárez and the Spanish parliament that would later be called the Law for Political Reform. González argued that the democratic opposition influenced the Suárez administration until the approval of the December 15 referendum.⁴⁴ Moreover, González declared in a statement about the referendum that,

From our point of view, before the realization of the general elections, a transitional stage must be covered, in which conditions must be given to ensure that a clean democratic alternative is derived from them...that these choices can be identified with the proposed objective of a democratic rupture. For this reason, the party and other democratic forces are defending that the process of the transition be negotiated, that the aspirations of nationalities and regions be respected, that the freedom of all political parties be guaranteed, that it be discussed and accepted

⁴² PSOE, 1976:2, quoted in: Kennedy, p. 24.

⁴³ Felipe González, “El proyecto socialista,” PSOE, *XXVII Congreso* p. 24.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

by the law, and should preside over the electoral process and that the government covering the transitional period enjoys a democratic *consensus*.⁴⁵

González's statement became a rallying cry for progress in Spain. For example, Santos Juliá argues, "What Felipe González did in the forthcoming congress of the PSOE...by blurring the boundaries that delimited previously clear concepts such as rupture and reform, in fact opened a new political terrain."⁴⁶ Ultimately, González defined the role of the Socialist in the transition to democracy as the right party to oversee the democratic transition. His political leadership united the PSOE but it also provided the base some legitimacy of the democratic transition.

Furthermore, the PSOE's position on the transition became a statement about their socialist principles. During the 27th Congress, the leaders of the PSOE stated,

Transcending the fascist state to a state of public liberties and formal democracy.
Transition from the state of formal democracy to a state in which hegemony corresponds to the working class, maintaining and deepening freedoms.
Transition from a Workers' Regime to a classless...society, in which all power apparatus is replaced by self-management at all levels.⁴⁷

The socialists still believed in a society without class. The optimism after Franco's death provided rejuvenation for the PSOE. Javier Tusell stated that the 27th Congress, "...leads one to deduce that the PSOE of the time sought to define itself as radical...it is equally clear that these declarations did not go beyond mere words. Felipe González has said of himself that he was always a moderate, and this is probably true, though at that time his party did not appear moderate to the same extent."⁴⁸ The position of the socialists

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 30.

⁴⁶ Santos Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política Española, 1879-1982* (Madrid: Santillana, S.A. Taurus, 1997), p. 464.

⁴⁷ PSOE, *XXVII Congreso*, p.159.

⁴⁸ Tusell, p. 291.

changed gradually when the transition pushed for significant changes in the success of the Law for Political Reform.

El País reported on the congress with great interest and its editors informed, “Within the PSOE the figure of Felipe González earns points for moments. The management of its executive committee was unanimously approved - with a single abstention by the delegates of the congress.”⁴⁹ González, as Secretary General of the PSOE, stood out and became an influential person for the Spanish left. Moreover, according to *El País*, González, “...proposed in his speech of the session...the establishment of a constitutional compromise between all democratic opposition forces to achieve a democratic constitution. In the speech, the Socialist leader exposed the political program of his party facing the next election period and the economic program to get out of the crisis of the current socio-economic situation.”⁵⁰ González and the party agreed that Spain needed a new constitution for the transition to succeed. The Socialist Party’s success was an example for the potential victory of the Spanish left in the upcoming months to win the elections in 1977.

The Law for Political Reform: December 15, 1976

A week after the Socialist Party’s 27th Party Congress, Spaniards voted to approve the Law for Political Reform. Suárez helped draft and negotiate a text of the law.⁵¹ Suárez’s role, as Paul Preston claimed, was that, “...with the aid of Tarcuato Fernández Miranda, Suárez was having considerable success in steering his reform

⁴⁹ “El PSOE afianza su opción democrática hacia la libertad,” *El País*, December 7, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/12/07/portada/218761201_850215.html (accessed January 16, 2017).

⁵⁰ “Felipe González propone un compromise constitucional,” *El País*, December 7, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/12/07/espana/218761223_850215.html (accessed January 16, 2017).

⁵¹ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John’s Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 94.

project through the Francoist institutions, although he was constantly worried that the obstacles could at any moment prove too great.”⁵² The optimism of passing this bill into law proved that Suárez had confidence in its success. The referendum’s significance even brought attention to the United States.

On December 2, 1976, Manuel de Prado, a Spanish diplomat and a close aid to the King⁵³ and at the time the Chairman of the board of IBERIA Airlines, spoke with the U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. During the 1970s, according to the political scientist Boris Leidtke, U.S. policy in Spain was to have a working relationship with the regime when Franco’s health declined and to not upset any of the moderate leaders.⁵⁴ Prado and Kissinger discussed the December 15th referendum and the Socialist Party’s 27th congress. In that conversation, Prado stated, “...now we have the referendum on the 15th of December. After we get the approval from the Cortes on the new reform law, the government will be stronger. We will still have some opposition, but they are not very well organized. We have given permission to the socialists to have their congress on the 15th of December.”⁵⁵ The U.S. had some doubts of the transitional period given the long years of authoritarian rule. However, Prado stated that the Suárez government would get stronger after the successful passing of the Law for Political Reform.

⁵² Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 101.

⁵³ Prego, *Diccionario de la Transición*, p. 163.

⁵⁴ Boris Leidtke, “Spain and the United States: 1945-1975,” in *Spain and the Great Powers in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Sebastian Balfour and Paul Preston (New York, Routledge, 1999), p. 241.

⁵⁵ “The opposition are the Francoists in this context given that the military also challenged the transition but had a strong hierarchy but loyalty to the crown. Memorandum of Conversation Mexico City, December 2, 1976, 10:20 a.m.,” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–15, Part 2, Documents on Western Europe, 1973–1976* 215

National Archives, RG 59, Records of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 19, NODIS Briefing Memos, 1976, Folder 2. Secret; Sensitive. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve15p2/d215>

Furthermore, the report added that Kissinger asked about the referendum and Suárez's prospects in staying in power. In their conversation, Kissinger and Prado discussed,

The Secretary: ...When did you say the referendum was going to take place?

Prado: The referendum will be on December 15th. We will then form a new government before the elections take place in April. Our elections will then be in either April or May.

The Secretary: Will Suarez still be Prime Minister afterwards?

Prado: Yes, I think he probably will for a while.⁵⁶

This conversation showed that Prado and Kissinger had confidence that the referendum would pass but also lead to the rise in popularity and consolidation of Suárez as the prime minister of Spain. The key aspect of this law was the decision to have free elections in 1977. Free elections had not occurred in Spain since 1936.

The American journalist James A. Markham, covered the referendum for the *New York Times* in the month of December. He wrote that, "Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez appealed tonight to Spaniards to vote yes in a national referendum tomorrow and turn the nation into 'a fully democratic society without risks and without fears.'⁵⁷ Furthermore, the Spanish left and the right had differences of opinion on the law. The leaders of the far right urged their partisans to vote no because they feared that Franco's legacy was disappearing.⁵⁸ For the ultra conservatives or the 'bunker,' the ratification of this law by the people would destroy the memory of Franco as a historical hero in Spanish history.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ James A. Markham, "Spain's Premier Says that Referendum Today Will Buoy Democracy," *New York Times*, December 15, 1976, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/122960145/4D443BDD8FA842E1PQ/1?accountid=14696> (accessed January 17, 2017).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

The ultra conservatives feared that the referendum challenged and delegitimized their control and authority over Spain since the Nationalist victory in 1939.

The referendum was passed successfully on December 15, 1976. What was the significant aspect of the law that Suárez vehemently pushed? Markham reported that, “Spaniards voted overwhelmingly yesterday in favor of a Government program to hold free elections next spring for a parliament that will have the power to rewrite the laws of the Franco period.”⁵⁹ The law provided a gateway for other political parties to join the arena. In the view of Victoria Prego, “The affirmative vote is defended by legalized political parties belonging to the political right willing to accept the rules of democracy.”⁶⁰ Moreover, it was the Spanish people that wanted democracy. For example, the editors of *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* had optimism about the drafting of this referendum. They proclaimed that, “Something changed. We still have no democracy, as it is said in this program last week, but it seems that the Spanish people are determined to have it.”⁶¹ Furthermore, Tusell argued that Spaniards felt that the referendum was a chance to express their opinions freely since the Civil War that ended in 1939 and that the vote would not be manipulated.⁶² Spaniards chose the option of allowing democracy to enter their lives even with the memory of the Second Republic’s end imbedded in their memories

The Legalization of the Communist Party (PCE)

⁵⁹ Markham, “Spaniards Give a Resounding ‘Yes’ In Referendum on Free Elections,” *New York Times*, December 16, 1976, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/122980219/775D49D02AC24AD4PQ/1?accountid=14696> (accessed January 17, 2017).

⁶⁰ Prego, *Presidentes*, p. 40-41.

⁶¹ Editorial, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, December 4, 1976.

⁶² Tusell, p. 284-285.

After the success of the Law of Political Reform, the next difficult step was the legalization of the Communist Party. The communists had been in exile or imprisoned since the end of the Spanish Civil War and by January 1977 the PCE was still illegal.⁶³ Tusell summarized the current state of the PCE as a party that had not altered its leadership.⁶⁴ The PCE maintained its core leaders such as Dolores Ibárruri who influenced the party. Santiago Carrillo was the Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party from 1960 to 1982. The goal of the PCE was, “With the dictatorship now well in the past, the attraction of a communism that had always been viewed as the arch-enemy of the regime had faded. Carrillo...showed a clear desire to avoid any danger of becoming inward-looking, and this led him during the election campaign to launch attacks on the AP but, in contrast, not against the UCD.”⁶⁵ Furthermore, according to Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, Carrillo coined the phrase *ruptura pactada* (negotiated break).⁶⁶ A negotiated break was similar to a democratic rupture that targeted the remnants of Francoism and to eradicate it for the transition.

The communists changed their plans for revolution against the Franco regime. In 1956, the Spanish communists called for a “national reconciliation”⁶⁷ that ultimately led to the ideas of Eurocommunism. According to the political scientists Richard Gunther, Joan Boatella, and José Ramón Montero, the Communist Party was, “...repudiating the

⁶³ Alejandro Quiroga, “Salvation by Betrayal: The Left and the Spanish Nation,” in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, ed. Gregorio Alonso and Diego Muro (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), p.141.

⁶⁴ Tusell, p. 291.

⁶⁵ The AP stands for *Alianza Popular* (the Popular Alliance), a far-right coalition party. They were once a political party filled with Franco defenders and sympathizers, a right wing coalition party. Tusell, p. 291-292.

⁶⁶ Carr and Fusi, p. 214.

⁶⁷ Richard Gunther, José Ramón Montero and Joan Boatella, *Democracy in Modern Spain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 93.

concept of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” in 1972, shifting from the cell structure of party organization to the more open branch structure in 1976, and removing the term Leninist from its self-designation in 1978.”⁶⁸ For example, the novelist and communist Jorge Semprún spent his time in exile listening to Carrillo speeches about the transition in person. He recollected in his writing that,

...in September 1975, at the Second National Conference of the Spanish Communist Party...Carrillo persisted in declaring: “Over and against any sort of formula for continuity, the democratic alternative will continue to be our solution. If the succession of Juan Carlos takes place, we will take advantage of the weakening of the entire power structure to impose, with the masses in the streets, the democratic objectives that Spanish society demands, culminating in the political revolution that will put an end to all the holdovers of dictatorial power.”⁶⁹

The call for democracy by Carrillo highlighted the evolution of the Spanish communists in the 1970s and their goal to return to prominence in Spanish politics. The democratic alternative was a similar political strategy to the Socialist Party’s democratic rupture. Carrillo called it Eurocommunism which had some similarities and differences with social democracy,

Carrillo, who wrote a book on Eurocommunism during the transition, argued that Eurocommunism, “...proposes to transform capitalist society, not to *administer* it...At the same time, the ‘Eurocommunist’ strategy aims to bring about a convergence with the socialist and social democratic parties, with the progressive Christian forces, with all the democratic groups that are not henchmen of monopoly-type property. These aims are not contradictory...”⁷⁰ The communists did not want to continue capitalist practices if they

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Jorge Semprún, *The Autobiography of Federico Sanchez and the Communist Underground in Spain*, trans. Helen R. Lane (New York: Karz Publishers, 1979), p. 177.

⁷⁰ Santiago Carrillo, *Eurocommunism and the State*, trans. Nan Green and A.M. Elliott (Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill and Company, Publishers, Inc., 1978), p.104.

won elections but they were willing to work with other political parties that had their ideals. While the communists did not renounce revolution, they knew that the people would accept formal democracy over another authoritarian dictatorship of the right.

However, Carrillo's time in Spain after Franco's death did not start well. On February 7, 1976, Carrillo secretly entered Spain where he was still not allowed to enter the country.⁷¹ To make things worse, the government struggled to support the legalization of the Communist Party. Carrillo challenged the Spanish government when he was seen in Madrid on December 10.⁷² The decades of demonizing the communists played a key role in the difficult task of legalizing the PCE. According to Carr and Fusi,

The democratic opposition could not accept its exclusion from political life – indeed they argued that the party's emergence from the mystery of clandestinity into the electoral field would expose its relative weakness. Since the end of the Civil War the suppression of 'Marxism' had been presented in the propaganda of the regime as its *raison d'être* and the legalisation of the PCE was still bitterly opposed by former reformists like Fraga."⁷³

Manuel Fraga was the head of the *Alianza Popular* (AP) during the transition. The communists had to overcome the decades of hatred by the Franco regime and the memories of the Spanish Civil War. The communists were the enemy of the state by Franco and his supporters. They had to challenge the conservatives that wanted no compromise and no reconciliation with them.

El País and *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* covered Carrillo's imprisonment in late 1976 when he secretly went to Spain even though he was banned. The publications reported the protests by Carrillo's supporters. On December 24, 1976, *El País* reported

⁷¹ Gregorio Morán, *Miseria y grandeza del partido comunista de España, 1939-1985* (Barcelona España: Editorial Planeta, S.A., Córcega, 1986), p.506.

⁷² Carr and Fusi, p. 225.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

that, “Several wounded and numerous bruised is the provisional balance of the demonstration attempts made yesterday afternoon around the Puerta del Sol, in protest of the arrest of Santiago Carrillo, secretary general of the PCE.”⁷⁴ These protests did not stop there. Editors of *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* called Santiago Carrillo “...*El preso del año*” (prisoner of the year).⁷⁵ They wrote that,

The arrest of Carrillo has renewed national passions. The captivity of the secretary general of the PCE has served as a "test" to test the reactivity of various key sectors in the near future of the country. Carrillo has been the prisoner of the year, the great piece collected by the heirs of the Franco regime. His captured, on the other hand, is not comfortable for a Government that is going to manage presumably democratic elections in five months.⁷⁶

For the opponents of the left, Carrillo’s bold move helped the push for the legalization of the Communist Party. If the first elections since the Second Republic were to be in mid-1977, then the arrest of the communists needed to stop for a smooth democratic transition.

Moreover, the Communist Party had other opponents to their legalization besides the far right. According to the same conversation earlier between Henry Kissinger and Manuel Prado, they both had concerns over the legalization of the Communist Party. In that conversation, they discussed the possible legalization of the PCE:

Prado: Brandt might encourage Suarez to make some moves towards the communists, but I doubt whether he will encourage Gonzalez to do the same. The King said to tell you that we will never give permission to the communists to join openly in the political process.

The Secretary: Well, you know my position. The American government cannot give the King of Spain advice on how he should run the internal affairs of his country. As far as I’m concerned, the decision you take should be whichever

⁷⁴ “Varios heridos en la manifestación por Carrillo,” *El País*, December 24, 1976, http://elpais.com/diario/1976/12/24/ultima/220230002_850215.html (accessed January 18, 2017).

⁷⁵ “La Guerra no ha terminado: Carrillo, El Preso Del Año,” *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, January 1, 1977.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

decision gives you the stablest government. You will simply have to weigh the pros and cons to see where the balance lies. Personally, I cannot shed tears over a party which declares all other parties illegal.

Prado: Our problem is the army. It would probably revolt if we legalized the communist party. Kreisky, who was with me in Las Palmas, said he thought it would probably be better to legalize the communist party... We simply do not have the tradition of compatibility which would allow us to take the same attitude. Carrillo was in Madrid last week, illegally, as always. He wanted to get a passport to come to Mexico City. Frankly, we think he's pushing too fast. We don't want to declare the communist party official yet. On the other hand, we don't want to cause problems.⁷⁷

The conversation between Kissinger and Prado was that the King had opposed the inclusion of the communists as a legitimate party. The military still had influence in Spanish politics even after Franco's death and many were still loyal to Franco. Kissinger, an anti-communist, continued this policy but he did not stay as Secretary of State after 1976 because Jimmy Carter won the 1976 Presidential Election. Thus, American policy on the PCE's legalization ended with Carter's victory.⁷⁸ However, Kissinger's policy was not to vehemently persuade the King's decision on the Communist Party.

In addition, the government had to balance a tight rope to not cause any strife with the socialists and other parties of the left versus the conservatives and the members of the 'bunker.' Paul Preston summarized Suárez's difficulties legalizing the Communist Party: "For the bunker and the army, to legalize the Communists meant throwing away everything that they had fought for in 1936."⁷⁹ The military leadership felt that the

⁷⁷ Willy Brandt was the leader of the Social Democratic Party in West Germany. Bruno Kreisky was Chancellor of Austria at the time of this conversation. "Records of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Document 215," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–15, Part 2, Documents on Western Europe, 1973–1976*, National Archives, RG 59, Entry 5403, Box 19, NODIS Briefing Memos, 1976, Folder 2, Secret; Sensitive, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve15p2/d215> (accessed January 20, 2017).

⁷⁸ Alejandro Quiroga, "Salvation by Betrayal: The Left and the Spanish Nation," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 141-142.

⁷⁹ Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 114.

communists were still the enemy and compounded the problems of the negotiations for Suárez. The memory of the Spanish Civil War could not be easily erased given the politics that affected these powerful conservatives in the government.

However, as with González, Carrillo communicated, negotiated, and met with Suárez over the transition as he eventually left prison. According to Victoria Prego, “The encounter between Suárez and Carrillo was celebrated in top secret.”⁸⁰ This secret meeting took place on February 27, 1977 due to the political controversy surrounding the communists at the time. In the meeting, “...Carrillo agreed to accept the monarchy and the bicolor flag as part of the price for the legalization of the PCE.”⁸¹ In exchange, “Suárez promised to create a political system in which Juan Carlos was to be a king with symbolic duties but no governing powers.”⁸² Carrillo and Suárez fulfilled their promises to each other as a symbol of trust and compromise between two opposing politicians.

On April 9, 1977, the Communist Party became legal in Spain. Suárez risked his political career on this decision. As Linz and Stepan had pointed out, “The decision to legalize the Communist Party was extremely dangerous...Suarez’s difficult choice proved decisive in assuring the moderate Euro-Communist posture of the Spanish Communist Party and its leader Santiago Carrillo and thus made a contribution to the eventual success of the Spanish transition.”⁸³ Furthermore, the political scientist Omar Encarnación observed an important purpose for the legalization of the PCE: “Suárez also

⁸⁰ Victoria Prego, *Así se hizo la Transición* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés Editores, S.A., 1995), p. 644.

⁸¹ The bi-color flag is the monarchist flag or the current Spanish flag that has the symbol of the monarchy. Carrillo accepted this part of the deal as a symbol of compromise between the communists and the crown. This was a major change because the PCE supported the flag of the Second Republic. Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 114, see also Tusell, p. 288.

⁸² Santiago Carrillo, “La transición en España en testimonio de Santiago Carrillo,” *La transición en el País Vasco y en España*, ed. Javier Ugarte, 1998, p. 157-165, quoted in: Quiroga, p. 142.

⁸³ Linz and Stepan, p. 97.

recognized that the exclusion from the 1977 elections of the PCE, at the time the largest and best-organized party in Spain, would have certainly posed a serious problem of legitimacy for the new democracy.”⁸⁴ The communists had mobilized clandestinely and in exile for decades and their legalization meant peace and reconciliation between former enemies.

In addition, the U.S. embassy in Madrid reported that, “In a surprise move obviously calculated to find most Spaniards diverted by the celebration of Easter and immersed in affairs of the family... The Interior Ministry announced late last night the inscription of the PCE in the register of legal political parties.”⁸⁵ Suárez led the legalization behind the army’s back.⁸⁶ While in Paris, Carrillo made a statement that this legalization “...fortifies and lends credibility to the democratization process...”⁸⁷ Other politicians such as Ramon Rubial of the Socialist Party proclaimed that the successful legalization of the Communist Party was part of the struggle⁸⁸ and Fernando Alvarez de Miranda of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) called it “...an appropriate and opportune measure;” it will reduce tensions.”⁸⁹ These political parties had significant praise for this decision to legalize the Communist Party.

El País and *Cambio 16* reported this news as a historical moment for the post-Franco period. In *El País*, the headline proclaimed “*El Partido Comunista de España*,

⁸⁴ Omar G. Encarnación, *Spanish Politics: Democracy after Dictatorship* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), p. 37.

⁸⁵ “PCE Legalized,” American Embassy at Madrid to Secretary of State, (April 10, 1977, 12:00:00), Madrid, NACP, RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, National Archives AAD, 1977MADRID02678, D770125-0067 <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=80140&dt=2532&dl=1629> (accessed January 23, 2017).

⁸⁶ Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, trans. by Mark Oakley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), p. 224.

⁸⁷ “PCE Legalized,” April 10, 1977, NACP, RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1977.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

legalizado” (The Communist Party of Spain legalized). The editors wrote, “The Spanish communist party was legalized yesterday, after it was banned for 40 years...In the middle of the democratic opposition, the legalization of the PCE has gotten general satisfaction, and considered an essential step for normalizing the democratic process.”⁹⁰ Meanwhile, *Cambio 16*’s editorial welcomed the communists back to Spain after decades of exile as a legal party. The editors of *Cambio 16* praised the new ruling and wrote that “Communists, Communists, welcome. You have played a huge and conflictive role in the last half century of the history of Spain. Today you are one of the most solid parties in the country, you have suffered the dictatorship harshly and you have become a touchstone of democracy.”⁹¹

In addition, the *New York Times* quoted Enrique Santin, the chief of staff of the ministry, about his statement that the Communist Party was registered officially and became an official political party on the registry.⁹² Furthermore the *New York Times* reported that Carrillo was satisfied but did not trust Suárez and did not see him as a “...friend of the communists.”⁹³ Carrillo did give Suárez some respect as a leader of the transition. In a statement quoted by the *New York Times*, Carrillo said about Suárez, “I consider him an anti-Communist, but an intelligent one, who understands that ideas are not destroyed with reprisals and bans, and who is prepared to confront his ideas with

⁹⁰ “El Partido Comunista de España, legalizado,” *El País*, April 10, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/04/10/portada/229471201_850215.html (accessed January 20, 2017).

⁹¹ “El Milagro de los PeCes,” *Cambio 16*, April 18-24, 1977, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Spain Nos. 264-290, December 1976-January 2, 1977 thru June 27-July 3, 1977, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

⁹² “Spain Legalizes Communist Party, Ending Long Ban,” *New York Times*, April 10, 1977, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/123420078/E1A75E318B7548F6PQ/2?accountid=14696> (accessed January 25, 2017).

⁹³ *Ibid.*

ours...”⁹⁴ Carrillo and the rest of the communist leaders knew that Suárez had no intention of repeating the Francoist message of persecuting and imprisoning any opposition. The wounds were still there but the two men were willing to compromise.

Three days later was the 46th anniversary of the Second Republic and the army had denounced this move by the Suárez government. As Paloma Aguilar wrote, “The reaction of the Consejo Superior del Ejército (Higher Army Council) was immediate, and on 14 April the Consejo issued a communiqué in which it expressed its strong condemnation of the legalization of the party, although it also announced its deference to this decision...”⁹⁵ The military leaders of the bunker called it a “...*fait accompli* on the grounds of ‘national interests of a higher order.’”⁹⁶ Furthermore, *El País* wrote about this event that, “Today, the 14 of April, the anniversary of the Spanish Republic, it must be said that only a constitutional and democratic monarchy, like the one that is in the process of being established, which recognizes the rights of all Spaniards – Republicans included – can reasonably overcome this transitional stage.”⁹⁷ This piece was written by *El País* at the time of the military leaders complaints against the PCE’s legalization.

ABC had major concerns with the legalization of the Communist Party. The editors claimed, “Caution that in any case obliged us to look, rather than to the letter of statutes, to the substantial history of a party headed by the same leaders - Dolores Ibarruri and Santiago Carrillo - during the terrible years of our civil strife.”⁹⁸ *ABC* did not forget

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Aguilar, p. 224.

⁹⁶ Casanova and Gil Andres, p. 306.

⁹⁷ “Nada es casual,” Editorial, *El País*, April 14, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/04/14/opinion/229816805_850215.html (accessed January 23, 2017), also in Aguilar, p. 225.

⁹⁸ “La Legalizacion Del Partido Comunista,” *ABC*, April 10, 1977, <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1977/04/10/014.html> (accessed January 23, 2017), also in Aguilar, p. 225.

the strong suspicion and mistrust with the communists in Spain since the 1930s. For example, Paloma Aguilar has connected the legalization of the PCE as a shock to the conservatives with the memory of the Civil War: "...the Civil War had been the logical and necessary consequence of the chaos that had existed in the mid-1930s and that it was folly to include a party in the political game that would be sure not to respect the rules of democracy."⁹⁹ The communists had to prove to the cynics and the anti-communists that they would pursue a democratic path then an authoritarian path. Nevertheless, the communist party were open to elections and this legalization had to happen before the start of the 1977 elections.

The 1977 Elections

Once the Communist became legal in Spain, the next step in the transition was the first democratic elections in Spain since 1936. On April 15, 1977, Suárez and the *Consejo de Ministros* (Council of Ministers), that included the new Navy Minister, Admiral Pery Junquera, announced to the world that the first elections in forty years would take place on June 15, 1977.¹⁰⁰ 350 deputies and 267 senate seats for the Spanish parliament would be up for election in the nation.¹⁰¹ For Suárez, the plan was to develop a coalition that would win in June under his leadership. On May 3, 1977, the *Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD) became an official political party whose ideology was center right. The announcement included Suárez officially running for prime minister. The

⁹⁹ Aguilar, p. 225.

¹⁰⁰ "El Gobierno convocó las elecciones generales para el 15 de junio," *El País*, April 16, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/04/16/portada/229989603_850215.html (accessed January 25, 2017), also in: Prego, *Presidentes*, p. 64.

¹⁰¹ "El Gobierno convocó las elecciones generales para el 15 de junio," *El País*, April 16, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/04/16/portada/229989603_850215.html (accessed January 25, 2017)

announcement reassured Suárez's commitment to continue the work he made in the transition but also to grow and solidify the UCD as a legitimate party.

In a speech to the Spanish people, Suárez explained his decisions during the transition that ranged from his desire to continue to be prime minister and his thoughts on the Communist Party. He stated,

...the Spanish people are mostly moderate, and we have tried to respond to that quality with an open spirit. We have discussed as much as possible with the political forces that the change was not a simple laboratory operation, but a sum of efforts, ideas and criticism of all political parties that only has as a target and protagonist for the Spanish people.

Measures of grace are being implemented because we know that the society of 1977 wants to overcome all causes of confrontation and needs instruments for harmony. Our internal normalization corresponded to an effort to normalize our presence in the world. The political parties have come into play, we are closer to getting the bases for the social pact...

...Spanish society **won** laboriously, but with a maturity that everyone honors us, their liberties and their undoubted right to organize their future.¹⁰²

Suárez addressed the people of Spain with the success of including all political parties in this historic transition. The social pact would be a new constitution and more amnesties in the future.

Furthermore, Suárez addressed the legalization of the Communist Party and to his critics on the left and right. He directly stated that, "I, gentlemen, not only am I not a Communist, but I firmly reject its ideology, as the other members of the cabinet I preside over reject. But I am a democrat, and a true democrat. That is why I think our people are mature enough - and proves it every day - to assimilate their own pluralism."¹⁰³ The

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

speech supported Suárez's policy of including all political parties that included the opposition even if they were former enemies.

Besides the UCD, the political parties involved in this new parliamentary election included old and new parties that were moderate, conservative, and left leaning, but also in the periphery of Spain where political parties formed in Catalonia and the Basque region. On the left were the PSOE and the PCE whose parties were some of the oldest in Spain. On the right was the *Alianza Popular* or the Popular Alliance (AP). According to Tusell, the party aroused fear and hostility and only attracted old members that supported Franco to its party.¹⁰⁴ The two major parties outside of the center include the PNV or the Basque Nationalist Party and the center-right Catalanian party, the PDC or the *Pacte Democràtic per Catalunya*. The PDC were led by Jordi Pujol, a prominent leader of Catalonia.

How did this election lead to the success of the UCD and the PSOE? According to Paul Preston, "...Spaniards wanted change, but not confrontation and this favoured Suárez and Felipe González. In contrast, Carrillo and Fraga awakened memories of the conflicts of the past."¹⁰⁵ Since it was the first elections since the Second Republic, the extremes of the left and the right did not gain favorability in this historic election. The PSOE mobilized under the leadership of González. They went on the offense against the ultra conservatives. At the same time, González stressed the importance of voting in these elections. On May 28, he said, "The present elections...will be more than just a fight for an alternative power. The PSOE proposes, as a first objective, to obtain a democratic

¹⁰⁴ Tusell, p. 290.

¹⁰⁵ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 117-118.

constitution...”¹⁰⁶ The PSOE’s plan was democratic rupture and its platform stressed the importance of a new constitution.

However, the UCD managed to make themselves as the party of Suárez. A political party that was built on Suárez’s success, a moderate platform for the transition, and the Spanish people felt the UCD called for more national unity.¹⁰⁷ During the week of the election, leaders of each party appeared on television for one last appeal to the Spanish people. As reported by *El País*, Suárez proclaimed that,

“I aspire to continue the task, because I have a political vocation,” ...He emphasized that he had promised democracy from the legal point of view, “and with logical deficiencies we have succeeded,” and then he mentioned that, once the political reform has been made, there are other reforms that will be undertaken next, although it will not be possible to satisfy all claims overnight. “I cannot assure you,” he said, “immediate and miraculous solutions to those problems that have been dragging on for many years, even if the present freedom of expression makes them seem new. We are a country with deficient structures and legislation that does not conform to the reality of 1977.”¹⁰⁸

Suárez played to his strengths from his accomplishments of passing the Law for Political Reform and the legalization of political parties including the PCE. He hoped that these accomplishments would consolidate his victory in the June 15th elections.

On June 15, 1977, the election succeeded as the first big test for democracy in Spain. About 78 percent of the Spanish population voted.¹⁰⁹ As Paul Preston put it, “The Franco regime had been laid to rest...”¹¹⁰ A legitimate democratic election was the beginning of a new era in Spain. *Cambio 16*’s editorial of this historic day was entitled “*El día de la victoria*” (The Day of Victory),

¹⁰⁶ “La alternative del pueblo: PSOE,” *El Socialista*, May 29, 1977, Library of Congress, Microfilm, January 1, 1977 thru December 31, 1978, Shelf No. NP2849, Reel No. 2168.

¹⁰⁷ Encarnación, p. 55.

¹⁰⁸ “Reportaje: Últimas intervenciones de los líderes en Televisión,” *El País*, June 14, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/06/14/espana/235087262_850215.html (accessed January 26, 2017).

¹⁰⁹ Casanova and Gil Andrés, p. 307; Tusell, p. 292.

¹¹⁰ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 119.

It is a kind of sublime historical revenge, we arrived at the elections of 1977, with such unanimity and approach of programs and parties, that the torn elections of February of 1936 seems to belong to another world...To break the dictatorship demanded to call free elections to endow the country with a democratic constitution. These elections are already here.¹¹¹

The history of liberalism in Spain connected journalists to a time when there was liberal democracy. Spaniards voted in an historical election that legitimized the nation as a major step in democracy.

The UCD won 165 seats and the Socialist Party came in second with 118 seats.¹¹² Tusell stated, “The Union of the Democratic Center won approximately 34 percent of the votes cast and 165 members of parliament...The PSOE won 29 percent of the vote and a total of 118 deputies...the Spanish Communist Party won 20 seats and the Popular Alliance 16.”¹¹³ The historian Michael Richards argued,

Some on the left expressed the view that the elections signified that the war was at last over, a sentiment expressed during the final address of the Madrid PSOE campaign of Felipe González in the stadium of Vallecas, centre of urban migration since the 1940s. The Socialists would not win the elections, however, voters were cautious – perhaps even fearful – and many flocked to the centre as the best guarantor of a peaceful transition.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, in the opinion of Tusell, “There is no doubt at all the PSOE displayed the greatest dynamism, and along with its technical and organizational capabilities this meant that expectations continued to grow, almost tripling the initial production of 10 percent of the vote suggested by opinion polls.”¹¹⁵ The socialists had gained over 100 seats and would therefore have a lot of influence over the creation of the new Constitution. Overall,

¹¹¹ “El día de la victoria”, Editorial, *Cambio 16*, June 20-26, 1977.

¹¹² “*Trunfo del Centro*,” *Ya*, June 17, 1977, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Spain, Madrid, June 1, 1977 thru June 30, 1977, Shelf No. NP 397, Reel No. 710.

¹¹³ Tusell does not give out percentages of seats won by the Cortes for the PCE and the AP’s. Tusell, p. 292.

¹¹⁴ Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-making Spain since 1936* (New York and Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 268.

¹¹⁵ Tusell, p. 292.

the June 1977 elections had ushered in a new era and became a major step for Spain to move forward with the transition. The UCD, a relatively new coalition of the moderate right, had control over the democratic future of Spain.

Conclusion

In less than two years, Spain went from an authoritarian dictatorship to having its first free elections in 41 years. The resignation of Arias Navarro and the decisions made by King Juan Carlos were the first steps of compromise and reconciliation between the Spanish political leaders. Adolfo Suárez as prime minister accomplished in his first years in office a challenging task. First, Suárez led and pushed for political reform that ended Spaniards exiled for opposing the Franco regime and legalized political parties. Second, he legalized the PSOE (the Socialist Party) and the PCE (the Communist Party). The Communist Party's legalization became the ultimate test in the process of creating a new democracy in Spain. In Spain, the communists were the enemy dating back to the terrible years of the Civil War. For Suárez, to legalize the PCE after months of negotiations proved that he was the right man to lead the transition to democracy. Suárez's efforts persuaded Carrillo into a pact over the Spanish flag and his efforts to prevent the military from taking control of the peaceful transition. Third, the June 15, 1977 elections succeeded with overwhelming numbers and support throughout most of the country. Spaniards chose moderate leadership and saw the UCD and the PSOE as the right political parties to lead the country out of authoritarianism.

However, the memory of the war still lingered. The military did not approve of allowing the communists back in the political arena. Moreover, the memory of the failures and death of the Second Republic lingered in the minds of the political

establishment. The creation of a new constitution would further open to the past. Suárez would now have to reform the Spanish economy and invite all political leaders from each party to create and ratify a constitution. Still, even with old wounds and current problems with terrorism from ETA and GRAPO,¹¹⁶ progress had been made and Spain had another chance with democracy.

¹¹⁶ GRAPO was a leftist, anti-fascist terrorist organization in the late 1970s during the Spanish transition.

Chapter 2: The 1978 Constitution, Consensus, and the Push for Regional Autonomy: 1977-1978

This chapter is an analysis on the creation and the ratification of the 1978 Constitution, and how the major political parties of Spain, led by the UCD (The Democratic Center Party) relied on compromise to successfully create the Constitution from June 1977 to December 1978. In addition, this chapter analyzes other key events such as the Moncloa Pacts and the Amnesty Law of October 1977 and how these political pacts were part of the politics of consensus. During the transition, the constitutional debates included political parties from not only the left and the right, but others from different regions such as Catalonia and the Basque Provinces. The leadership of each political party resolved key issues for a successful transition to democracy. First, how did the process of drafting the new Constitution work in the Spanish Cortes¹ after the success of the 1977 elections? Second, which leaders were involved with the drafting process and which political parties had a say in the drafting of this Constitution? Third, why did the politicians want a new democratic state that decentralized and allowed regions to have autonomy? These questions proved that the Spanish leadership wanted an overhaul of the Francoist attitudes about regional autonomy in Spain.

In this chapter I analyze sources from the Spanish parliament. This includes the *Congreso de los Diputados* (Congress of Deputies) and the Senate. I specifically analyze the Constitutional debates, essays from socialist leaders such as Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra, the PCE's (Communist Party) 9th Congress, and newspaper and

¹ The Cortes is the legislative branch of Spain or the Spanish parliament.

magazine sources. The Constitutional debates provided key deliberations from political leaders that argued for the construction of a fair Constitution that included the interests of regional provinces and not just the central regions. Meanwhile, the success of the Constitution's ratification showcased that most Spaniards agreed to its legitimacy and overwhelmingly voted for it. The ratification process had support from parties such as the PSOE (The Socialist Party) and the PCE (The Communist Party). Furthermore, the democratic process extended Adolfo Suárez's popularity amongst his constituents and others but it bolstered the PSOE as an alternative moderate party. The 1978 Constitution's success united Spain as a nation of regional autonomous provinces and ended the dark chapter of Francoism in Spain.

Democratic Momentum and the Constitutional Talks

After the June 1977 elections, the country's new leaders in the Spanish parliament had their own ideas on the creation of a new constitution. For the Suárez administration, the election results, while good for the Democratic Center Party, had challenges with the left. The historian Julián Casanova mentioned that in the summer of 1977, the UCD did not win the absolute majority in Spain.² The Socialist Party's triumph as the second largest political party in the Spanish parliament, led to the UCD's commitment to compromise in the construction of democracy. For the leaders of the new regime, there were four important steps for the completion of the transition: a general amnesty law, autonomy for regions and nationalities in Spain, the economy, and the drafting of a

² Julián Casanova and Carlos Gil Andrés, *Twentieth-Century Spain: A History*, trans. Martin Douch (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 309.

constitution.³ Suárez had to invite all his allies and opponents over political reform on the creation of a new democratic constitution.

The political actors such as: Adolfo Suárez, Felipe González, King Juan Carlos, Santiago Carrillo, and Jordi Pujol, generally agreed on the values of reconciliation and compromise. Victor Ferreres Comella, a political scientist and expert on Spanish Constitutional Law, argues that Spaniards expressed moderation because they voted for the UCD over the AP (Popular Alliance Party) and the PSOE over the PCE.⁴ With the political leaders, moderation became the norm with even the most left wing and right wing parties after the 1977 election. According to Comella, “Manuel Fraga, the leader of the AP...was willing to convert old Francoists into conservative democrats...Santiago Carrillo... was a moderate communist.”⁵ The stage was set for political leaders to debate over the Constitution because of the results from the 1977 election. The reason was that the moderate parties and candidates such as the PSOE and UCD succeeded over far left and far right views such as the PCE and AP.

On July 22, 1977, King Juan Carlos spoke to the Cortes. He focused on the progress made in the transition but also pressed for a new constitution. First, the King proclaimed that, “Democracy has begun. It is undeniable...Now we need to try to consolidate it.”⁶ Second, Juan Carlos commented on the steps towards the completion of the steps toward consolidation.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Victor Ferreres Comella, *The Constitution of Spain: A Contextual Analysis* (Portland, Oregon: Hart Publishing, 2013), 13.

⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

⁶ Spain, *Cortes, Diario de Sesiones*, Año 1977, Núm. 3, July 22, 1977, p. 38. http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L0/CONG/DS/C_1977_003.PDF (accessed February 22, 2017), see also: Pamela Beth Radcliff, *Making Democratic Citizens in Spain: Civil Society and Popular Origins of the Transition, 1960-78* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 322 and Paul Preston, *Juan Carlos:*

...the country has many concrete problems unresolved on which the Spanish people expect the direct action of their representatives. The first thing is to create the appropriate legal framework for new social relations, in the constitutional, regional or human communication. The Crown wishes - and believes to interpret the aspirations of the Cortes - a Constitution that accommodates all the individualities of our people and guarantees their historic and current rights. It wishes to acknowledge the diverse reality of our regional communities and shares in this regard whatever aspirations that do not weaken but enrich and make more robust the unquestionable unity of Spain.⁷

The King proclaimed his commitment to the democratic process in this speech.

Moreover, he wanted to assure the lawmakers that he would support a Constitutional Monarchy and a constitution that included the individual and basic rights of Spaniards of all regions and diversities.

Soledad Álvarez Coto, a journalist for *El País*, reported on the King's speech that day. He wrote, "With the phrase "Democracy has begun" the King appeared before the deputies and senators as a constitutional Monarch, integrator and arbitrator and a supreme personality of popular sovereignty."⁸ The King's presence provided a symbol of unity of a politically divided nation. During the speech, the report by Coto also specified that the politicians in the Spanish parliament reacted positively to the King's speech, that the King wished that the monarchy to be constitutional, and for the political leaders to immediately draft a new constitution.⁹ However, while the Communist Party applauded the King's speech, the Socialist Party remained seated.¹⁰

Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004), p. 400.

⁷ Spain," *Cortes, Diario de Sesiones*, Año 1977, Núm. 3, July 22, 1977, p. 39.

⁸ Soledad Álvarez Coto, "El Rey señala la necesidad de una nueva Constitución," *El País*, July 23, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/07/23/espana/238456801_850215.html (accessed February 22, 2017).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ The socialists had some doubts over the King's commitment to transitioning the regime into a democracy. Preston, *Juan Carlos: Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy*, p. 400. For more information on the socialist thoughts on the monarchy see: Santos Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política Española, 1879-1982* (Madrid: Santillana, S.A. Taurus, 1997), p. 499-500.

The Constitutional Debates, July 27, 1977.

On July 27, the Congress of the Deputies began its debates on the drafting of a constitution. Felipe González first spoke to the Congress about the role of the Socialist Party in Spain for democracy throughout history. He stated to the deputies, “After many vicissitudes, the Socialist Party, which was preparing for the fall of the *Primoriverista* [Primo de Rivera] Dictatorship in all its reach, rose in 1931 with a spectacular triumph, again in conjunction with the Republicans, becoming the first political force in Spain.”¹¹ González gave this speech as a historical reminder that the socialists were consistently against dictators in Spain. Furthermore, he mentioned the historical significance of the Republicans of the 1930s and the memory of the Second Republic as a challenge against Miguel Antonio Primo de Rivera, the military dictator of Spain in the 1920s.

González also commented on the current events of the transition since Suárez led the country. In his thoughts on the June 1977 elections, he declared, “On this date, universal suffrage was reestablished directly and in secret. Despite the limitations imposed by the Law of Political Reform...the Socialists understood that this fact could mean the restoration of popular sovereignty.”¹² The Law for Political Reform and the democratic election on June 1977 were a significant return to popular sovereignty and universal suffrage in Spain. González and the socialists claimed that they were the ones leading the way for elections and political amnesty.

¹¹ *Primoriverista* is a term refers to the dictatorship of Miguel Antonio Primo de Rivera, a Military dictator of Spain in the 1920s before the Second Republic and father of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, one of the founders of Spanish Fascism. Spain, *Cortes, Congreso de los Diputados*, “27 de Julio de 1977. — Num. 5,” p. 66, pg. 65-102, *Cortes Constituyentes (1977-1978): Debates Políticos*, ed. Manuel Gonzalo (Madrid: Cortes Generales Servicios de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1980), p. 8.

¹² *Cortes Constituyentes (1977-1978): Debates Políticos*, p. 9.

González listed five major points for the Constitution. He demanded the Constitution to include the right for people to unionize and he demanded the Constitution include the political, social, economic, and cultural rights for the youth and children.¹³ This was a priority for the socialists to improve workers' rights in a time when Spain had modernized. González wanted the Constitution to include the rights for the youth and children, recognize the rights for women, and he demanded that, "...an autonomous framework must be defined capable of responding generously to the aspirations and rights of the various peoples that compose Spain...to establish solidarity mechanisms that serve to keep harmoniously united all these peoples with their own personality."¹⁴ González's speech represented the Socialist Party's platform on issues of rights. These rights included the regional provinces that demanded political and cultural autonomy. Lastly, the socialists demanded liberty of conscience for every citizen and that the state enact and impose secularism in Spain.¹⁵ This last demand was a social challenge to moderate conservatives and these demands had an impact on part of the new Constitution.

In 1977, Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra proclaimed the importance of the drafting of a constitution through compromise. In an essay titled "*La Alternativa Socialista*" (The Socialist Alternative), they proposed, "In our pursuit to obtain this objective, we have proposed, with all the political democratic powers, a Constitutional Compromise, that contains all of the powers of the political parties and democratic participants in the electoral process...It is therefore proposed that the party...offers the

¹³ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.11.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.11

country a democratic Constitution.”¹⁶ González and Guerra argued for compromise in the creation of a new constitution that included all political parties. The socialists understood that pushing for a more moderate message would assist the Socialist Party to win future elections.

Later in 1978, González continued this political objective of a constitution for all. In an essay titled “*Tareas Futuras y Modelo de Sociedad*” (Future Tasks and Model of Society), he proclaimed, “We do not, therefore, want the Socialists to have a Constitution for the exclusive use of anyone. Neither the left nor the right. We pretend that the basic norm of our coexistence is an adequate framework in which the programs of the political forces can be put into practice without needing to question it permanently.”¹⁷ For González and the socialists, the Constitution should not have any biases against one political side. This was important for the socialists because of fairness whenever a law is put in place by whichever political party would be in power.

After González spoke to the Congress of Deputies, Santiago Carrillo, Secretary General of the Communist Party, delivered his speech to the Congress on several important topics such as the new Constitution and political amnesty. Carrillo stated that the communists would cooperate in the creation of the Constitution that does not exclude any political and ideological group and that affirmed the principle of popular sovereignty.¹⁸ Similarly to González, Carrillo’s policy was the rights of Spaniards of all regions to have popular sovereignty. He and the PCE wanted the new Constitution,

¹⁶ Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (Bilbao, España: Ediciones Albia, 1977), p. 36.

¹⁷ “Una Transición Atípica,” Felipe González, *España y su futuro* (Madrid: Cuadernos para el Diálogo, 1978), p. 36.

¹⁸ Spain, *Cortes, Congreso de los Diputados*, “27 de Julio de 1977. —Num. 5,” pg. 65-102, *Cortes Constituyentes (1977-1978)*, p. 15.

“...that authentically solves the problem of regional and domestic liberties, indispensable for Spain to be a united state...”¹⁹ He called for the central government in Spain to not oppress regions that wanted autonomy within Spain. This question of respecting the rights of regions that wanted autonomy became one of the key dilemmas of the creation of the Constitution of 1978.

The amnesty debate on political crimes and political prisoners did not end after the 1977 elections. For Carrillo, the Spanish parliament needed to grant amnesty to Spaniards accused by the dictatorship of committing political crimes and to continue reconciliation between the state and the former opposition Spaniards against Franco.²⁰ Furthermore, he claimed that, “This amnesty must also have a working aspect and confirm the readmission in their jobs in the companies or in the hierarchy of the State, with all their rights, to those who were dismissed or removed for political reasons or union activities.”²¹ For the communists, the rights of workers who were fired for their political beliefs, had to change in order for a complete amnesty. The legalization of the Communist Party pushed them to establish themselves as the true party for the workers and the former and current political prisoners.

After Carrillo’s speech at the Congress, Jordi Pujol of the Democratic Catalonia Party, represented that region and its concerns over regional autonomy and democracy. He stated, “...there is a great hope in Catalonia: the hope that this Cortes will be the instrument of a great mission, a double mission, on the one hand, for the full recognition of the collective personality of the various regions and nationalities in Spain, and, on the

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 15.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

²¹ Ibid., p. 15.

other hand, the creation of real solidarity, not fruit...of coercion, but fruit of the will to live together.”²² Pujol commented that Catalans had hope for the Spanish parliament for the first time in years. The push for autonomy would help heal the rift between the central government and the regions within Spain that had their own identities. He argued that autonomy and democracy in Spain were inseparable and that it was vital for the Catalans that they had a voice in the drafting of the new Constitution.²³

For the Basques, the PNV (the Basque Nationalist Party), was represented by Xavier Arzallus, a prominent Basque politician negotiated between the Basques and the Suárez administration. As with the Catalans, Arzallus called for regional autonomy for Euskadi (The Basque region). He listed three points that the Basques had debated for the right for regional autonomy. First, the right of autonomy “... is an inescapable requirement and repeatedly declared by the Basque people...we make our intentions public to devote all our parliamentary work to its achievement and urge the Cortes and the Government to proceed in a way that this attempt is realized as soon as possible.”²⁴ The PNV declared that they would cooperate with other deputies, through parliamentary work, over the autonomy of the Basque citizens.

Second, Arzallus, the PNV, and other members of the Congress that were Basque, declared solidarity with other nationalities that wanted autonomy.²⁵ The regions outside of Castile had a common cause for self-rule. Third, Arzallus argued, “As soon as this right is achieved, instantly implement measures of an administrative legal order that affects the provinces of Álava, Navarra, Guipúzcoa, and Vizcaya with respect due to their

²² Ibid., p. 19.

²³ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁵ Ibid.

individual characteristics.”²⁶ He listed these points that proved to be a major argument for reform with these separate nationality political parties. Moreover, given the number of terrorist attacks caused by ETA after the death of Franco, the PNV had to step in to resolve any conflicts between the government and the Basques. The political conflict between the central government and the Basque region became a central theme in the development of the new Constitution.

Later that day, Manuel Fraga addressed his fellow deputies about the future Constitution. He first mentioned collaboration with other political parties but in exchange to not bring up the past such as the Spanish Civil War. He proclaimed, “We consider ... of very little use for Spain to debate what has already happened and, moreover, to irresponsibly open the old wounds of a century long civil war.”²⁷ During the transition, the AP was an example of a party that avoided the crimes committed by the Nationalists during and after the Spanish Civil War. They wanted to avoid any confrontations over the past. However, Fraga wanted a true Constitution that attracted the interests for all and that called for a pluralist democracy.²⁸

The last major party to speak to the Congress that day was the Democratic Center Party. The UCD representative Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, Suárez’s successor and future prime minister of the government, called for a draft of a new constitution that would have the consensus of all political parties represented in the Congress and of all Spaniards.²⁹ He stated, “a Constitution that institutionalizes a structure of public freedoms, jurisdictionally guaranteed, whose practice has no limit than to respect the Constitution,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 37.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 37

²⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

and does not consent with more obstructions...to defend society against violence...”³⁰

The UCD was the political party with the most seats in the Congress of Deputies and their policy on the Constitution was a strong democratic institution with judicial oversight over freedoms. Calvo-Sotelo’s statement targeted individuals and organizations that have used violence since Franco’s death such as ETA. The Spanish political leaders’ constitutional debates provided ideas of what the Constitution would address such as regional autonomy and basic freedoms.

October 1977: The Amnesty Law and the Moncloa Pacts

On October 14, 1977, the Spanish parliament passed a significant bill on political amnesty. According to the Congress of Deputies records, Secretary José Luis Ruiz-Navarro of the UCD stated that the proposed amnesty law would cover political crimes between December 15, 1976 and June 15, 1977.³¹ The bill covered the demands for autonomy and the reestablishment of public freedoms while the law extended amnesty up to October 6, 1977.³² According to Article 10 of the bill, “The competent judicial authority shall immediately order the liberty of the beneficiaries of the amnesty to be found in prison and shall waive search and arrest warrants for those who have been declared in default.”³³ The amnesty put forth a complete institutional change with the judiciary’s power in the end of political crimes. When it was passed by the Congress of Deputies, the parties involved in the creation of the bill included: the UCD, the PSOE, the

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Spain, *Cortes, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados*, Año 1977, Núm. 24, Sesión Plenaria, núm. 11, October 14, 1977, p. 954, http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L0/CONG/DS/C_1977_024.PDF (accessed February 25, 2017).

³² Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, trans. by Mark Oakley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), p. 194

³³ Spain, *Cortes, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados*, Año 1977, Núm. 24, Sesión Plenaria, núm. 11, October 14, 1977, p. 956.

PCE, *Minoria Vasca* (Basque Minority) and *Minoria Catalana* (Catalan Minority), *Grupo Mixto* (Mixed Group) and *Socialistas de Catalonia* (Socialists of Catalonia).³⁴

The editors of *El País* reported on the new amnesty law and stated that, "...most of the parliamentary groups were in favor of the signing of reconciliation, which means amnesty, only two deputies voted against it - one of them, the former captain Julio Busquets - and the maximum block of the total of eighteen abstentions corresponded to the Popular Alliance. In the Senate, there were no votes against [the amnesty], and only six abstentions..."³⁵ The votes greatly favored amnesty of political crimes but Manuel Fraga ordered the AP to boycott the meetings.³⁶ The editors of *El País* wrote, "...the most significant intervention against the proposed amnesty law came from Popular Alliance..."³⁷ In the Congress, the AP had abstained since the political prisoners tended to be leftists that opposed Francoists. The AP opposed the political parties of the democratic center and far left over political amnesty in 1977.

Michael Richards best explained the historical significance of the 1977 Amnesty Law. He states that this amnesty law wiped the slate for all political opposition since 1936 when the Civil War began.³⁸ Furthermore, he argued that,

...opposing the dictatorship based on democratic conscience was in effect equated with the institutional violence of the military regime...Unusually in the Spanish

³⁴ *Grupo Mixto* is a parliamentary group where there are deputies that do not have the requirements to be an official party or are not members of a parliamentary group. Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, p. 195.

³⁵ Julio Busquets was a member and deputy of the *Socialistas de Cataluña* (Socialists of Catalonia). "Las Cortes aprobaron la amnistía," *El País*, October 15, 1977, p. 8-9 and 11, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/10/15/portada/245718003_850215.html (accessed February 25, 2017).

³⁶ "Near Consensus Amnesty Draft Hammered Out," American Embassy at Madrid to Secretary of State, (October 14, 1977 12:00:00 am), Madrid, NACP, RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1977, Central Foreign Policy Files, National Archives AAD, Document Number: 1977MADRID07636, Film Number: D770378-0071, <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=239115&dt=2532&dl=1629> (accessed April 14, 2017).

³⁷ "Las Cortes aprobaron la amnistía," *El País*, October 15, 1977, p. 8-9 and 11.

³⁸ Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-making Spain since 1936* (New York and Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 268.

case, it came some four decades after the end of the war, an intervening period which saw repressive erasure of memory...and a humiliating silence...followed by another two decades of rebuffed calls for reconciliation.³⁹

The Amnesty Law of 1977 was a continued act of reconciliation between the two opposing political forces.

On October 25, 1977, the Moncloa Pacts were agreed by the political leaders of Spain. The pact was a negotiated solution to the economic recession and the lack of policy since the transition began.⁴⁰ According to Preston, the pact dealt with the response to terrorism, inflation, unemployment, and trade.⁴¹ Furthermore, Julián Casanova summarized that the pact was, "...the acceptance by the forces of the left of a policy of moderation and wage freezes to put a brake on inflation in exchange for a series of promises to initiate fiscal, legal, institutional and social reforms."⁴² The Moncloa Pacts were a consensus that benefited almost all of the major political parties. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan called the Moncloa Pacts a political pact where Suárez invited all the major political parties to the presidential home for negotiations.⁴³ Furthermore, the editors of *Cambio 16* wrote, "The pact...could finally be signed in the Moncloa, after four months in which the first democratic government of Adolfo Suárez walked carefully without daring to get involved in the current economic situation. The pact, obviously, is not good,

³⁹ Ibid., p. 268-269.

⁴⁰ Mary Vincent, *Spain 1833-2002: People and State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 215.

⁴¹ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 136.

⁴² According to Julián Casanova the Moncloa Pacts introduced property tax and the IRPF (*Impuesto sobre la Renta de la Personas Físicas* or income tax) reformed the financial system and public expenditure, reviewed the Military Justice Code, parliamentary control of the media, extension of free education, and a push for a Workers Statute' that improved labor relations, Casanova and Gil Andres, *Twentieth Century Spain: A History*, p. 311.

⁴³ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 90.

but neither is it bad. It is simply unavoidable.”⁴⁴ *Cambio 16*'s editorial explained that the signing was good because it was a successful compromise between all the major political parties.⁴⁵ For example, Preston argues, “The Moncloa Pact was in many respects the culmination of the policies of moderation and self-sacrifice pursued by both the Socialists and Communists throughout the transition period.”⁴⁶ The Suárez administration led and pushed for compromise.

This consensus by the Moncloa Pacts, after the Amnesty Law of 1977, showed that the political leaders needed to adopt reconciliation within Spanish politics. The journalist Federico Abascal Gasset, who worked for *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, wrote, “The agreements of the Moncloa...will serve Mr. Suárez to prove if he knows how to govern a country.”⁴⁷ The Moncloa Pacts was another political victory for Suárez and the UCD. The Moncloa agreements on the economy proved to be part of the overall idea of democratic consensus and Suárez demonstrated that he was the right man to steer Spain towards democracy. As Javier Tusell argued, “The Moncloa Pacts came to represent in socio-economic terms an attitude parallel to that of the political consensus achieved in the electoral law and the amnesty law.”⁴⁸ The pacts were an example of the Spanish model for democratic transitions. Still, not everyone was on board. Paloma Aguilar claims that only the AP refused to sign the Moncloa Pacts.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ “Inevitable,” Editorial, *Cambio 16*, November 7-13, 1977, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 291-316, July 4-10, 1977 thru December 26, 1977-January 1, 1978, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 137.

⁴⁷ Federico Abascal Gasset, “El soufflé de la Moncloa,” *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, October 29, 1977, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Tusell, p. 294.

⁴⁹ Aguilar, p. 157.

The following day on October 26, 1977, unions such as the UGT, CCOO, and the *Confederacion Española de Organizaciones Empresariales*, were supposed to participate in the negotiations of the Moncloa Pacts.⁵⁰ According to Casanova, the pacts, "...met two of the main objectives fairly quickly: a marked fall in foreign deficit and the swift reduction of inflation to 16%. However, unemployment was still rising... Without the participation of the trade unions, which had been excluded from the negotiation, and with no body set up to oversee the promises, many of them were shelved until better times came along..."⁵¹ The Moncloa Pacts were agreements debated by political leaders within Madrid that decided where the Spanish economy would advance. Nonetheless, Paul Preston argues that the left viewed the Moncloa Pacts as a "...necessary evil."⁵² While the pact was not perfect, it served as a policy that embraced compromise. Overall, October 1977 served as a significant month towards the creation of a new constitution because of the democratic process explored through political and economic reforms.

Constitutional Debates: Federalism vs. Autonomy

The debates on regional autonomy was the role of Madrid versus the regions outside of Castile. Galicia, Catalonia, and the Basque Country were three of the principal areas in Spain that wanted political autonomy. During the dictatorship, Franco and his supporters were vehemently against the complete autonomy of regions and nationalities outside of the center (Castile). The political scientist Josep M. Colomer has argued that

⁵⁰ The UGT stands for the *Unión General de Trabajadores* or the General Union of Workers that partnered with the Socialist Party. The CCOO stands for the *Comisiones Obreras* or the Workers Commission that partnered with the Communist Party. The CEOE stands for the *Confederacion Española de Organizaciones Empresariales* or the Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations. "Patronos y obreros, presents en el desarrollo del "pacto de la Moncloa,"" *El País*, October 26, 1977, http://elpais.com/diario/1977/10/26/economia/246668405_850215.html (accessed March 1, 1977).

⁵¹ Although Casanova and Gil Andrés do not specify, the promises towards the trade unions was structural reforms in, Casanova and Gil Andres, p. 311-312.

⁵² Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 137.

the conservatives of the AP wanted to maintain a unitary state whereas the Catalan Democratic Convergence (CDC) and the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) favored the creation of institutions within their communities.⁵³ The UCD led the Spanish government in solving this dilemma of regional autonomy versus a continuation of centralization. Furthermore, Linz and Stepan argued, "...when Spain began its transition, the variable that potentially presented the most dangerous complication for both democratic transition and democratic consolidation was stateness...The most important indicator was the terrorist violence of the nationalist Basque organization ETA."⁵⁴ ETA, and other terrorist groups, had a massive influence in the debates over regional autonomy.

On January 19, 1978, the Senate debated on the topic of autonomy in the creation of a new constitution. Alberto Armas Garcia, a member of the Socialist Party and Senator representing Tenerife, began his address with a statement, "It is evident that the country [Spain] has a longing for regional life; even in areas without an autonomous tradition there had been mass movements that would have to be blind and deaf to not interpret."⁵⁵ The ultimate pursuit for the socialists was for a political reform that granted autonomy to all regions of Spain. Armas Garcia called for a conception of a federalist system within Spain that was a union of all nationalities.⁵⁶

The socialists promoted a federalist system when González and Guerra wrote about this topic in their essays. They declared that the new Constitution should confirm a

⁵³ Josep M. Colomer, "The Spanish 'State of Autonomies': Non-Institutional Federalism," in *Politics and Policy in Democratic Spain: No Longer Different?* ed. Paul Heywood (Portland OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999), p. 41.

⁵⁴ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John's Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 99.

⁵⁵ *Cortes Diario de Sesiones del Senado*, Num 5, January 19, 1978, p. 254-260, *Cortes Constituyentes (1977-1978): Debates Politicos*, p. 618.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

federalist system that guaranteed autonomy for all the people of Spain because they can create their own institutions.⁵⁷ The idea of autonomy opposed Francoism's ideal of a centralized state ruled by an authoritarian dictator. For the socialists, their policy was for regions and nationalities within Spain to gain some freedoms. Furthermore, they argued, "...This decentralization process and the empowerment of autonomies is perfectly consistent with the essence of Socialism, since it supposes a deepening of the concept of democracy, an objective that is identified with that of Socialism itself."⁵⁸ The socialists campaigned for autonomy as part of a democratic socialist ideology that would take Spain towards political consensus.

In addition, the Catalonia Senator from Barcelona, Josep Benet Morell, of the *Grupo Entesa dels Catalans*, a leftist party, addressed the Senate on the autonomy of Catalonia and his concerns on the current administration. He stated, "It is necessary that the government had a pre-autonomy policy. This is necessary because, in the question of the autonomies, it is now producing illusions and confusions that can have severe negative consequences."⁵⁹ Much of the problems with regional conflict was mainly with the Basque radicals in ETA and not with Catalan nationalism. The political scientist Omar Encarnación argues, "The Catalans presented an ideal scenario for the introduction of regional home rule because...in contrast to the Basque Country, violence is not an important component of Catalan nationalism."⁶⁰ The Catalans proved to be valuable on the debate towards a federalist Spanish state. This question and debate on regional

⁵⁷ González and Guerra, *PSOE*, p. 37.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁵⁹ *Cortes Diario de Sesiones del Senado*, Num 5, January 19, 1978, p. 254-260, *Cortes Constituyentes (1977-1978): Debates Politicos*, p. 623.

⁶⁰ Omar G. Encarnación, *Spanish Politics: Democracy after Dictatorship* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), p. 102.

political autonomy proved to be important because the Constitutional debates continued in 1978.

The 9th Spanish Communist Party Congress: April 19-23, 1978

On April 20, 1978, the Communist Party held their party congress in Madrid. It was the first congress for the PCE to legally be allowed in Spain since 1932.⁶¹ The congress was a massive event for the communists that returned to Spain. It took place slightly after the 47th anniversary of the founding of the Second Republic. On April 16, 1978, Dolores Ibarruri, the lifetime president of the PCE, wrote a declaration published by *El País* about this historic occasion for the communists. She wrote about the struggle of the communists after almost forty years of exile, persecution, and having a clandestine life before the legalization in 1977.⁶² Ibarruri later proclaimed in her published declaration that, “Our Communist Party is a revolutionary Marxist party, democratic, in solidarity with all the peoples, movements and parties that fight for their national liberation and for socialism...I trust that in the IX Congress...our party will be strengthened.”⁶³ Similar to the socialists during the 27th Congress in Madrid the previous year, the communists came together in triumph for the 9th Congress.

On April 20, 1978, *El País*'s journalists Joaquín Prieto, Sebastian García, and Soledad Gallego-Díaz reported that more than 2000 people (1500 of them were delegates) arrived for the inauguration of the 9th Congress of the Communist Party that

⁶¹ *Noveno Congreso del Partido Comunista de España: Informes, debates, actas, y documentos, Madrid 19-23 de abril de 1978* (Madrid: Partido Comunista de España, 1978), p. 5.

⁶² Dolores Ibarruri, “En el umbral de nuestro IX Congreso,” *El País*, April 16, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/04/16/opinion/261525612_850215.html, (accessed March 1, 2017), see also, *Noveno Congreso del Partido Comunista de España*, p. 9-11.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

took place April 19.⁶⁴ On that day, Santiago Carrillo, still the Secretary General of the PCE, gave a speech to the 9th Congress. On the draft of the new Constitution, he told his fellow colleagues and party members that, “It is necessary to start with reality: no party has the strength to impose a text of his onto others. Perhaps this is a guarantee that this Constitution will last longer than others and with it the democratic system.”⁶⁵ He thought that the consensus and lack of one party dominating the other parties could be a good sign that this Constitution would sustain democracy for a long time.

Carrillo promoted the Communist Party’s plans for a Constitution that satisfies the party and the workers. He argued, “We have proposed in the Cortes to reach an agreement to have a Constitution before the summer...We estimate that with the current text it is possible to carry out profound transformations of structure the day that a majority is prepared to carry them out.”⁶⁶ The PCE had become part of the democratic process because they negotiated with their opponents. Still, the communists demanded that changes be made during this historic time of creating a new constitution that worked. As Carrillo noted, “Once the Constitution was approved, a new Electoral Law and perhaps some other complementary one of importance, the Constituent Cortes would have to dissolve to raise new general elections in order to choose ordinary Courts, in conditions of freedom and clearer than those that existed on June 15 from last year.”⁶⁷ He argued that the new Constitution’s implementation had to improve the next elections for the betterment of the Communist Party and the nation.

⁶⁴ Joaquín Prieto, Sebastian García, and Soledad Gallego-Díaz, “Orden y ausencia de emotividad en la inauguración del IX Congreso del PCE,” *El País*, April 20, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/04/20/espana/261871210_850215.html (accessed March 1, 2017).

⁶⁵ *Noveno Congreso del Partido Comunista de España*, p. 34.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

The 1978 Constitution Drafted and Approved

The 1978 Constitution was a joint creation by a constitutional drafting committee that had men from separate political parties. It was a consensus that also learned from the mistakes made by the Second Republic's Constitution. The Constitution had a small committee to draft it except the Basques were not invited in the constitutional negotiations within the small committee. The reason for a small committee was that the decision-making process was much easier with a small group than a large group.⁶⁸ They each represented interests of their political party but having a small group increased the chance of swift compromise. The 1978 Constitution was lengthy and according to Tusell,

...the Constitution had to be lengthy because the left insisted on an extensive enumeration of rights and intentions...The draft constitution was written by a commission of seven people: three of the center, one socialist, one communist, one Catalan nationalist, and a representative of the right...in March 1978, shortly before the text was completed, the socialists withdrew from the commission. Later, the right-wing members were on the point of doing the same, but on neither occasion, was the fundamental consensus of the group under any real threat.⁶⁹

The plan included a Catalan nationalist furthering the idea of a Spain that was a federalist system of autonomous provinces and a process of decentralization.

As Prime Minister of Spain, Suárez emphasized the importance of consensus. For example, in a speech given to the Congress of Deputies on April 5, 1978, he addressed to lawmakers and Spaniards,

...during a constitutional process, the Government must limit the reach of its options maintaining the level of dissent at levels which are not substantial, because that is the only way to avoid what would be the gravest danger to the body politic: the nonexistence of a radical harmony in the country, at its roots, concerning the basic elements of national coexistence. This transitory situation,

⁶⁸ Richard Gunther, "The Spanish Model Revisited," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, eds. Gregorio Alonso and Diego Muro (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), p. 25-26.

⁶⁹ Tusell, p. 296, see also: Gunther, "The Spanish Model Revisited," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 25.

characteristic of all constituent periods, conditions all aspects of political action...And the Constitution, as an expression of national harmony, must be obtained by consensus, for which it is necessary to consider the diverse political forces now present.⁷⁰

As Linz and Stephan have claimed, the Suárez administration adopted a “free constitution-making formula”⁷¹ or a formula where the consensual, instead of the majority, drafted the Constitution.⁷² Suárez and the UCD were the majority but they chose not to dominate the drafting of the new Constitution. The diverse group of civilians from separate political parties in the committee represented the UCD’s policy of consensus in the development of the new Constitution.

The text of the Constitution covered prominent issues that plagued the transition up to this point. For example, the Spanish Constitution’s preamble guaranteed the rights of Spaniards and the Constitution would protect their rights along with their culture, traditions, languages, and institution.⁷³ The Preliminary Part, Section 1, proclaimed that Spain would be a social and democratic State under the rule of law that valued democratic values, National Sovereignty, and the democratic system would be a Parliamentary monarchy.⁷⁴ The political system established itself due to the influence of the UCD and PSOE but also in the agreement to allow autonomy for regions. Sections 2 and 3 recognizes the nationalities and regions for their rights to self-government and that while Castilian would continue to be the official language of Spain, the other Spanish

⁷⁰ Spain, *Cortes, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados*, Núm 36, Sesión Plenaria núm. 13, April 5, 1978, p. 1261, http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L0/CONG/DS/C_1978_036.PDF (accessed March 2, 2017), also in Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 114.

⁷¹ Linz and Stepan, p. 114.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁷³ Spanish Constitution of 1978, Preamble, trans., http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso/Hist_Normas/Norm/const_espa_texto_ingles_0.pdf (accessed March 2, 2017).

⁷⁴ Spanish Constitution of 1978, Preliminary Part, sec. 1, cl. 1-3.

languages would also be officially recognized within each region's autonomy.⁷⁵ It was clear that the Catalonians represented the push for self-government within each region and nationality. While King Juan Carlos's royalty had to be respected, the compromised agreements ended the old centralized government dominated from Madrid.

Most importantly, freedom of expression was central to the completion of the transition to democracy. In Part 1, chapter 1, section 20, the Constitution listed the rights of free expression. They included, "the right to freely express and spread thoughts, ideas and opinions through words, in writing or by any other means of reproduction; the right to literary, artistic, scientific and technical production and creation; the right to academic freedom; the right to freely communicate or receive truthful information..."⁷⁶ The fundamental right of Spaniards to have freedom of expression legally destroyed a large aspect of Francoism. Spain returned to the core liberal values that had disappeared for almost forty years.

Lastly, the continuation of two houses on the Spanish parliament was a fundamental lesson learned since the days of the Second Republic. Part III, Chapter 1 of the Constitution addressed the Houses of Parliament. The *Cortes Generales* (Congress) would have two houses: the Congress of Deputies and the Senate and that they would be inviolable or would never be infringed based on the protections by the Constitution.⁷⁷ Richard Gunther argued that the committee members understood that resentment, while drafting a constitution, could backfire because of the consequences that could lead to instability within the state, collapse of the state, and violence such as what occurred in the

⁷⁵ Spanish Constitution of 1978, Preliminary Part, sec. 2 and 3, cl. 1-3

⁷⁶ Spanish Constitution of 1978, Part I, chapter 1, sec. 20.

⁷⁷ Spanish Constitution of 1978, Part III, chapter 1, sec. 66, cl. 1.

1930s.⁷⁸ Consensus meant the inclusion of opposing sides and this political strategy was a common theme with the Spanish transition to democracy.

On October 31, 1978, the Constitution was approved by the Cortes. According to the reports by *Cambio 16*, out of 598 Senators and Deputies, 551 favored the new Constitution, 11 were against it, and 22 abstained.⁷⁹ Those that abstained included the PNV while a member of the AP was not entirely on board with approving it.⁸⁰ Before the vote, on October 30, *El País* was targeted by a terrorist attack plotted by a Far-right group. Three employees of *El País* were gravely injured by a letter bomb.⁸¹ Other newspapers reported the terrorist attack and the two chambers voting for the referendum on the Constitution. The conservative newspaper *Ya* labeled it as “Terrorism against liberty.”⁸² Moreover, the editors of *El Socialista* denounced the terrorist attack and stated, “despite the bombs, the Spanish Constitution of the new democracy is already in the street: In the hands of the people.”⁸³ The next step of the constitutional process was the citizens to vote for the referendum of the new Constitution.

On December 6, 1978, Spaniards went to the polls to vote for or against the Constitution. The political parties and news media made persuasive arguments for or

⁷⁸ Gunther, “The Spanish Model Revisited,” in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 34.

⁷⁹ “Ya solo, el referendum: ¡Viva la consentida!” *Cambio 16*, November 12, 1978, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 343-369, July 2, 1978 thru December 31, 1978, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

⁸⁰ “La Constitución, aprobada por el Parlamento: Aprobación masiva de la Constitución por el Congreso,” *El País*, November 1, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/11/01/espana/278722816_850215.html (accessed March 4, 2017).

⁸¹ “Salvaje atentado terrorista contra nuestro periódico, Tres empleados de EL PAIS heridos, dos de ellos gravísimamente, al explotar un paquete-bomba,” *El País*, October 31, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/10/31/espana/278636416_850215.html (accessed March 4, 2017).

⁸² “Atentado Contra El Diario “*El País*”: Terrorismo contra libertad,” *Ya*, October 31, 1978, Library of Congress, Microfilm, October 1 thru October 31, 1978, Shelf No. NP 397, Reel No. 710.

⁸³ “Contra el terrorismo...La Constitución: Aprobada en las dos Cámarasm está lista para el referendum,” *El Socialista*, November 5, 1978, Library of Congress, Microfilm, January 1, 1977 thru December 31, 1978, Shelf No. NP 2849, Reel No. 2168.

against the ratification. In an editorial in *Cambio 16*, Juan Tomás de Salas argued to vote yes to the Constitution. He stated,

If...the dictatorship had fallen instead of placidly vanishing, the Spaniards would probably have suffered much more, but the image of the previous regime would have been shattered forever. The traumatic change of regime would have allowed us to know in detail the system of widespread corruption that established and maintained Francoism for so many years by these lands...Vote YES on December 6 to bet that we are a people capable of living free and in peace.⁸⁴

Tomás's persuasive article centered on the past and current state of Spain such as the Franco regime fading instead of collapsing right away. For Tomás, voting yes was the right choice for peace and stability instead of misery from the long dictatorship. The Constitution was overwhelmingly voted by Spaniards. The editors of *El País* reported that 87.16% of the voters favored the ratification of the Constitution.⁸⁵ However, the turnout for the vote was low because of the low voter participation in the Basque region when the PNV abstained from voting.⁸⁶ The political scientist Diego Muro states that the PNV's supporters followed the commands of the party to abstain because the PNV felt that it was an opportunity to become the number one leader of the Basque nationalist movement.⁸⁷

There was a massive wave of optimism within the Democratic Center and the Socialist parties. *El País* reported that the Secretary General of the UCD, Rafael Arias Salgado, "...was not overly concerned about the abstention rate... "This Constitution is

⁸⁴ Juan Tomás de Salas, "Por qué hoy que votar "sí,"" Editorial, *Cambio 16*, December 10, 1978.

⁸⁵ "La Constitución, aprobada, aunque con mayor índice de abstención de lo previsto," *El País*, December 7, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/12/07/portada/281833202_850215.html (accessed March 4, 2017).

⁸⁶ Based on Victor Ferreres Comella's statistics, about 67% of the voting population voted in the referendum of the Constitution versus about 79% that voted in the June 1977 elections in: Comella, *The Constitution of Spain: A Contextual Analysis*, p. 15, see also: Casanova and Gil Andres, p.315.

⁸⁷ Diego Muro, "The Basque Experience of the Transition to Democracy," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 168-169.

going to be approved by more than 70% of the voters and that is a magnificent result,” he said. Mr. Arias Salgado pointed out that the abstention rate had not been high in the Basque Country...”⁸⁸ Furthermore, Alfonso Guerra, the second in command of the PSOE, told *El País*, “To obtain a percentage of voting superior to the 60% is already a triumph. I do not think anyone has to be nervous about abstention figures.”⁸⁹ Both Guerra and Salgado maintained that the ratification of the Constitution would pass successfully.

The Socialist Party campaigned for the ratification of the Constitution in the month of November and early December. On the December 10, 1978 issue of *El Socialista*, there was a declaration from the Executive Commission of the PSOE. They declared, “The citizens from all the cities of Spain have overwhelmingly approved the new constitution. On top of violent terrorism, the pressures from the extreme right, and all the attempts to destabilize the democratic process, the people demonstrated a clear and overwhelming will for coexistence between peace and liberty.”⁹⁰ The optimism of the PSOE and the UCD culminated with the signature of King Juan Carlos on December 26 when the Constitution of 1978 became the official document that Spain had become a democratic nation.

Concomitantly, the Communist Party’s first weekly issue of *Mundo Obrero*, the official Spanish Communist publication that was reinstated after the PCE was legalized, covered the ratification of the 1978 Constitution. The communists were happy that the ratification went well but they knew they had work to do. In an article written by

⁸⁸ “El día se aprobó la Constitución: La Constitución puede ser promulgada el día 26,” *El País*, December 7, 1978, http://elpais.com/diario/1978/12/07/espana/281833221_850215.html (accessed March 5, 2017).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ “Los ciudadanos de todos los pueblos de España han aprobado por abrumadora mayoría la nueva Constitución, “Declaración de la Comisión Ejecutiva del PSOE,” *El Socialista*, December 10, 1978, p. 1.

Fernando Salgado, he argued that, “Despite the giant step of approval of the constitutional text, the transition between the dictatorship and a democratic system has not ended ... To put it in the words of Santiago Carrillo, “*The approval of the Constitution does not close, more than formally, the constitutional period.*”⁹¹ Salgado, as a member of the PCE, called for the party to lead in continued reform over the structures of the state and the economy.⁹² Still, the policy of consensus with the drafting, debates, and ratification of the 1978 Constitution proved that reconciliation from the past tragedies was the correct balance in transitioning Spain into a democratic state.

Conclusion

Victor Ferreres Comella summed up the trials, tribulations, and the triumph of the 1978 Constitution. He claims,

When read against the background of Spain’s troubled constitutional history, the text of 1978 is a great achievement. This Constitution has laid down the foundations for a democratic system that is committed to the rule of law and fundamental rights...The secret of the Constitution lies in the conciliatory spirit with which it was written. *Consenso* was the magic word that was in everyone’s mouth at the constitutional stage...A collective resolution was made that never again should a democratic political order collapse as the Second Republic did in 1936.⁹³

The 1978 Constitution began with the successful elections from June 1977 and culminated in the Constitutional debates within the Congress of Deputies and the Senate. The Moncloa Pacts was Suárez’s achievement in inviting party leaders over economic problems in Spain. The Moncloa Pacts represented the strategy for the achievement of consensus in a divided Spain. The UCD and the PSOE led this idea even though the

⁹¹ Fernando Salgado, “Ya tenemos Constitución...Y ahora, ¿qué?” *Mundo Obrero*, December 7-13, 1978, p. 6.

⁹² Salgado, “Ya tenemos Constitución...Y ahora, ¿qué?” *Mundo Obrero*, December 7-13, 1978, p. 6-7.

⁹³ *Consenso* means consensus in Spanish. Comella, p. 23.

PSOE initially called for a democratic rupture. The Amnesty Law of October 1977 continued the growing trust between the left and the moderates.

Political leaders of the democratic left and right (except for the PNV and Basques), as well as most Spaniards, voted for the ratification of the 1978 Constitution. The vote indicated that Spaniards wanted the nation to transition to democracy. The consensus in the creation of the Constitution was done by Spanish political leaders and not the military. There was not a push by the majority for another authoritarian dictator nor for the continuation of the fascist tendencies of Francoism. The greatest achievement of the 1978 Constitution was as mentioned by Comella: the lessons from history. Spanish politicians learned from the mistakes from previous attempts of consolidating democracy in Spain, especially from the Second Republic. Spanish nationalities and regions were granted regional autonomy and the Catalans were part of the creation of the 1978 Constitution. However, the challenges now centered on maintaining the democratic experiment.

Chapter 3: The Rise and Victory of the Spanish Socialist Party: 1979-1982

This chapter is an analysis of the PSOE's (Spanish Socialist Party) success in the 1982 elections, the fall of the UCD (Democratic Center Party), and the consolidation for democracy after the ratification of the 1978 Constitution. I argue that the reason for the Socialist Party's success was the decision by Felipe González, and other leaders of the party to exclude the term Marxism on their party platform. I address the following questions: Why did the Socialist Party forgo Marxism and how did the UCD's victory in the spring 1979 elections push for the socialists to go for a moderate approach? Why was 1979 a pivotal year for the socialists in Spanish politics? What caused Adolfo Suárez and the UCD to lose approval with Spaniards even after the successful ratification of the 1978 Constitution? Lastly, what was the political impact of the attempted coup d'état on Spanish politics?

A significant aspect of the Spanish transition to democracy was the popularity of the UCD. Adolfo Suárez's leadership brought political amnesty for most political prisoners and exiles that opposed Franco. Moreover, the 1978 Constitution had a successful ratification process that had an overwhelming majority in the Cortes (the Spanish parliament) and from the population. The Socialist Party was in second place in the 1977 elections and again in the 1979 elections. However, the socialists shifted politically under the leadership of Felipe Gonzalez and Alfonso Guerra. Since the PSOE became legal again, the socialists had ideological debates within their party about Marxism. The Marxist question plagued the PSOE. Ultimately, the PSOE succeeded in winning the elections in 1982. Spain, a nation that once banned the socialists, had later

maintained power from 1982 to 1996. The PSOE benefitted from the UCD's failures under Suárez's and during Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo's time as prime minister. However, the PSOE emerged as a moderate party of the left that was anti-authoritarian with a commitment to liberal democracy.

I analyze the publications of the Socialist Party, including essays from Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra. The socialists had several publications from their leaders. Furthermore, I analyze the Spanish parliamentary records, the U.S. State Department Embassy reports from Madrid, and newspapers and magazines including the party's newspaper, *El Socialista*. Other newspaper publications include: *El País*, *Cambio 16*, *Diario 16*, and *Mundo Obrero*, the PCE's (Communist Party) official publication. Moreover, I examine the PSOE's 29th Congress from 1981. This chapter concerns the period following the ratification of the 1978 Constitution, a period that also included terrorist attacks by ETA and GRAPO.

The PSOE and the Marxist Question

In 1977, González and Guerra published an essay titled, "*El Socialismo de nuestro tiempo*" (Socialism in Our Time). They wrote that "Marxism is not a dogma, it is not a sect, but it is a method of analysis of history and reality..."¹ They believed that socialists in Spain treated Marxism as an absolute dogma. They rejected economic determinism² and criticized the Soviet Union. In a scathing critique of the USSR, they wrote,

¹ Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra were coauthors of the book; *P.S.O.E.* Alfonso Guerra was secretary of the press for the PSOE Executive Commission who later became Vice Secretary General of the PSOE under Felipe González. Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (Bilbao, España: Ediciones Albia, 1977), p. 26.

² *Ibid.*

The deviations of Marxism have created a false image of the socialist project. In the Soviet Union, Marxism has transformed into an antithesis, contradicting itself. It once criticized a dominant ideology [capitalism] has now converted into a dominant ideology, an ideology of the State, and an ideology of the Party [Communist Party]. The suppression of freedom on its citizens has created a new form of oppression...All the political regimes that call themselves socialist are dictatorships like all the democracies are capitalists. There is... no political regime that unites the two conditions that define our thoughts: socialism and democracy.³

This statement by González and Guerra challenged the Communist Party's ideals. The criticism towards the USSR was that they suppressed their citizens. From these statements, they called for democratic socialism and a return to the democratic history from the Second Republic. For both men, the question was: should Marxism be part of the PSOE platform in post-Franco Spain? The PSOE's goal was to win elections and Marxism created a dilemma because it was a problematic word.

The 1979 Elections

The March 1, 1979 elections were another victory for the Democratic Center Party. It was the first election since the ratification of the 1978 Constitution. This election had 350 deputies and 208 senators running for congress.⁴ Julián Casanova concluded that the election, "...made no essential difference to the Spanish political map. The UCD won again...and the PSOE...established itself as the main opposition force and only alternative to government."⁵ The Socialist Party remained in second. The editors of *El País* wrote that, "...yesterday's election clearly reflects the typical splitting of the left, in this case severely tinged with regionalism or nationalism. Thus, the Spanish Socialist

³ Ibid., p. 27.

⁴ The number of seats in the Congress of Deputies were 350 seats and the Senate had 208 seats. "Hoy, las primeras elecciones generales tras la aprobación de Constitución," *El País*, March 1, 1979, p. 11-12, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/03/01/portada/289090806_850215.html (accessed March 14, 2017).

⁵ Julián Casanova and Carlos Gil Andrés, *Twentieth-Century Spain: A History*, trans. Martin Douch (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 317.

Workers Party...which has maintained its positions for two years, has seen its best expectations cut by the objectively socialist vote of the electorate, which has largely preferred to vote as regionalist.”⁶ The socialists’ problems with defeating the UCD were the divisions within the party. For example, as the historian Paul Preston argued, “In the PSOE’s southern stronghold, votes were lost to the recently created *Partido Socialista de Andalucía*...”⁷ The socialists’ divisions by region was a factor and a continual problem as to why they could not get a majority in the Cortes.

Cambio 16’s report on the election results summed up with a headline that labeled the election night as Gonzalez’s most depressing night.⁸ Juan Tomás de Salas, a journalist for *Cambio 16*, wrote that, “If the definitive figures confirm it, the results of the March elections do not represent as much of a victory for President Suárez but more as a psychological defeat for the Socialists...If the Socialists had not made too many illusions of victory...they would not seem to have many reasons to feel defrauded.”⁹ The PSOE underestimated the Spaniards attraction to the UCD’s moderate positions. For González and the PSOE, the election was a devastating loss but a turning point in its political history. Concomitantly, *El Socialista*’s headline expressed damage control from the senate seats gained by the PSOE. The editors of *El Socialista* claimed that, “When we thought that the language and the methods that contributed so much to keeping the wounds of civil discords open, our present political campaign has been used by the

⁶ “UCD, en solitario,” Editorial, *El País*, March 2, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/03/02/opinion/289177203_850215.html (accessed March 14, 2017).

⁷ Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain* (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1986), p. 153.

⁸ “Aunque Suárez no barrio: La noche mas triste de Felipe González,” *Cambio 16*, March 11, 1979, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 370-394, Madrid, January 7-13, 1979 thru June 24, 1979, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

⁹ “Ganó Suárez,” Editorial, *Cambio 16*, March 11, 1979.

Spanish nation to exhibit its traditional vices again.”¹⁰ Much of the concern was that Suárez and the UCD benefitted from the success of the 1978 Constitution’s ratification.

Why did the Socialist Party lose the March 1979 elections? One reason was Suárez’s last appeal to Spaniards the night before the election through a televised address. *El País* summarized Suárez’s speech on TVE and he attacked the PSOE stating,

“We cannot believe in the centrist moderation of electoral propaganda,” because the program of the XXVII Congress, for example, defends free abortion and, moreover, it would be subsidized by the taxpayer; the disappearance of religious education advocates a path that leads to a collectivist and self-managed economy. In other manifestations, [the PSOE] have raised the dissolution of those who nominate repressive bodies of the State and demanding responsibilities or publicly advising the negotiations with ETA.¹¹

The speech made a massive impact to undecided voters as Suárez appealed to a far more social conservative position on abortion and religious freedom.¹² In *Cambio 16*’s article “*Por qué no ganó el PSOE*” (Why did the PSOE not win), they quoted Julio Feo, a Spanish socialist, and Feo argued that Suárez’s appearance on television the night before the election, “...behaved demagogically and provoked the vote of fear.”¹³ The socialists had a traumatic defeat¹⁴ and underestimated Suárez’s moderate positions that went against the PSOE’s history. Social issues such as abortion were a key issue that swayed voters towards the UCD over the socialists.

¹⁰ “Por decision del pueblo: El PSOE Se Consolida,” *El Socialista*, March 4, 1979, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Madrid, January 1, 1979 thru December 31, 1979, Shelf No. NP2849, Reel No. 2168.

¹¹ “Felipe González afirmó que el PSOE puede gobernar y Suárez pidió la mayoría parlamentaria,” *El País*, February 28, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/02/28/espana/289004417_850215.html (accessed March 16, 2017).

¹² Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 153, see also: Santos Juliá, “Ideological Conversion of PSOE Leaders,” in Frances Lannon and Paul Preston, eds, *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain: Essays in Honour of Sir Raymond Carr* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 278.

¹³ “Por qué no ganó el PSOE,” *Cambio 16*, March 18, 1979, see also: Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 153.

¹⁴ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 154.

The Communist Party increased their results by only 1 percent in 1979.¹⁵ In an editorial from *Mundo Obrero*, the editors argued, “Democracy, which began to be constructed on June 15, 1977, is still imperfect, since when fixing its laws, except when the Communists intervened, the Constitution, for example, the bourgeoisie’s interests prevailed.”¹⁶ The communists were not content and the election results disappointed them. The editors of *Mundo Obrero* added that, “The possibility of a policy driven by communists, socialists, and other democratic currents that countered the tendencies to govern law by the UCD is real.”¹⁷ The communists still believed that the Spanish voters would turn to a more leftist attitude against the UCD’s more moderate positions. However, Preston claimed that the decline in membership had to do with the leadership that was once exiled such as Santiago Carrillo because these men and women still had “...Stalinist habits.”¹⁸

The Socialist Party’s 28th Congress: The Marxist Question Revisited

The Socialist Party’s 28th Congress led to a debate on whether it would continue to use Marxism in their party platform. The historian Santos Juliá argued that the 1979 elections and the victory of the UCD forced González to limit Marxism as a slogan for the party and that the leaders needed to organize another party congress to solve this problem.¹⁹ Before the congress, González made a statement in an interview to *El Socialista* about the 28th Congress of the PSOE. He argued that, “Marxist analysis cannot lead to dogmatization, in my opinion, in such a way that anyone who does not feel

¹⁵ Javier Tusell, *Spain: From Democracy to Dictatorship, 1939 to the Present*, trans. Rosemary Clark (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), p. 304.

¹⁶ “Cuando dos y dos no son cuatro,” Editorial, *Mundo Obrero*, March 8-14, 1979.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 153.

¹⁹ Santos Juliá, “Ideological Conversion of PSOE Leaders,” in *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain: Essays in Honour of Sir Raymond Carr*, p. 279.

Marxist, or who does not have a Marxist origin, or who does not know Marx, does not feel comfortable in the party.”²⁰ For González, before the congress, the main reason for the PSOE to let go of dogmatic worship of Marxism was because of the March 1979 election results. As the political scientist Paul Kennedy stated, the disappointing results from the March 1979 elections strengthened González’s resolve to take on the Socialist Party’s self-defined idea of Marxism and of his own authority within the party.²¹

The debate took over the 28th congress on May 17 to May 20, 1979. The political scientist Monica Mendez-Lago claimed, “The Marxist definition of the party and the strict definition of the working class were perceived as the main impediment to further electoral growth. In fact, Felipe González had already announced his intention to ask the party to remove the term ‘Marxist’ from the PSOE programme in May 1978.”²² The 28th congress became a transitional period in the history of the PSOE because of this debate González brought up as a major factor to the future of the party.

During the 28th congress, two camps divided the party: the *oficialistas* (officials) or *felipistas* (named after Felipe González) and the *criticos* (critics).²³ The ideological debate dominated most of the congress. *El País* reported that,

The delegates, more than a thousand, made clear from the first moment their majority desire was not to suppress the Marxist definition of the PSOE and applauded strongly how much Karl Marx was mentioned. Enrique Tierno Galván, mayor of Madrid and honorary president of the party, reaped great applause saying that the PSOE should not abandon any ideological aspect...Felipe González...delivered a speech for an hour and a half and called for the 28th Congress of the PSOE to assume, with critical spirit, the Marxist experience and

²⁰ “XXVIII Congreso y centenario del PSOE: Felipe González hace balance,” *El Socialista*, May 13, 1979.

²¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Spanish Socialist Party and the Moderisation of Spain* (New York and Manchester UK: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 29.

²² Monica Méndez-Lago, “The Socialist Party in government and in opposition,” in *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, ed., Sebastian Balfour (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2005), p. 174.

²³ *Ibid.*

that of all socialists. He raised applause only when he quoted Pablo Iglesias and Marx and when he asked for less verbalism and more depth in the change.²⁴

Enrique Tierno Galván was a loyal socialist that wanted the socialists to continue to use Marxism in their party platform. Galván and González's speeches divided the congress. The 28th Congress started with a public schism of Marxism as an ideology within the socialist leadership. The PSOE was at a cross roads of which direction the party should go in a post-Franco Spain. The first day showcased the inevitable conflicts between the moderates and the leftists of the party. González represented a less ideological approach to Marxism as a political ideology in the PSOE.

González continued to challenge the party's dogmatism of Marx as a political force with the socialists even though he did not denounce Marx. He said:

At this hour, we must also pay homage to the fundamental creator of scientific socialism, Karl Marx, to compensate him for the attack he has received and receives from all the reactionaries of the Earth and to rescue him from the ignorance and manipulation of those who...have elevated Marxism to the altars of dogmatic doctrine. Against Marx and with Marx, nations have also practiced despotism and tyranny, fascism and totalitarianism. That is why Karl Marx deserves to be studied and assumed critically, without making it sacred and with recognition. The Socialist Party could never give up the ideas that gave it life. Nor could socialism assume Marx as an absolute value that marks the dividing line between true and false, but assuming it to himself and to all socialists means critically gathering his contributions to the struggle for the construction of a new society.²⁵

He confronted this ideological dilemma with his delegates and colleagues in the PSOE directly. For González, Marxism in the twentieth century connected with the complete worship of its ideas. The Marxist question plagued the PSOE and he believed that Marx

²⁴ "El congreso del PSOE aprobó la gestión de la ejecutiva," *El País*, March 18, 1979, p. 11 and 14, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/18/portada/295826405_850215.html (accessed March 16, 2017).

²⁵ "Felipe González: "Debemos asumir críticamente a Marx y a todos los socialistas"" *El País*, May 18, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/18/espana/295826408_850215.html (accessed March 17, 2017).

consumed the party leaders as a sacred doctrine. The congress was an ideological struggle on how to analyze Marxism without the need to remove the word but to move the party towards the center left.

The American Embassy in Madrid reported on González's speech to the U.S. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance. They stated,

Making it clear that his intention was not to "renounce" Marx, Gonzalez nevertheless emphasized the necessity of "modernizing the party in order to be able to mobilize a majority of society" (i.e., open the party to the center-left), because socialism cannot "assume Marx as an absolute value that makes the difference between truth and falsehood, between just and unjust."²⁶

The significance of this speech transformed part of the identity of the Socialist Party. For González, modernizing the party meant moving on from the Marxist identity. He understood that his ambition to become a future prime minister of Spain had to confront the issue of Marxism because it was a controversial term that was unpopular with the voters. The voters favored moderate positions and González responded to the voters and wanted to influence them in the next election.

On May 19, the leaders of the party approved a draft resolution that the PSOE reaffirmed its party platform as a class, of the masses, Marxist, and a federal and democratic party.²⁷ Then on May 20, González resigned as Secretary General of the PSOE. In his resignation, González shocked his constituents in the congress.²⁸ The American Embassy in Madrid summarized the events: "...The specific issue that

²⁶ In this period, the American ambassador in Spain was Terence Todman, ambassador from 1978 – 1983. The reports do not mention his name but he was the ambassador in Madrid. "The PSOE Congress: The First Day," American Embassy Madrid to Secretary of State, Madrid (May 18, 1979), NACP RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1979, Central Foreign Policy Files, National Archives AAD, Document Number: 1979MADRID06728, Film Number: D790225-1180, <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=227899&dt=2776&dl=2169> (accessed March 17, 2017).

²⁷ "El debate ideológico crea serios problemas a la dirección del PSOE," *El País*, May 19, 1979, p. 14-15. http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/19/portada/295912804_850215.html (accessed March 17, 2017).

²⁸ Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 156.

precipitated the chain reaction leading to Felipe Gonzalez's refusal to run for reelection as PSOE First Secretary was the reaffirmation of the PSOE's Marxist character included in the statement of party principles approved by the Congress during the night of May 19-20."²⁹ The resignation was a bold move by González given how popular he was within the party. The Marxist question defined the decisions made by González as the leader of the PSOE.

On June 3, 1979, the Spanish journalist José Oneto and at the time director of *Cambio 16* said:

Felipe González, who is not a Marxist, who does not believe that Marxism is the alternative of his party, who has personally had the courage to publicly declare that he prefers to die stabbed in Harlem, New York than to live in the Soviet Union, believed that the definition has left the XXVIII Congress of the PSOE...does not match a model of modern socialist society...and has decided to resign from the Secretary General of the party.³⁰

As stated before, González criticized the Soviet Union back in 1977 and understood that the term Marxism, had become a dogma by the leftist members of the PSOE.

Furthermore, the editors of *Cambio 16* argued that the crisis in the PSOE, "... provoked by modernists and radicals and the resignation of Felipe González to the Secretary General, threatens to divide dramatically the party of Pablo Iglesias and can endanger the stability of the Spanish Democratic System if...within six months Felipe González is again defeated."³¹ The six months mentioned by *Cambio 16* was a conference by the

²⁹ "The PSOE Congress: The Apple of Discord," American Embassy Madrid to Secretary of State, Madrid (May 23, 1979), NACP RG 59, Electronic Telegrams, 1979, Central Foreign Policy Files, National Archives AAD, Document Number: 1979MADRID06973, Film Number: D790237-0450, <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=231405&dt=2776&dl=2169> (accessed March 17, 2017).

³⁰ José Oneto, "Felipe," *Cambio 16*, June 3, 1979.

³¹ Pablo Iglesias was the founder of the PSOE and was an influential figure of the socialists since his death. The centennial anniversary of the PSOE was celebrated before the XXVIII Congress on May 2, 1979. "Por qué se plantó Felipe," *Cambio 16*, June 3, 1979.

PSOE that the leaders of the party decided. The following conference, the Extraordinary Conference, would take place in late September of 1979.³²

Nevertheless, the compromise did not happen during the 28th Congress. Mendez-Lago argued that, “the delegates to the Twenty-Eighth Party Congress...backed the *criticos* but at the same time expressed their wish to keep González as the PSOE’s General Secretary. González refused to stand for re-election...”³³ González was not going to concede the removal of Marxism from the party. As Santos Juliá stated, the delegates of the party wanted González to remain the leader while simultaneously state that the party was Marxist.³⁴ The delegates wanted the party to remain Marxist. For González, he had no choice but to resign as Secretary General.

Angel Merino, a journalist for *El Socialista*, argued, “before our 28th Congress, the right-wing press has used the controversy surrounding the word Marxism with a radically different position to which the controversy holds for us...”³⁵ Merino responded to the Marxism debate and the right-wing press’s attacks on the socialists as a vulnerability to the party and how the controversy differed from the right-wing and left-wing press. *El País*’s editorial had an optimistic opinion on González’s resignation. They claimed that, “Felipe González won. And if in the editorial of last Sunday, we warned about the need for him to remain at the head of the party, today it should be added that his act should not be taken as abandonment, but as an active attitude of commitment to his

³² Paul Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 156.

³³ Méndez-Lago, “The Socialist Party in government and in opposition,” *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, p. 175.

³⁴ Santos Juliá, “Ideological Conversion of PSOE Leaders,” *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain: Essays in Honour of Sir Raymond Carr*, p. 279.

³⁵ Angel Merino, “El partido es historia y es presente,” *El Socialista*, May 27, 1979, p. 2.

party and to the country.”³⁶ The PSOE needed González and the reformists to take drastic measures for the party to win the majority of the votes.

Mundo Obrero highlighted that González told the delegates that the PSOE had to be socialists and not become Marxists first.³⁷ Furthermore, *Mundo Obrero* reported that even after his resignation as Secretary General, González was still popular with the delegates that the delegates chanted his name.³⁸ Ultimately, the 28th Congress was a low point for the party during the transition but it had to happen for the socialists to evolve. The congress represented the desperation of the PSOE to become the majority party and it provided a reevaluation of the PSOE’s platform.

The Extraordinary Congress of the PSOE took place on September 28 and 29, 1979. It benefitted González and his supporters for several reasons. The journalists of *El País*: Soledad Gallego-Díaz, Joaquín Prieto, Juan Francisco Janeiro, and Sebastian García, reported that, “The Extraordinary Congress of the PSOE decided yesterday to admit “currents of opinion” in the party, as well as assuming Marxism as a method of analysis of reality and consider the PSOE as a “mass party...”³⁹ The Extraordinary Congress was an ideological and political compromise within the PSOE’s leadership.

Furthermore, González and Guerra returned and became Secretary General and Vice-Secretary General after the compromise.⁴⁰ In an interview, González responded to

³⁶ “El PSOE abre paréntesis,” Editorial, *El País*, May 22, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/22/opinion/296172010_850215.html (accessed March 17, 2017).

³⁷ “Seis eses para un nuevo congreso: Felipe, una derrota entre aclamaciones,” *Mundo Obrero*, May 24-31, 1979.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Soledad Gallego-Díaz, Joaquín Prieto, Juan Francisco Janeiro, and Sebastian García, “El Congreso aprobó una resolución de izquierda y eligió una ejecutiva moderada,” *El País*, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/09/30/espana/307490401_850215.html (accessed March 18, 2017).

⁴⁰ Méndez-Lago, “The Socialist Party in government and in opposition,” *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, p. 175.

El País that, "I fully share the ideological report approved by the congress; its content was already in the speech with which the 28th Congress was inaugurated" ...The Extraordinary Congress has been, in the judgment of the socialist leader, satisfactory."⁴¹ González became the winner after the Extraordinary Congress. Paul Preston argued, "With the entire national press and the television supporting Felipe González, it was perhaps inevitable that the *criticos* would suffer a humiliating rout. The moderates were victorious..."⁴² González's popularity and charisma dominated the PSOE's positions that overwhelmed the more left wing members of the party. Nevertheless, 1979 was a critical year for the PSOE. Santo Juliá argued that the PSOE matured during this critical moment in its history.⁴³ In addition, Juliá claimed that the PSOE's abandonment of Marxism was not just an ideological dispute but preparations for the PSOE's threat to change Spanish society as part of the political system.⁴⁴ While the socialists had an ideological struggle, the next years for the party strengthened due to the problems of the UCD and other key events.

Adolfo Suárez and the decline of the UCD

The UCD had taken control over the Constitutional debates and was relatively successful until the second half of 1979. The problems for the UCD began with the party's continued difficulties with ETA and within the party itself. First, on April 5, 1979, the opposition slammed Suárez's announcement of his new cabinet.⁴⁵ Guillermo Galeote

⁴¹ "Felipe González: "Comparto plenamente la ponencia ideológica aprobada,"" *El País*, September 30, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/09/30/espana/307490407_850215.html (accessed March 18, 2017).

⁴² Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 157.

⁴³ Santos Juliá, "Ideological Conversion of PSOE Leaders," *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain: Essays in Honour of Sir Raymond Carr*, p. 284.

⁴⁴ Santos Juliá, "La renuncia al Marxismo," en Santos Juliá, Javier pradera y Joaquín Prieto, eds., *Memoria de la transición* (Madrid: Santillana S.A., Taurus, 1996), p. 412.

⁴⁵ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 157.

of the Socialist Party criticized the cabinet as more to the right than Suárez's last administration.⁴⁶ Suárez's victory from the March elections was short lived. José Otono of *Cambio 16* criticized Suárez's government. He began his column with a daubing on a wall in Madrid⁴⁷ which read, "Franco was mad: he thought he was Suárez" ... the development and outcome of the crisis has not only been Francoist, but Franco probably would have envied Mr. Suarez when it came to putting into practice that political juggling of El Pardo and that, on many occasions, he is diminished by the behavior of the Moncloa."⁴⁸ This scathing piece against Suárez's administration was an example that the UCD were not as popular as they were after the March 1979 elections.

Second, the week of May 25 to 27, 1979 was a difficult time for Suárez.⁴⁹ On May 25, *ETA: militar* assassinated a general, two colonels, and their driver two days before the *Día de las Fuerzas Armadas* (The Armed Services Day).⁵⁰ Not including the driver, the victims were General Luis Gómez Hortigüela, leader of the *Personal del Ejército* (Army General Staff), Colonels Agustín Lasy, and Jesús Avalos Gomáriz.⁵¹ ETA, the Basque terrorists that continued to cause problems for the government, split during the transition. The two sub groups were ETA:M ('*ETA militar*' who believed in armed struggle) and ETA:PM ('*ETA poli-milis*' a more political and less violent group).⁵²

⁴⁶ "Primeras impresiones de la Oposición ante el nuevo Gobierno," *El País*, April 6, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/04/06/espana/292197613_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017).

⁴⁷ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 158.

⁴⁸ José Oneto, "Giro a Suárez," *Cambio 16*, April 22, 1979.

⁴⁹ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 161.

⁵⁰ "ETA asesina a tres altos cargos militares en vísperas del Día de las Fuerzas Armadas," *El País*, May 26, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/26/portada/296517602_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017), also in: Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 161.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, *A Rebellious People: Basques, Protests, and Politics* (Reno and Las Vegas, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1991), p.190.

The following day, GRAPO, an antifascist and leftist terrorist organization, killed eight and wounded fifty people, labeled as a terrorist attack, at a cafeteria in Madrid.⁵³

Cambio 16 criticized Prime Minister Suárez's response to the tragic events. Part of the issue stemmed from Suárez when he did not attend the funeral for the three military officers killed by ETA, he did not visit the Army headquarters, and he did not go to the Spanish parliament until that Wednesday.⁵⁴ The editors of *Cambio 16* specified their critique of Prime Minister Suárez that he, "...should have spoken to the country the same Saturday or at least last Sunday. A few words of security...And it is important to speak to the country, in Parliament, on television, and wherever it may be, as often as necessary, and most importantly often."⁵⁵ Much of the criticism against Suárez had taken a hit towards the UCD by the left and the right. Part of the politics of consensus was keeping the military out of the constitutional debates and at that moment, the military wanted answers from the Suárez administration.

Third, these events by ETA led to the continued problem with the policies of regional autonomy. Suárez negotiated with the PNV over an autonomy statute with on July 18, 1979. According to the reports by *El País*, the PNV and the UCD, "...concluded yesterday the global agreement on the content of the Basque Statute, which was personally ratified by the President of the Government, Adolfo Suárez, and the president of the PNV, Carlos Garaicoetxea."⁵⁶ The PNV and the *Euskadiko Eskerra* voted and

⁵³ Ocho muertos y cerca de cuarenta heridos por la explosión de un artefacto en Madrid, *El País*, May 27, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/05/27/espana/296604001_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017), see also: Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 161-162.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "Señor Presidente," Editorial, *Cambio 16*, June 10, 1979.

⁵⁶ "Exito completo en las negociaciones UCD-PNV sobre el Estatuto vasco," *El País*, July 18, 1979, http://elpais.com/diario/1979/07/18/portada/301096803_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017).

helped campaign for a yes vote.⁵⁷ ETA-PM accepted the statute but ETA:M did not accept the terms and they would continue the war.⁵⁸

While the statute was an attempt for peace between the Basque region and the government, the 1980 autonomous elections damaged the UCD. Andalucía had its autonomy referendum on February 28, 1980. 4,468,979 Andalusians voted and 54 percent voted yes on the autonomy statute.⁵⁹ The editors of *Cambio 16's* called it a great political setback for the UCD from the Andalusians.⁶⁰ The autonomy debate came from Article 151 of the Constitution that concerned Andalusia. As the editors of *El País* argued, “Although late, President Suárez realized the impasse that had led, at the constituent stage, the foolish attempt to reduce the political significance of the autonomies of Catalonia and the Basque Country by inventing the possibility of generalizing them through article 151 and of the initiative referendums.”⁶¹ Suárez was a hindrance to the constitutional process in Andalucía and this referendum took a major hit to his popularity.

Fourth, the Basque election on March 9, 1980 was another setback for the UCD.

The editors of *El País* reported,

What some are already considering as a UCD catastrophe in the Basque Country happens after the adverse results in the Andalusian referendum and only eleven days after the elections for the Parliament of Catalonia, before which the opinion polls also indicate very bad prospects for the UCD. The autonomic politics of

⁵⁷ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 164

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “Escasas posibilidades de éxito para los partidarios del “sí” en el referéndum andaluz,” *El País*, February 28, 1980, http://elpais.com/diario/1980/02/28/espana/320540402_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017), see also: Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 170-171.

⁶⁰ “Adolfo Suárez dos,” Editorial, *Cambio 16*, March 16, 1980, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 422-438, Madrid, January 6, 1980 thru April 27, 1980, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

⁶¹ “Andalucía,” Editorial, *El País*, March 1, 1980, http://elpais.com/diario/1980/03/01/opinion/320713201_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017).

President Suárez today is the target of criticisms from the opposition parties - notably the PSOE - and segments of the UCD itself.⁶²

The Basque elections damaged Suárez's leadership as the UCD came in fourth place behind the PSOE. Furthermore, as Paul Preston argued, one poll had about fifty percent of the voter that voted for the UCD back in March 1979, stated they would not vote for the UCD again.⁶³ The UCD began to show cracks and the PSOE exploited it. On May 21, 1980, the PSOE passed a motion of censure against Suárez and, as *El País* claimed, this act by the PSOE, "...whose approval would lead to the fall of the Cabinet and the automatic appointment of Felipe González as the new President of the Government. Adolfo Suárez said that he considered the presentation of the vote of censure, because it is a mechanism provided for in the Constitution, although he attacked the PSOE for "showing that he lacks an alternative."⁶⁴ Overall, these examples caused the UCD problems of stability that damaged the integrity of the party. 1980 was a terrible year for Suárez but an opportune year for the opposition. The avalanche of mistakes led to the eventual resignation of Suárez as Prime Minister of Spain.

Adolfo Suárez's Resignation, February 1981 and 23-F

Suárez resigned on January 29, 1981. *ABC*, a major Spanish conservative newspaper, covered the resignation of Suárez and published the transcript of his resignation speech on television. He said,

I am leaving, therefore, without anyone asking me, ignoring the requests and the pressures with which I have been urged to remain in my position, with the conviction that this behavior, however little comprehensible it may seem at first

⁶² "El triunfo de los partidos nacionalistas vascos, otro serio revés para el Gobierno de UCD," *El País*, March 11, 1980, http://elpais.com/diario/1980/03/11/portada/321577201_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017).

⁶³ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 172.

⁶⁴ "Los socialistas presentan una moción de censura a Suárez y proponen a Felipe González para president," *El País*, May 22, 1980, http://elpais.com/diario/1980/05/22/portada/327794401_850215.html (accessed March 22, 2017).

sight, is what I believe my country requires me in this moment...Every politician must have a vocation of power, a desire for continuity and duty in the framework of some of these principles.⁶⁵

Suárez's speech was a television broadcast and his popularity was at an all-time low as he only had 26 percent of the population supporting him.⁶⁶ Suárez gave his speech based on his love for Spain. However, the editors of *El País* reported that, "President Suárez did not explain yesterday's televised address about his political reasons that led him to resign as head of the Executive office and his party."⁶⁷ Suárez did not explain why he resigned. Nevertheless, his decision was a political decision because the UCD was still in power.

El País stated the possible reasons for Suárez's resignation. The editors speculated that his resignation, "...has been brought about from the so-called critical sector of his party and from traditional Spanish circles of the right in recent months. People close to the outgoing president point out that the decision is solely due to psychological and political exhaustion..."⁶⁸ Historians and political scientists analyzed Suárez's reasons for his resignation. Julián Casanova explained that, "...the determining factor was the internal division of the UCD, in which it was hard to separate ideological disputes from personal confrontations."⁶⁹ Suárez had been in power since Carlos Arias Navarro resigned back in July 1976 and his internal issues with the UCD had a hand in his decision. Paul Preston added that, "Physically and psychologically exhausted after leading Spain through the transition, he had little stomach for a fight with his erstwhile

⁶⁵ "Tras la dimisión de Adolfo Suárez: Preocupa el future de UCD," *ABC*, January 30, 1981, <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1981/01/30/013.html> (accessed March 19, 2017).

⁶⁶ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 186.

⁶⁷ "Adolfo Suárez no explica las razones políticas de su dimisión: Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, probable candidate de UCD como president del Gobierno," *El País*, January 30, 1981, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/01/30/portada/349657201_850215.html (accessed March 19, 2017).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Casanova and Gil Andrés, p. 321.

colleagues.”⁷⁰ Suárez led Spain through amnesty of political prisoners and exiles, the Moncloa Pacts, and the 1978 Constitution. However, his popularity within the government and with Spaniards declined. As Tusell claimed, “He realized his own limitations and that over time the popularity he had once enjoyed had dwindled.”⁷¹ Once Suárez’s popularity declined, he understood his reelection would be difficult.

Nonetheless, Suárez’s decision was a historical moment in Spanish history due to the decisions he made with the transition. He chose to reform the political system from within and he did it swiftly. He included the opposition in negotiations over political amnesty of prisoners and exiles. The legalization of the Communist Party was a risk that while controversial, was vital for the democratic transition to succeed. He continued this policy of reconciliation and compromise with the Moncloa Pacts and the 1978 Constitution.

Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo became the next prime minister of Spain. He was the Second Deputy Prime Minister of Spain from September 1980 to Suárez’s resignation. The editors of *Cambio 16* wrote a detailed article about “Operation Leopoldo” and about Calvo-Sotelo’s role in the UCD and the government. The reason why Suárez chose Calvo-Sotelo as his successor was,

Worried about the deterioration of the situation, obsessed by the severe problem of terrorism, convinced even that Suárez himself had no choice but to name him the successor, Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo had never dared to take the necessary step, or to head any palace revolution to end Adolfo Suárez. Only when, on the morning of January 30, the President of the Government, who had not yet told the country his resignation, was launching “Operation Leopoldo.”⁷²

⁷⁰ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 186.

⁷¹ Tusell, p. 306.

⁷² “Operación Leopoldo,” *Cambio 16*, February 9, 1981, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Nos. 475-491, Madrid, January 5, 1981 thru April 27, 1981, Shelf No. (0)83/703.

Calvo-Sotelo remained loyal to the UCD and Suárez trusted him as the next prime minister of Spain. As for the UCD party, Preston argued that, "...Sunday 8 February...the Congress of UCD elected Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo as their candidate for the premiership. He had been reluctantly chosen merely as the candidate who provoked least antipathy among the various factions."⁷³ Calvo-Sotelo's inauguration was to take place on February 23, 1981.

February 23 began in the Cortes with debates and the eventual inauguration of Calvo-Sotelo as the new prime minister. Later that day, at around 6:20 pm (1820 hours), according to the Congress of Deputies records,

...after hearing in the hall some shots and shouts of "Fire, fire!" and "To the floor everyone!" many people armed and in uniform of the Civil Guard barged into the hemicycle, located in Strategic places, threatened the Presidency by force and, after an altercation with the First Vice-President of the Government, Lieutenant General Guterrez Mellado, ordered everyone to drop to the ground, with the sounding rattles of submachine guns. The session is interrupted.⁷⁴

The military far right and the last remnants of Franco formed a group called 23-F.

Colonel Antonio Tejero led 23-F. He was in prison for seven months in November 1978 over the *Cafetería Galaxia* conspiracy.⁷⁵ 23-F took over the Spanish parliament and attempted a coup d'état. Paul Preston described the coup in his biography of King Juan Carlos,

At 6:23 P.M., about 320 Civil Guards under Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero arrived at the Cortes. Tejero jumped from the first bus, waving his pistol and shouting, 'In the name of the King!' Approximately half the Civil Guards entered the Cortes...Tejero loudly repeated that he was acting on the orders of the King and General Milans del Bosch. The Civil Guards who burst into the chamber took

⁷³ Herrero de Miñón, *Memorias*, p. 232-236, Calvo-Sotelo, *Memoria viva de la transición*, p. 59-65, quoted in: Paul Preston, *Juan Carlos*, p. 463.

⁷⁴ Spain, Cortes, Diario de sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados, Pleno, núm. 146, February 23, 1981, p. 9260, http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L1/CONG/DS/PL/PL_146.PDF (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁷⁵ Tusell, p. 309.

hostage the government ministers and all of the nation's parliamentary deputies...Felipe González, Alfonso Guerra, the deputy leader of the PSOE, Santiago Carrillo, Gutiérrez Mellado, Suárez and Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún were locked in a bitterly cold room where they were obliged to remain in silence until the following morning.⁷⁶

The coup was a moment of confusion as the idea was to create a state of emergency and 23-F hoped that the King would back the military. Other conspirators included General Alfonso Armada and General Jaime Milans del Bosch.⁷⁷ General Alfonso Armada was a member of the Army's high command and General Milans del Bosch was the Captain-General of the Valencia Military Group.

The King had to decide since the political leaders of each major party were under the control of 23-F. His television address on the early morning of February 24 ordered 23-F to step down, to surrender and to put an end of the attempted coup, and that the crown did not tolerate any action by the military in disrupting the democratic process and the ratified Constitution.⁷⁸ *ABC*, as staunch supporters of the monarchy, published a part of the speech the King made to the public. He said, "The Crown, symbol of the longevity and unity of the country, cannot tolerate, in any way, actions or attitudes of people who intend to interrupt, by force, the democratic process that the Constitution voted by the Spanish people..."⁷⁹ After the King's speech, Lieutenant General Milans del Bosch ordered his troops to withdraw at Valencia, the city he and his men occupied during the coup.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 469.

⁷⁷ Gil Andres and Casanova, p. 321-322.

⁷⁸ Preston, *Juan Carlos*, p. 481-482.

⁷⁹ "Mensaje del Rey a los españoles: "La Corona no puede tolear acciones o actitudes de persona que pretendan interrumpir por la fuerza el proceso democrático," *ABC*, February 24, 1981, <http://hemeroteca.abc.es/nav/Navigate.exe/hemeroteca/madrid/abc/1981/02/24/013.html> (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁸⁰ Victoria Prego, *Presidentes: Veinticinco años de historia narrada por los cuatro jefes de Gobierno de la democracia*, Primera edición (Plaza & Janés Editores, S.A., 2000), p. 130.

The King's decision was the defining moment that proved that he would defend democracy from the military leadership that aspired to be the next Francisco Franco. As *Cambio 16's* editorial declared, "Without King Juan Carlos, the night of February 23 would have been the saddest for a couple of generations of Spaniards...With the courage and an enviable serenity, King Juan Carlos smashed an improbable coup that was about to triumph."⁸¹ Shortly afterward, the coup failed due to the unity of the country's politicians, the citizens, and the King's sway of the military conspirators.

The press from all areas of the political spectrum condemned the actions of Colonel Tejero and 23-F. The editors of *El País* reported that the King met with the leaders of the political parties, including Felipe González.⁸² They stated,

During the meeting with Agustín Rodríguez Sahagún, Felipe González, Santiago Carrillo, Manuel Fraga, and Adolfo Suárez, the resigned President, the King read a message on the situation by the coup of Lieutenant Colonel Tejero, who, according to the testament of the secretary General of the PCE, "it was supplemented by contributions from everyone." ...González insisted that the coup "should force us all to reflect seriously" and he stressed the desirability of differentiating the action of a group of people, without involving armed institutions or bodies.⁸³

The Spanish parliament united and González, along with his opponents, understood the significance of this attempted coup.

On February 25, the Spanish parliament met again to continue where the congress left off since the attempted coup. Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, who finally became the new Prime Minister of Spain, gave his speech to the Congress of the Deputies. He called for high praise for the King and his leadership to defend democracy when the government

⁸¹ ¿Y ahora, qué? Editorial, *Cambio 16*, March 2, 1981.

⁸² "El rey Juan Carlos analizó la situación con los líderes de los partidos mayoritarios," *El País*, February 25, 1981, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/02/25/espana/351903619_850215.html (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

and 23-F detained the congress as hostages.⁸⁴ Santiago Carrillo also praised the King's actions and the unity of each political party's defense of the Constitution and the democracy in a tense moment.⁸⁵ González, similar to his statement to *El País*, told the congress that the nation needed to reflect on whether to consolidate or not consolidate democracy in Spain.⁸⁶ He specified that, "When the words that transmit the ideas in a civil manner are replaced by submachine guns, they are silenced by submachine guns, it can hardly be said that democracy is beginning with strength and that it has finished a stage of the transition."⁸⁷ However, the impact of the failed coup in Spain showed how quickly the country could turn into another authoritarian state had it not been for the political leaderships commitment to democracy. The political scientist Paloma Aguilar claimed that the attempted coup showed the political parties that the military still had anti-democratic ideas.⁸⁸

The PSOE summarized this event as the end of any opposition to the democratic transition. In *El Socialista*, the editors stated that the darkest days of the coup d'état gave rise to a country that protested for democracy even while the Cortes was under control of the 23-F.⁸⁹ Moreover, in *El Socialista*, the PSOE declared, "1. It's total commitment to defend the constitution, democracy, and liberty for the people ...2. Their demand from

⁸⁴ Spain, Cortes, Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados, Pleno, núm. 147, February 25, 1981, p. 9283, http://www.congreso.es/public_oficiales/L1/CONG/DS/PL/PL_147.PDF (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9289.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9290.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Paloma Aguilar, "Justice, Politics, and Memory in the Spanish Transition," in De Brito, Alexandra Barahona De Brito, Carmen González-Enríquez, and Paloma Aguilar, eds., *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 108.

⁸⁹ "El pueblo ha dado su veredicto," Editorial, *El Socialista*, March 10, 1981, Library of Congress, Microfilm, September 1980 –March 1981, Reel No. 2168, p. 3.

the public powers, the security forces of the state and the armed forces...to defend the constitution.”⁹⁰ The socialists were right because of the substantial number of protests Spaniards had for democracy throughout the country.⁹¹ As Preston stated, these demonstrations by Spaniards against 23-F’s actions by Spaniards was as if a phoenix of Spanish democracy rose again.⁹²

The Socialist Party and the 1982 Elections

On October 21-24, 1981, the Socialist Party had their 29th Party Congress. At the congress, the PSOE declared that, “The Socialist Project is defined by a radical defense of freedom ... That Project is identified today in Spain with the task of defense and development of the Constitution. We again point out that the constitutional development in the chapter of fundamental rights and public freedoms is incomplete.”⁹³ The PSOE’s party platform became a progressive platform on improving the rights of Spaniards. Still, the 29th Congress did not use the word Marxism and González won his reelection as Secretary General by almost 100 percent of the votes.⁹⁴ Thus, González united the PSOE and pushed for a more moderate position.

In 1981 and 1982, Spanish politicians had disputes over Spain’s inclusion in NATO. The NATO debate dominated Spanish politics and politicians argued about whether to join NATO. The Democratic Center Party favored joining NATO since

⁹⁰ “La primera reaction del PSOE,” *El Socialista*, February 25-March 3, 1981.

⁹¹ “Hoy, manifestaciones en toda España libertad a democracia y la Constitución,” *El País*, February 27, 1981, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/02/27/portada/352076402_850215.html (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁹² Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 204.

⁹³ PSOE, *XXIX Congreso* (Madrid, 1981), p. 21.

⁹⁴ “Felipe González, reelegido secretario general del PSOE con el 100% de los votos,” *El País*, October 25, 1981, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/10/25/portada/372812403_850215.html (accessed March 20, 2017), see also: Kennedy, p. 31; Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, 211-212.

October 1978.⁹⁵ The Socialist Party were against Spain joining NATO and on April 29, 1981, González declared that Spain should stay out of NATO.⁹⁶ The PSOE ran an anti-NATO campaign while the UCD and PCE were struggling in popularity. Part of the PSOE's strategy was to push for peace. For example, on November 16, 1981, there was a mass protest for peace, disarmament, and freedom in Madrid, specifically against Spain joining NATO and anti-nuclear missiles. About 250,000 people showed up and the event had been organized "...by more than two hundred political, trade unions, environmentalist, feminist and citizen associations of all kinds, which was one of the most important pacifist demonstrations that have been held in Europe lately."⁹⁷ At the march were members of the PSOE and PCE including González and Carrillo.

According to the journalist Karmentxu Marín of *El País*, "Most of the audience shouts were "NATO; No, Bases Out!" And Carlos Tena, one of the presenters of the act, introduced the speech of Felipe González as " who soon, and that very soon, will take us out of NATO..."⁹⁸ Critics, such as the conservative journalist Federico Jiménez Losantos, felt that the left used this as a political advantage to label the protest as a protest for peace instead of an anti-NATO protest.⁹⁹ Still, the PSOE had a political platform, such as an anti-NATO agenda, which benefitted from the recent events that transpired from the

⁹⁵ Angel Viñas, "Spanish foreign policy from Franco to Felipe González," in *Spain and the Great Powers in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Sebastian Balfour and Paul Preston (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 255.

⁹⁶ Soledad Gallego-Díaz, "Felipe González: "España debe permanecer fuera de la OTAN,"" *El País*, April 29, 1981, p. 13, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/04/29/espana/357343204_850215.html (accessed April 9, 2017).

⁹⁷ Karmentxu Marín, "250.000 personas se manifestaron el domingo en Madrid por la paz, el desarme y la libertad," *El País*, November 17, 1981, http://elpais.com/diario/1981/11/17/espana/374799605_850215.html (accessed March 20, 2017).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Federico Jiménez Losantos, *Lo Que Queda de España: Con un prólogo sentimental y un epílogo balcánico*, Cuarta edición (Madrid: EDICIONES TEMAS DE HOY, S.A., 1995), p. 399.

failed coup in February 1981. González wanted to take on the UCD again in the 1982 elections. Eventually on May 30, 1982, Spain voted and became the sixteenth nation to join NATO.¹⁰⁰ However, the election results in 1982 changed power from the Democratic Center Party to the Socialist Party and Spain changed its NATO policy once the socialists gained power.

The PSOE's strategy during the elections was to benefit from the declining popularity of the UCD. In 1982, Marguerite Johnson, a journalist for *Time* magazine, wrote an article on González. She wrote, "He has supported the government on such issues as antiterrorist laws and regional autonomy, and proceeded to mold the party in the pattern of social democratic parties elsewhere in Western Europe."¹⁰¹ *Time's* piece summarized the reason for González's success during the transition and the push for social democracy proved effective. González became a popular symbol of the reconstructed PSOE. On González's popularity, Johnson argued,

One reason is that Gonzalez does not sound much like a leftist. He has promised not to invite Communists into his government. He has little respect for Communist Leader Santiago Carrillo, 67, whom he calls a "bad prophet and a bad political leader... To reassure business leaders, Gonzalez has promised not to follow the example of France's Mitterrand by nationalizing major companies, except for Spain's electrical system.¹⁰²

González's candidacy analyzed the past mistakes from the PSOE but the party evolved and took an opportunity to unite the country under the banner of the PSOE. Furthermore, he planned for a moderate position since his scathing critique of Marxism back in 1977.

¹⁰⁰ OTAN is NATO in Spanish. The same day was the announcement of the sentencing of the members of 23-F responsible for the failed coup. "A media tarde de ayer España quedó integrada en la OTAN," *El País*, May 31, 1982, http://elpais.com/diario/1982/05/31/portada/391644004_850215.html (accessed May 31, 1982).

¹⁰¹ Marguerite Johnson, "Socialists on the Move," *Time*, October 25 – November 8, 1982, Library of Congress, Microfilm, July 1982 – December 1982, Shelf No. 02914, Reel No. 106, p. 51.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

González won the election defeating Calvo-Sotelo and the UCD as the main party of the government. The editors of *El País* reported that, “The left returns to power in Spain after more than 43 years of right wing governments, with the resounding victory of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), who yesterday won with 201 seats, an absolute majority in the third legislative elections after the death of General Franco in 1975...The PSOE received the votes of more than 9,800,000 Spaniards (46%)...”¹⁰³ The success came from other factors besides the party’s change in direction. *Diario 16* put part of González’s acceptance speech the night he won the election. He declared, “The Spanish Constitution...has worked correctly, facilitating the alternation in power that is one of the essential principles of democracy...We have a great populace. The Spanish people deserve all of our sacrifice.”¹⁰⁴ González and the PSOE defended the rights of the Constitution and promised to improve Spain.

NATO became one of the main reasons why the socialists won the 1982 election. The political scientist Angel Viñas argued that the NATO debate contributed and favored the Socialist Party’s victory by a landslide over the UCD and therefore the UCD collapsed.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, the PSOE benefited from the UCD’s internal problems but it succeeded in including Spaniards that were not from the working class. As Méndez-Lago concluded on the 1982 victory, the PSOE had two mission statements: “...the modernisation of Spain and the consolidation of democracy.”¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, according

¹⁰³ “El Partido Socialista, con 201 escaños, consigue la mayoría absoluta para gobernar la nación,” *El País*, October 29, 1982, http://elpais.com/diario/1982/10/29/portada/404694001_850215.html (accessed March 21, 2017).

¹⁰⁴ “El mensaje de Felipe,” *Diario 16*, October 29, 1982, p. 6, Library of Congress, Microfilm, Madrid, October 1, 1982 thru October 31, 1982, Shelf No. NP3809, Reel No. 2932.

¹⁰⁵ Angel Viñas, “Spanish foreign policy from Franco to Felipe González,” in *Spain and the Great Powers in the Twentieth Century*, p. 260.

¹⁰⁶ Méndez-Lago, p. 176.

to Preston, the UCD's defeat was the greatest electoral defeat since World War II as the UCD about 6 percent of the vote.¹⁰⁷ Their defeat was embarrassing and they did not recover from the 1982 elections. The PSOE's victory in 1982 signified the end of the transition because the PSOE transitioned with Spain in maintaining peace, freedom, and democracy.

Conclusion

The Spanish Socialist Party was a political party that had ideological problems. Still, in a post-Franco world, the newer generation, led by Felipe González, knew that Marxism was a problematic term in Spain. The March 1979 elections was a shocking defeat for the socialists and the party had to make a tough decision: become moderate or stick to the old principles that survived during the Franco regime. The PSOE's 28th Congress was a significant and historical moment for the party. The decision made by González to resign as Secretary General ultimately benefitted the PSOE in the future. Concomitantly, the UCD's slow decline after the March 1979 elections came from a population that rejected some policies of consensus Adolfo Suárez and the UCD embraced. The turmoil with ETA and GRAPO, along with the failed coup d'état by Colonel Tejero and 23-F, showed the vulnerabilities of the UCD's policy. The UCD's legacy was a successful one that crashed at the end of the transition.

Nevertheless, the 1978 Constitution became a symbol of the start of the consolidation of democracy. The politics of consensus did work and favored not just the UCD but the other major political parties. The political rivalries after 1978 intensified as compromise led to closely contested elections. Furthermore, the NATO debate benefitted

¹⁰⁷ Preston, *Triumph of Democracy in Spain*, p. 225.

the socialists as they were against Spain joining NATO. Overall, the Spanish transition to democracy concluded with the victory of González on October 28, 1982. The optimism towards the PSOE proved to be a strong indication that Spain shifted to a moderate leftist position. González remained prime minister until 1996 and the transition coincided with the victorious PSOE as a representation of the democratic past of the Second Republic and one of the major entities that paved the way for democracy in Spain after Franco.

Conclusion

Spain's transition to democracy was a success that rested on political consensus and reconciliation. Political consensus and reconciliation meant an agreement between politicians about how to tackle Spain's violent past. The Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship had an impact on Spain's problems with unity. During the transition, the decisions made by the political leaders, under difficult negotiations, led to compromise and consolidation of a constitutional monarchy that valued liberalism, democracy, and decentralization. When Adolfo Suárez and the UCD (The Democratic Center Party) had the majority, they included regions such as Catalonia in these negotiations. The debates over political amnesty of political prisoners and exiles, the 1978 Constitution, and the legalization of opposing political parties, established democracy in Spain since the fall of the Second Republic. Suárez and the political leaders of the UCD paved the way for a reconciliation between the central government in Madrid and regional provinces.

Why did Spain have a political transition from an authoritarian dictatorship to democracy? Carlos Arias Navarro's resignation on July 1, 1976 was the beginning of the peaceful transition. King Juan Carlos decided that Arias Navarro's leadership was not the solution to a transition because he represented the 'bunker' or the loyal supporters of Franco. The King's support for Suárez's policies on political amnesty and reform changed the transition to a policy of reconciliation. The political scientist Omar G. Encarnación described the Spanish transition as a "politically clean slate" and that the

long term counted on the inclusion of members of the Franco regime.¹ The goal of the moderates such as Suárez, a member of the Franco regime, and the King, the successor of Francoism, involved negotiations that looked forward.

The tragic past became part of the policies of the Suárez administration. Franco's death in 1975 did not solve the dilemma of the tragic past. The memory and the scars of the Civil War and the actions by the Franco regime did not disappear during the transition. However, the role of politicians such as Suárez, the King, and Felipe González, the Secretary General of the PSOE (the Socialist Party), during the transition led to some optimism that Spain could have a successful democratic state. The democratic right led the policies of political amnesty of political prisoners that opposed the Franco regime. However, the achievement of Suárez and the democratic right was the legalization of the PCE (the Communist Party). The democratic left supported democracy and continued the transition when it came to negotiations and debates over the 1978 Constitution.

The socialists and communists favored democracy and fair elections. The socialists shifted from democratic rupture to a more moderate position whereas the communists utilized Marxism and Eurocommunism in their party platform. Eurocommunism was a political ideology, coined by Santiago Carrillo and adopted by Western European communists, that distanced itself from the Soviet Union.² The consolidation period normalized relations with the spirit of fair and competitive elections.

¹ Omar G. Encarnación, "Democratizing Spain: Lessons for American Democratic Promotion," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, ed. Gregorio Alonso and Diego Muro (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), p. 248.

² Tony Judt, *Post War: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), p. 496.

Political scientists such as Richard Gunther state that the Spanish model is a peaceful political transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy which is based on Spain's democratic transition. The Spanish model's praise stemmed from a negotiated transition from a dictatorship to a democracy. The model understood how nations would benefit a democratic transition after the example of Spain in the twentieth century.

Suárez's leadership led to the beginning of political amnesty of prisoners and exiles as the first step to a democratic transition. However, for a successful transition, the Communist Party's inclusion in the negotiations signified the importance of ending animosity of Franco's enemies. Suárez and Carrillo's negotiations led to the legalization of the Communist Party in 1977. Carrillo, the Secretary General of the Communist Party, opposed the Franco regime and its supporters since the end of the war. The negotiation between Carrillo and Suárez summed up the early years of the Spanish transition because of the strong animosity between opposing factions. Suárez was a remnant of the Franco regime and Carrillo was an enemy of the state since the Civil War ended. On February 27, 1977, Carrillo agreed to recognize the monarchy and the bicolor flag representing the King while Suárez agreed to the PCE's legalization.³

The Communist Party's legalization had a major impact in Spanish politics. Suárez controversial decision to support the legalization of the PCE challenged moderate and ultra conservatives in Spain. For example, the military opposed the PCE's legalization because of the history of the Civil War and because it viewed Carrillo and

³ Alejandro Quiroga, "Salvation by Betrayal," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 142.

the communists as dangerous. However, the military leadership was loyal to the King.⁴ For the most part, the military had less influence in politics than it did under Franco. The King made sure that the military would remain loyal to the crown and the nation even with the controversies that surrounded the return of the Communist Party. The important parts that led to democracy in Spain did not have the military's involvement. The coup d'état on February 23, 1981 furthered a mistrust of the military's willingness to defend democracy and the Constitution. Still, political amnesty was a success as the democratic left favored democracy. Suárez's popularity spiked with the Law of Political Reform, political amnesty, and the PCE's legalization in Spanish politics. The historian Mary Vincent argues that the Law for Political Reform was "the constitutional groundwork for democracy..."⁵ The Law of Political Reform meant that the Suárez administration emphasized the importance of democratic reform. The June 15, 1977 elections resulted in Suárez and the UCD's victory but it was a success because of the PSOE and PCE's involvement. The elections proved that Spain made progress in the democratic transition.

The 1978 Constitution represented the politics of consensus.⁶ The Constitution was inclusive to parts of the country that wanted regional autonomy from the central government in Madrid. Stanley Payne argues that, except for the Basques, national consensus included peaceful dialogue, reconciliation, and negotiation instead of

⁴ Paul Preston wrote about Juan Carlos's relationship with the military leadership and example of how the leadership took an oath of loyalty to the King and the constitution. Paul Preston, *Juan Carlos: Steering Spain from Dictatorship to Democracy* (W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2004), p.475

⁵ Mary Vincent, *Spain 1833-2002: People and State* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2007), p. 212

⁶ Richard Gunther, "The Spanish Model Revisited," in *The Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition: the Spanish Model*, p. 23.

confrontations.⁷ The Moncloa Pacts and the drafting of the 1978 Constitution included members of the UCD, PSOE, PCE, the Catalonians, and the conservative party AP (People's Alliance). The constitutional debates provided speeches from key political leaders of each major party's thoughts on a constitution. The results from these debates were a Constitutional Monarchy with regional autonomous provinces, self-rule, and basic freedoms of a democratic nation.

The political and cultural issues such as language, laws, regional autonomy, and Spanish nationalism summed up the decentralization of the Spanish state. The Constitution provided a bicameral Cortes (the Spanish parliament) that included a Senate and Congress of Deputies. Decentralization challenged the Franco regime of Spanish nationalism centralized in Madrid. The new Spanish state collaborated with all political leaders of various regions. The political scientists Richard Gunther, José Ramón Montero, and Joan Botella state that after the 1978 Constitution, Spain became "*Estado de las autonomías*" (State of the Autonomies).⁸ The changes made to the Spanish state provided more freedoms for autonomous regions. The Basques and the PNV (The Basque Nationalist Party) caused some problems with the transition since ETA still carried out terrorist attacks after Franco's death.

However, without the main political parties, such as the PSOE and the UCD, the 1978 Constitution would have failed. The debates over the Constitution showcased the changes since Arias Navarro's resignation. The ratification on December 6, 1978 proved

⁷ Anatoly M. Khazanov and Stanley Payne, "How to Deal with the Past?" in *Perpetrators, Accomplices and Victims in Twentieth-Century Politics*, ed. Anatoly M. Khazanov and Stanley Payne (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2009), p. 251.

⁸ Richard Gunther, José Ramón Montero, and Joan Botella, *Democracy in Modern Spain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 11.

that the Constitution was popular as an overwhelming majority voted yes. These political actions by Suárez and the UCD displayed stability and wisdom to Spaniards. The Constitution's ratification led to the UCD's victory in the March 1979 elections. The election verified that Spaniards approved Suárez's policies since he became the King's choice to lead the transition. The Spanish conservatives respected the monarchy and Suárez won elections due to support from the King and his stances on social conservative values.

The Socialist Party's contributions to the transition played a significant role in these negotiated pacts. The PSOE's original party platform was Marxism and democratic rupture. Democratic rupture declared the removal of remnants of Francoism from the government that included the 'bunker' or the dedicated supporters of Franco. González and the Vice-Secretary General Alfonso Guerra, led the change in the PSOE's change in policy. González, Guerra, and their supporters within the PSOE, argued that the party's slogan and its ideology should not use Marxism. For González, the success of Suárez and his policies on amnesty, free elections, the Communist Party's legalization, and the election results of being in second place behind the UCD, led to his decision that the PSOE needed to become more moderate. Suárez's social conservative policies also worked against the PSOE, such as Suárez's refusal to decriminalize abortion, because some Spaniards had concerns over socialism and some were still Catholics. González's decision proved to be right about the PSOE's shortcomings in winning elections as he and his supporters knew that most Spaniards favored moderate positions. The PSOE's 28th Party Congress in 1979 became a debate on Marxism and while it caused González to resign as Secretary General, he later became the leader of the party after the

Exceptional Conference on September 1979. The goal of the PSOE, as with all the major parties, was to win the majority. González also believed in political consensus and reconciliation once the socialists changed strategies.

The Socialist Party's victory in 1982 changed Spain because the socialists controlled the majority even after the violence and repression of the Franco regime. González's victory proved how Spain had changed in seven years from 1975 to 1982. The socialists challenged the UCD but they understood the importance of reform and unity. The socialists left leaning moderate position, based on working class and union rights but not a radical push for revolution and nationalizing business, resulted from the debates within the party but also with their opponents. González's administration lasted until 1996 and his decision to criticize and let go of Marxism led to the PSOE's victory.

The democratic transitional period's international significance was unlike the international context of the Spanish Civil War. Still, the U.S. and the world understood how significant the death of Franco affected Western Europe and the creation and ratification of the 1978 Constitution. For example, the U.S. Embassy reports revealed that the military opposed the possibility the Spanish government legalizing the Spanish Communist Party. Analysis of the transition in an international context is important because of the comparisons made to Spain's transition to other authoritarian dictatorships transitioning to democracy in the twentieth century such as Portugal. Spanish newspaper publications played a significant role in the transition thanks to an increase push for the freedom of the press. *El País* and *Cambio 16* had significant reports on the events since its first issue during the transition. *El Socialista*, the PSOE's newspaper, had a vital role

in the PSOE's platform that led to their victory in 1982. These newspaper reports include transcripts of speeches from important politicians such as Suárez and González.

The failed coup on February 23, 1981 and the terrorist attacks from ETA, GRAPO, and left and right wing groups challenged the transition to democracy. These incidents influenced the policies of the major parties. The coup was the last-ditch effort for the Francoists to the return of an authoritarian regime. The actions by King Juan Carlos prevented a disaster in Madrid. However, the threat of a military uprising led to the decline of the UCD and the rise of the PSOE. The socialists figured that the failed coup was a moment that proved that the remnants of the Franco regime still challenged the democratic ideals of the 1978 Constitution. For example, González led the socialists to a more moderate position that emphasized more on the working class but not on nationalizing private industry and Marxism as a dogma. This action proved vital for the success of the PSOE in elections after 1979. The Marxism debate during the 28th Party Congress of the PSOE was a microcosm of the politics of the transition. The divisions of the Spanish political leaders had a key role in the elections, especially after the ratification of the 1978 Constitution. The NATO debate also had a significant role in 1982 because of the anti-NATO sentiment from the constituents of the Socialist Party. The socialists and communist parties were against Spain entering NATO and that assisted the PSOE in the 1982 elections.

González and his party members won the 1982 elections with the lessons learned from the past. The Second Republic's demise by Franco and the Nationalist forces brought forth valuable lessons. Democracy in Spain had failed experiments but the positive aspects of the transition dominated over terrorism and military conspiracies.

Moreover, the PSOE understood that some Spaniards still believed in the old myths and narratives by Francoists against the left. Julián Casanova's article, "History and Memory: A New Social Dimension," analyzed the importance of historians that challenged the outdated and discredited narratives and myths of the Nationalists and supporters of Franco.⁹ The collective memory of the past, while not a product of the *pacto de olvido* (pact of forgetting), the democratic transition needed to avoid these controversies. The socialists, and other political parties, needed to ensure that the 1978 Constitution needed to prevent another 1936.

The Spanish transition to democracy succeeded in the establishment of democratic institutions. Political scientists and historians such as Paul Preston, Santos Juliá, Paloma Aguilar, Richard Gunther, Michael Mann, Michael Richards, and others have studied this period since Franco's death. However, the 1978 Constitution's debates were significant because not only did it have major party leaders but the points raised by these leaders addressed the issues of drafting the 1978 Constitution. The Constitution responded to the mistakes made from the 1930s. Still, historians of Modern Spain should continue to analyze Suárez and González's leadership in the construction of a democratic state.

When the PSOE won the elections in 1982, the democratic transition ended. The UCD no longer exists in contemporary Spanish politics but scholars have not and should not underestimate Suárez's impact in Spanish history. The decisions made by Suárez, sometimes controversial, proved that Spain could function as a democratic state even after nearly forty years of the Franco regime and its crimes. Spaniards embraced

⁹ Julián Casanova, "History and Memory: A New Social Division," 2008, *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 21 no.3, 187-202, p. 188.

democracy and they supported the monarchy and the Constitution. Furthermore, they were against Colonel Antonio Tejero and 23-F's attempted coup to take over the Spanish parliament as reported by newspapers and magazines. The decisions made by the political leaders modernized Spain and put the nation into an international context. Spain's transition to democracy was a negotiated pact that bridged the Franco era with a consolidated Spanish democracy. The moderate politicians of the left and the right prevailed in this transitional model that showed Spain embraced liberalism and democracy.

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