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THE FALANGE AS STATE PARTY

1937-1939

THE FORMAL DECREE of unification settled very little with regard to the structure of the new party. The civil government moved at a very slow pace. Franco and his staff still occupied themselves primarily with military affairs, apparently satisfied that the rudimentary *Gleichschaltung* of April had temporarily shelved all internal political problems. The resulting readjustment was an involved process, and no one seemed to be in a hurry. At first, there was not even much money available.¹ The lack of any clear conception of the new party's mission was suggested by the nature of the first official task given the FET by the Governor General of Salamanca; his order authorized the party to organize nursing courses.²

Slowly, the Political Secretariat began to draw the party cadres together, and the incorporation of local auxiliary units got under way on May 11. Under the new dispensation party membership continued to increase, but it was apparent that many of the new members were fair-weather friends who would be with the Falange only for the duration of hostilities. As Serrano Suárez admitted, "A very great number of Party members were never more than nominal affiliates. They were, in reality, members who retained their own individual identities and were more or less cautious representatives of free opinion."³

In an ABC interview on July 19, Franco proclaimed once again that his aim was "a totalitarian state." He also reiterated that the FET was to serve, in effect, as a great melting pot for such a state:

There exists in Spain a great unaffiliated neutral mass . . . which has never wanted to join any party. This mass, which might feel hesitant to unite itself with the victors, will find in the Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S. the adequate channel for uniting itself with National Spain.⁴

However, it would obviously be difficult to make a going concern of the new party with the active support of the surviving leaders of the old Falange. Almost all those who had first been arrested were speedily released, but from this to securing their energetic cooperation in the FET was a long step. An ex-officio committee representing the old Falange had been set up in Salamanca at the house of Pilar Primo de Rivera. There the remaining Falange chiefs met to decide which of them would collaborate with the new party, and under what terms. The most influential voices were those of Agustín Aznar, José Antonio Girón (who represented the militia), and Fernando González Véllez, the serious and intelligent *jefe provincial* of León.⁵

Franco's agent in the negotiations that followed was Ramón Serrano Suárez.⁶ The representative of the Falange committee was Dionisio Ridruejo, the twenty-four-year-old *jefe provincial* of Valladolid. Ridruejo was honest and highly intelligent, yet very emotional. His blend of personal qualities somehow won him admittance to the very narrow but extremely intense circuit of Serrano's affection, and the two became good friends.

A vague understanding was soon reached between the Falange committee and the Cuartel General. It was assumed that the Falangists would respect the hierarchy of command being established, and that after the war a sincere attempt would be made to implement the national syndicalist program. The construction of the new state party was to begin immediately.

Some of the Falangists had private reservations about this arrangement. Others, like the National Council delegate and *jefe provincial* of Seville, Martín Ruiz Arnedo, were fully convinced of Franco's sincerity. At any rate, they had no choice. Everyone felt that it was better for the FET to be set up and administered by Falangists rather than by a collection of Carlists and conservative opportunists. Individually, or in small groups, they resolved to build as strong a core of *camisas viejas* (Falange veterans) within the new organization as they possibly could, both to ensure the continuity of the party and to change the nature of the current leadership. González Véllez was given Hedilla's vacant seat on the Junta Política.⁷ Later named its chairman, he was a strong advocate of this policy of boring-from-within.

The first party statutes, which were not released until August 4, 1937, preserved in large part the previous structure of the Falange. Twelve special services were set up for the party, taking in every aspect of government activity. It has been suggested that Serrano Súñer's reason for preparing such an elaborate program of service cadres was to compensate for the lack of executive training in the Falange leadership.⁸ In effect, the functions of the various Falange services were duplicated at many levels by the government ministries. Thus the Falange's bureaucracy could gain experience without having to face full responsibility. Later, party cadres would be ready to help administer the one-party state. The apparent intention was suggested even more clearly by a law of October 30, 1937, which required the approval of the local Falange and Civil Guard chiefs for anyone recommended to a position in a local or provincial government; it was declared that such double authorization would be necessary until the construction of the "new totalitarian state" was finished.⁹

In the latter part of 1937 there appeared a series of leaflets attacking the capture of the Falange by the Army, signed "Falange Española Auréntica." These made little impression on the old Falangists, who were now rapidly being placed in responsible positions in the FET. The sheets were printed in foreign territory, probably in France. Rumor linked their appearance to Vicente Cadenas, the Falange's former Chief of Press and Propaganda, who had managed to escape from Spain on the morrow of the unification.* It was also suggested, quite logically, that the leaflets were circulated by agents of the Republican minister Indalecio Prieto, who hoped to be able to provoke further dissension within the FET.¹⁰ Having failed in their purpose, the leaflets disappeared after several months.

Chief of Press and Propaganda for the FET was Fermín Yzuriaga, the bizarre Pamplona priest who had founded the Falange's first daily newspaper. Before the unification he had been a supporter of Hedilla, but he easily made an adjustment to the new situation.

* Cadenas denies that he ever participated in such activities or that, so far as he was ever able to learn, any such organization as "Falange Española Auréntica" ever existed. He dismisses the incident as an anti-Franco maneuver led by unidentified parties.

During the latter half of 1937 *Arriba España* usually ran a front-page caption reading "For God and the Caesar." Appointed to his new post in May, Yzuriaga chose as his Chief of Propaganda Dionisio Ridruejo; his Press Chief was a veteran Carlist, Eladio Esparza.

During 1937 Falange propaganda was sometimes hampered by military censorship and occasionally quashed outright by the official government information service. Since Yzuriaga's grasp on reality was slight in any event, it was not surprising that the general effect of his efforts was negligible. In a speech at Vigo on November 28, 1937, Yzuriaga replied to murmurers in the party. He admitted that there was some truth in the charge that the Falange was no longer revolutionary, saying that one must tread the path to revolution very carefully.¹¹

The Falange press was full of praise for the Army.* It carried the customary condemnations of all kinds of liberalism, and flattering articles on Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. In rare moments of belligerence, some Falange papers still denounced the Franciscan aspects of Catholicism and declared that papal politics were not infallible.¹² There were also occasional diatribes against the virtually nonexistent Jews.¹³

Only occasionally did a really telling blast come from the national syndicalist trumpet. One such instance was Gonzalo Torrente Ballester's slashing critique of a pamphlet being circulated by the privately organized "Provisional Directive Junta of Economic Forces." The pamphlet condemned the vices of a controlled economy and propounded a doctrine of relative *laissez faire*. Torrente Ballester, one of the new party intellectuals, emphasized the need for widespread state control and intervention to ensure a just and adequate functioning of the national economy.¹⁴

With such statements Falange writers served the military government as an instrument for warning the financial and industrial forces of Spain that they were not to be the sole beneficiaries of the new state. It was implied that those who did not wait patiently on the Caudillo might be fed into the jaws of the national syndicalists. In

* Even before its director became Press and Propaganda Chief, Yzuriaga's *Arriba España* ran in front-page headlines the motto: "The Sound Doctrine: Always With the Army." (May 30, 1937.)

fact, in his own public statements Franco took some pains to pose as a social reformer. He spoke of the "dehumanized banker" and the need for protecting the working classes.¹⁵

We are also making a profound revolution in a social sense, which is inspired by the teachings of the Catholic Church. There will be fewer of the rich, but also fewer of the poor. The new Spanish State will be a true democracy in which all citizens will participate in the government by means of their professional activity and their specific function.¹⁶

Eventually, some sort of executive leadership had to be given the FET, but Serrano and the political directorate were at a loss as to how to proceed. None of the remaining *camisas viejas* had enough talent or prestige to administer the party, and Franco did not consider them trustworthy. The Generalissimo preferred that Serrano Suárez take over direction of the FET. But Serrano (whom political wits dubbed the *cañadísimo*, or "most high brother-in-law") was a cautious, careful man who strove to act with extreme finesse. He was already unpopular among the veteran Falangists, and he knew that any further power accorded him would increase resentment.

The old guard continued to press for the exchange of Raimundo Fernández Cuesta, the last Secretary of the original party. Before the unification, Serrano had opposed this, not wishing to increase the possible resistance of the *camisas viejas* against the process of coordination then being planned. Now that the power of the old guard had largely been broken, he began to reconsider the matter; Fernández Cuesta's presence might not be harmful and might even have political advantages.¹⁷ Serrano knew well that Fernández Cuesta was not sufficiently energetic as an administrator to be dangerous in the new situation. Furthermore, his eighteen months in Republican jails seemed enough to guarantee his full loyalty to the rebel government.

Feelers were accordingly put out for the exchange of Fernández Cuesta, who had already escaped from prison twice and been recaptured each time. The proposal was favored by Indalecio Prieto, who was still greatly impressed with the papers left behind in José Antonio's cell at Alicante. Prieto had already sent copies of José Antonio's testament into Franco Spain, hoping to provoke a break in

the Franco government by exciting the revolutionary aspirations of the Falange old guard. He thought that the return of Fernández Cuesta might possibly rouse the *camisas viejas* to action.*

The ex-Secretary-General arrived in rebel territory in October 1937. He made his first public appearance at Seville on October 29, the fourth anniversary of the founding of the Falange. After thanking Franco for his deliverance from Republican territory, he declared that the aim of the FET was to establish the Spanish economy on a syndical system, which he described as perfectly compatible with capital and private property. Some platitudes about controlling the stock market and financial operations followed, but nothing more.¹⁸ Fernández Cuesta looked like a safe party Secretary for the Caudillo, and he was appointed on December 2, 1937. There was no reaction from the *camisas viejas*, except a general feeling of contentment that no ex-conservative had been imposed on them. In a New Year's Day interview, Fernández Cuesta warned:

Sincerity and affection oblige me to say to the Old Guard that it must have an understanding spirit, and not lock itself up in exclusiveness or adopt repulsive airs of superiority, but receive with love and comradeship all who come with good faith to Falange Española Tradicionalista.¹⁹

Fernández Cuesta had a tolerant nature and was not unintelligent, but he lacked initiative and had little administrative talent. Furthermore, being a *camisa vieja*, he was never trusted by Franco. Only Serrano Suárez had the Generalissimo's confidence, and it was Serrano who continued to pull the wires in the Falange. The little lawyer lived and acted on a plane removed from the ordinary servants of the state. Always dressed in a well-tailored black business suit, he was the only important person in Salamanca who felt no compulsion to sport a uniform.

Franco and Serrano Suárez displayed extraordinary skill in balancing off the various incompatible and contradictory elements wedged

* Prieto urged Fernández Cuesta to join the still mysterious "Falange Española Auténtica." Fernández Cuesta says that he never doubted the good faith of those who promoted the "FEA," but that after the harsh experiences of 1936 he had no personal desire to reject the leadership of Franco. (Conversation with Raimundo Fernández Cuesta, Madrid, Feb. 13, 1959.)

into the FET. The party itself soon became hopelessly faction-ridden, which was just what the dictator wanted. No one really knew where the Caudillo stood on the long political spectrum reaching from national syndicalist revolution to clerical reaction. The German ambassador noted:

[Franco] has very cleverly succeeded, with the advice of his brother-in-law, . . . in not making enemies of any of the parties represented in the Unity Party that were previously independent and hostile to one another, . . . but, on the other hand, also in not favoring any one of them that might thus grow too strong. . . . It is therefore comprehensible that, depending on the party allegiance of the person concerned, one is just as apt to hear the opinion in Spain that "Franco is entirely a creature of the Falange," as that "Franco has sold himself completely to the reaction," or "Franco is a proven monarchist," or "he is completely under the influence of the Church."²⁰

Serrano Suárez bore the brunt of the enmity aroused by the new political alignment of 1937. His first and bitterest opponents were not Falangists but monarchists, who realized that with the unification he was trying to lay the basis for a corporative, authoritarian, nonmonarchical state. This created an enormous, seemingly insuperable, obstacle to their plans for a restoration. They launched an extensive whispering campaign against Franco's evil genius, the *cuñadísimo*.

In his *ABC* interview of July 19, Franco had already rolled out what was to become his standard line for monarchists:

If the time for a Restoration should arrive, the new Monarchy would of course have to be very different from the one which fell on April 14, 1931: different in its content and—though it may grieve many, we must obey reality—even in the person who incarnates it. . . . [That person] ought to have the character of a pacifier and ought not to be numbered among the conquerors.²¹

In short, everything was to be postponed indefinitely. There was no reason to hide the fact that the military dictatorship would be necessary for some time after the war was over. Franco ended with the comforting statement that the aristocracy had made great sacrifices

and had shown up well in the war, as if to say that this glory and their personal perquisites should be enough for them.

For his part, Serrano Suárez declared to all that his only goals were "to help establish *effectively* the political *jeftatura* of Franco, to save and realize the political thought of José Antonio, and to contribute to establishing the National Movement in a juridical regime, that is, to institute a State of Law."²² A Falange pedigree was quickly built up for Serrano. His dealings with José Antonio were inflated and noised about, in preparation for greater things to come.²³ When the first regular Franco cabinet was set up on January 30, 1938, the *cuñadísimo* became Minister of the Interior and *Jefe Nacional* of Press and Propaganda for the FET. Serrano now ran internal Nationalist politics.

After the new government list was announced, a howl went up from the *camisas viejas* over the appointment of General Gómez Jordana as Foreign Minister. Jordana was a monarchist and had a reputation as an Anglophile. He would be likely to countenance what Falangists termed the "crime of Gibraltar" and to work for a Bourbon restoration. Furthermore, he was not overly fond of the fascist governments admired by most Falangists.

The old guard was soon given compensation for this affront. Since Serrano, the party's nominal Press and Propaganda Chief, was also head of the Ministry of the Interior, this meant that the Falange propaganda machine could now control the official propaganda of the state. This opened the way for the first of Franco's many compromises. In return for accepting a cabinet packed with conservatives and monarchists, the *camisas viejas* would be allowed to control government rhetoric.²⁴ As Subsecretaries of Press and of Propaganda for the FET, two young protégés of Serrano, both super-Falangists, were chosen. They were, respectively, Antonio Tóvar and Dionisio Ridruejo.

Ridruejo, only twenty-five years old, set out to establish a "totalitarian" propaganda machine, and the quasi-revolutionary line of the Falange enjoyed a tight monopoly of information outlets. Young Dionisio was soon nicknamed "the Spanish Goebbels"—a strained analogy, based only on the diminutive physical stature of the two

men. Dionisio was the most eloquent speaker in the party since José Antonio, and he strove to maintain the vanished *Jefe's* tone of "poetic fascism."²⁶

It was evident throughout the first half of 1938 that each temporary military crisis was likely to bring a recrudescence of political differences.²⁵ As the war dragged on without a clear end in sight, the political malaise deepened. General Juan Yagüe, the "Falange General," grew very tired of the war and the political dealings of the Cuartel General. The calculated cruelty and premeditated hatred of the Civil War disgusted him. He saw few signs of a "new Spain" emerging from the political intrigue around Salamanca. Yagüe was so embittered that during a speech on the first anniversary of the unification he lashed out publicly against the actions of the Caudillo's clique.²⁶ According to von Stohrer, the German ambassador,

In particular it was felt that the parts of his [Yagüe's] speech in which he gave free recognition to the bravery of the Red Spanish opponents, defended the political prisoners—both the Reds and the "Blues" (Falangists), who were arrested because of too much political zeal—and severely attacked the partiality of the administration of justice, went beyond his authority and represented a lack of discipline; the answer was his recall from command, at least temporarily.²⁷

In a major speech at Zaragoza, given on the same day as Yagüe's address, Franco strongly denounced all murmurers and dissenters: Efforts to infiltrate the cadres of our organizations multiplied; an attempt was made to sow rivalry and division in our ranks; secret orders were given in order to produce lassitude and fatigue. An effort was made to undermine the prestige of our highest authorities by exploiting petty complaints and ambitions. These are they who want to sound an alarm to capital with the phantasm of demagogic reforms. . . .

Therefore Spain's constant enemies will not cease in their attempt to destroy our unity, as they did even after the decree of unification, speculating at times with the glorious name of José Antonio, founder and martyr of the Falange.²⁸

* Ridruco was a bard in his own right, and a better one than José Antonio. After his propaganda duties ended in 1941 he won well-deserved literary recognition as one of the two or three best neoclassical poets in Spain.

The German ambassador reported that forty per cent of the civilian population in rebel territory were still considered politically unreliable, and were held in place only by the government's policy of ruthless reprisals. All of the more responsible elements in the Franco government were becoming depressed by the sea of blood flowing from the savage police repression intended to guarantee the "internal security" of the Nationalist government. Although precise figures cannot be determined, it is clear that many thousands of people were slaughtered by the White Terror during the Civil War. The first indiscriminate massacres gave way to the more legalistic methods of the military tribunals set up under General Martínez Anido, who became Minister of Public Safety in the 1938 cabinet; but the killing went on unabated. Many people, conservative and Falangist alike, voiced their apprehension over the continuity of a state based on such foundations.*

Martínez Anido had won his spurs as a legalized murderer by arranging the slaughter of Anarcho-Syndicalists in the great Barcelona repression of 1921-22. But that had been child's play compared to what went on after 1936. Many of the *camisas viejas* hated Martínez Anido as a reactionary and a butcher; despite their many errors of thought and deed, the Falangists had never intended the national syndicalist state to pursue a juridical policy of mass murder.²⁹ In June of 1938, some of the old guard leaders proposed through Serrano Suñer that the Ministry of Public Safety be handed over to them, and that a more limited Ministry of Public Health be created for Martínez Anido.³⁰ This suggestion was quietly sidestepped. Objections to the policy of brutal repression were not sufficiently widespread in influential circles to be taken seriously. When Martínez Anido died unexpectedly a few months later, Serrano Suñer took over this position

* During the first part of the Civil War many Falangists participated with great abandon in the Rightist repression. The Army, which was responsible for the initiation and execution of this policy of mass murder, preferred to use Falangists for such tasks whenever possible. The complicity of the Falange in this gruesome work was very great. However, the Falange was the only one of the Rightist groups that attempted to restrain its members from arbitrary crime, even to a limited degree, as the liberal lawyer Antonio Ruiz Vilaplana has recorded. (See *Doy fe: Un año de actuación en la España nacionalista*, pp. 168-69.)

as well. Serrano was still oppressed by the memory of his brothers slain in the Republican zone; the killings went on, as they would continue to do long after the Civil War had officially ended.

The full roster of the first National Council was not complete until October 19, 1937.³¹ Of its fifty members, twenty could be classified as more or less genuine Falangists; eight were Carlists, five were generals, and some seventeen were assorted monarchists, conservatives, and opportunists. This mixed fry was a good representation of the political heterogeneity behind the Franco regime. There was a sufficient variety of discordant groups to assure that nothing unplanned or original could be accomplished. The regime's favorite tactic of playing critics off against one another was already obvious. The first National Council met only a few times, and its insignificance was extreme.³²

Little more could be said for the party's first Junta Política. According to Serrano,

Its labors were rather insignificant, serving only to maintain official contact between the party and the state.

In some cases the meetings (it should not be forgotten that the official party, like the national movement itself, was a conglomeration of forces) were strained and even agitated. The political life of the regime resided principally in the Ministries.³³

The Ministries, with one exception, were controlled by non-Falangists.

Perhaps the only noteworthy action taken by either the first Council or the first Junta Política of the FET was a deliberation regarding the realignment of party structure undertaken by the National Council in June 1938. All those genuinely concerned with the party realized that unless something were done to strengthen its organization within the structure of the state, it had little hope of projecting any influence in the future. Pedro Gamero del Castillo, Dionisio Ridruejo, and the Carlist Juan José Pradera were appointed to draw up a plan for reorganizing the FET. Gamero and Pradera were both shrewd enough to realize that no bold adjustment would be viewed with favor by the government. But Ridruejo, one of the last of the firebrands in the party, still cherished ambitions of seeing Spain turned into a true totalitarian Falange party-state. His two associates shied away from his proposals but suggested that he draw

them up and present them on his own initiative. Ridruejo ingeniously did so. The proposals he presented at the next meeting of the National Council would have made the Falange militia autonomous and increased the party's power throughout the state.

The resistance on the part of the Rightists and the generals was led by Pedro Sáinz Rodríguez, the Minister of Education. Ridruejo had already drawn the ire of Sáinz Rodríguez by opposing in the Junta Política the immense control being given to the Church in educational matters. Sáinz Rodríguez declared that Dionisio's proposals for radical change demonstrated a lack of confidence in the present government. The Generalissimo, who was presiding over the meeting, showed considerable anger, announcing that, even worse, they showed a lack of confidence in the Caudillo. Ridruejo defended himself by saying that he had simply acted on suggestion of the party, and that since the Caudillo was *Jefe Nacional* of the party, to strengthen the authority of the party would be to strengthen the authority of the Caudillo, but that if the Caudillo did not really consider himself the head of the party, and so on. Nothing came of the proposals, to be sure, but Ridruejo escaped formal censure.³⁴

The only result of this incident was that Franco grew even more suspicious of the *camisas viejas*. He had already received reports (completely false) that Agustín Aznar and Fernando González Véllez, both National Council members, were preparing a plot against him; he evidently took Ridruejo's proposals as evidence of such feelings of rebellion.³⁵ Both Aznar and González Véllez were soon arrested, and on June 23 and 25 their dismissal from official position was announced.³⁶ After a brief period the two were released, but they were exiled to remote provinces for the remainder of the war.³⁷ González Véllez's plan to participate in the FET and work to influence the government from within had accomplished nothing against the authority, suspicion, and obduracy of the dictator.*

* Even before the war ended, Franco was busy removing potential internal opposition. Eugenio Vegas Latapí, an obstreperous intellectual and a leader of the *Acción Española* group, was ejected from the National Council on March 4, 1938, and Fal Conde's day of grace ended forty-eight hours later. (*Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Española Tradicionalista*, No. 16, Mar. 15, 1938.)

Fernández Cuesta made only weak efforts to save his two comrades. There was really little he could do, but he attempted even less. His failure to attempt a serious defense of Aznar and González Vélaz further diminished his prestige, which was already on the wane among the *camisas viejas*. In this matter, as in larger questions, the Secretary-General found himself with little room for maneuver. He was liable to be damned by either side. His only possible recourse would have been to rebel against Franco, but this was impossible during wartime; the Falangists considered themselves too patriotic.

By the beginning of 1938 the rulers of rebel Spain felt the need to begin some sort of work on the nation's social problem. The Italians seemed particularly anxious that the government prepare a labor charter to provide a reformist facade for the Franco dictatorship. The notion was discussed at the beginning of 1938 in the Council of Ministers and was duly approved. Two draft projects were commissioned: one to be prepared by Pedro González Bueno and the clique of conservative "technocrats" to which he belonged, and the other to be drawn up by a pair of young economic-minded academicians, Joaquín Garrigues and Francisco Javier Conde, with the collaboration of Dionisio Ridruejo. This latter draft turned out to be quite radical; it placed the national economy under the control of the proposed syndical system, with its entire program based upon an explicitly anticapitalist concept of property. The Garrigues-Conde project was championed in the Council of Ministers by Fernández Cuesta, but it was immediately rejected.³⁸ The González Bueno project, on the other hand, was more conservative and of a paternalist-capitalist nature. It was referred to the National Council of the FET for further polishing.

This disposition of the projects brought on a general free-for-all in the National Council. Carlists and representatives of the financial oligarchy offered amendments to make the proposed *fuero* more conservative, and the Falange "Left" countered with amendments to make it more radical.³⁹ Serrano Súñer, as nominal chairman of the Council, remained neutral. González Bueno, who had been appointed Minister of Syndical Organization in January of 1938, declared that he would resign if the members insisted on seriously revising the project. Serrano then tried to adjust the situation by saying that they

were all acting too hastily without specialized knowledge of the matter. He said that the most acceptable result would be merely a general statement of the aims and ideals of the "new Spain" with regard to labor.

Serrano's counsel was decisive.⁴⁰ A third draft was drawn up jointly, paragraph by paragraph. Ridruejo and Eduardo Aunós made the largest number of proposals. Queipo de Llano wanted to insert the phrase "The land belongs to him who works it," but this was vetoed by the conservatives. The final product was a set of platitudes known as the *Fuero de Trabajo*, which became the labor charter of the regime.⁴⁰ It merely stated that "capital was an instrument of production," but that labor's rights would be protected and extended through guaranteed employment, unspecified fringe benefits, and general government supervision.⁴¹

The Ministry of Syndical Organization and Action had already been set up in the general decree of January 30, 1938, which established the first formal Franco government. The new Ministry was to be comprised of five National Services: Syndicates, Jurisdiction and Housing of Labor, Social Security, Emigration, and Statistics.⁴² Further details included in the decree of April 31 elaborated the upper echelon of the syndical bureaucracy. A Central Syndical Council of Coordination was provided for and National Syndicalist centers were established in each province.⁴³ On May 13 provisions were made for the establishment of Labor Magistrates to adjudicate disputes.⁴⁴ Needless to say, this entire project was controlled from above.

Raimundo Fernández Cuesta distinguished between the nature of Spanish syndicalism and the Italian corporative state in the following way:

Neither is the Vertical Syndicate a copy of the Corporation. In those countries in which the governors have encountered, on coming to power, as in Italy, a class syndicalism that they could not dismantle, they have seen themselves forced, as a lesser evil, to convert it into State syndicalism and afterwards to create super-syndical organs of interconnection and self-discipline in defense of the totalitarian interest in production. Those organs are the Corporations. The Corporation, then, had a forced basis in class syndicalism. The Vertical Syndicate, on the other hand, is both the point of departure and of arrival. It does not suppose the

previous existence of other syndicates. Broad horizontal structures do not interfere with it. It is not an organ of the State, but an instrument at the service of its utilitarian economic policy.⁴⁵

The Falangist state, he said, would not be a syndicalist state:

When we say "the National Syndicalist state" we are referring to only one aspect of the State, the economic aspect. We mean that the State, to discipline the economy, employs the instrument of the Syndicates, but we do not mean that the State is mounted solely and exclusively on the Syndicates or that the sovereignty of the State lies in the Syndicates.⁴⁶

Pedro González Bueno was considerably less than successful as Minister of Syndical Organization. Although a professional engineer, he lacked the full capacity for the job. His orders were usually inadequate, contradictory, or unrelated to the problem at hand. Provincial syndicate leaders referred to him as the "Minister of Syndical Disorganization." The *camisas viejas* required a great deal more of González Bueno than he was able to give. Even before the Ministry was set up, Fernández Cuesta had to order that all Falange press and syndicate chiefs "ABSTAIN COMPLETELY FROM PUBLISHING ANY STATEMENT THAT MAY PRETEND TO INTERPRET THE POINT IN QUESTION [on syndicates in the Falange program]."⁴⁷ Some of the syndical *delgados provinciales*, such as José Andino of Burgos, simply resigned.⁴⁸

In theory, what González Bueno accomplished was the formation of a thin skeletal chain of syndicates throughout rebel Spain, which were supposed to embrace all workers and all branches of production. The reality was less impressive, and the syndical organization was most rudimentary. A shell was set up, but no results were obtained, nor much flesh added, during the duration of the conflict. Confusion reigned both at the Ministry center and in the provinces. There was not even a guiding philosophy or a well-worked-out theory of syndical organization. With chaos about him, González Bueno was unable to see his way clear to a coherent achievement; he was eventually removed in mid-1939.

The control of capital and agricultural production was beyond the reach of the syndicates. The Ministry of Economics, safely managed by representatives of the financial world, handled these areas largely

as it found most prudent. Even before the appearance of the Ministry of Syndical Organization, Economics had taken the initiative in establishing syndicates or cooperative organizations in special areas.⁴⁹ On August 23, 1937, the National Wheat Service was established to control grain prices, and it played a significant role in the economy for years afterwards.⁵⁰ On July 16, 1938, a special law created the Regulative Commission for Producers, which was to survey and regulate all aspects of business activity; the boards would be named by the various departments concerned, and would thus reflect the several sections.⁵¹ This Commission, basically a political and bureaucratic creation, served as the primary agency of business regulation during the first years of the regime. Various other control agencies were set up in 1937 and 1938, but some of the syndicalization decrees for producers issued by the Ministry of Economics had to be canceled for lack of means to carry them out.⁵²

All this commission- and syndicate-naming had nothing whatever to do with the Falange's working-class syndicates, or with the party itself. It merely pointed up their insignificance.⁵³ After the Falange became the *partido único* it still lacked the influence to intervene directly in economics, but it was given increased powers to confiscate certain types of capital goods and levy certain contributions for its own use. The business world saw no need to submit to such things, and there was much resistance to this arbitrary use of privilege. A series of fines was levied throughout the war on property-holders who refused to cooperate.⁵⁴

Turning to the home front, Falange papers complained of the passive resistance of the "Third Spain"—the old Right and the business groups still in league with the conservative politicians, all of whom were considered arms of the ever menacing internal enemy.⁵⁵ In return, the party press was sometimes harassed by military censorship.⁵⁶ When conservatives called the Falangists "crazy," they replied:

In your spurious lips we were insane both before the uprising and during it; therefore we died in the streets and fought in the trenches, while you doubted. But listen: materialists of every stripe, our sacred insanity of raising Spain toward God has not ended. We were and are crazy, but we shall not cease to be crazy so long as the Social Justice which this revolution demands is not realized on every level.⁵⁷

The only thing of which the Falangists were masters in the "new Spain" was rhetoric.*

The *camisas viejas* were at least a year in accepting the fact of the *Jeft's* death. All sorts of wild rumors circulated concerning his whereabouts and his physical condition. As late as February 1937 the Italian ambassador was given to believe by Franco that José Antonio was still alive.⁵⁸

The cult of José Antonio officially began on the second anniversary of his death. A government decree of November 16, 1938, declared November 20 a day of national mourning. Plaques commemorating José Antonio and the rebel dead were to be placed permanently on the walls of all Spanish churches. Chairs of political doctrine, named for José Antonio but appointed by Francisco Franco, were to be established at the Universities of Madrid and Barcelona. All sorts of press and propaganda gimmicks were set up under the Founder's honorary patronage. Projects for naming trade schools and special military units for the fallen leader were outlined. All centers of learning were directed to give a special lesson in his exemplary life and works.⁵⁹

Ideal identification with José Antonio provided a necessary and welcome dodge for the Salamanca *camarilla*. The round little Generalissimo led off the act. In a radio message of July 18, 1938, he reported that José Antonio had been ready to hand over the Falange to him in October 1934, which was only part of the truth.⁶⁰ On November 20 Franco delivered a special address over the National Radio in honor of *El Ausente*, as the *camisas viejas* called him.⁶¹ José Antonio Primo de Rivera had become the official symbol and patron saint of the new dictatorship. The grand climax came at the end of the war, when José Antonio's remains were removed from the common cemetery at Alicante. A torchlight procession of Falange militiamen bore the vanished *Jeft's* bier over a three-hundred-mile trek to a

* Although held in check politically, they undertook a few worthwhile projects. One of the most constructive civil activities of the Falange, in no way political, was the mobilization of young people for the organized reforestation of treeless areas. This work began formally on October 4, 1936, and eventually had a real effect on the face of Spain. (*Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Española Tradicionalista*, No. 33, Oct. 10, 1938.)

grand and solemn burial in front of the altar in the church at El Escorial, the resting place of Spain's kings.⁶²

José Antonio was the hero, the martyr, the troubadour, the transcendent reference, the perfect symbol—in short, everything that the leaders of the "new Spain" were not.

The overt political fusion promulgated in April 1937 reflected no real change of heart in either of the two protagonists, despite the high-sounding pronouncements of government propagandists. An order of April 30, 1937, established equal representation for each group on committees of fusion in every province, but this made little impression.⁶³ Falangists and Reguetés preferred to maintain separate headquarters until an order of June 8 declared that in towns with populations of less than 10,000 it was absolutely mandatory that they occupy the same quarters.⁶⁴ Plans were also made to fuse the respective youth groups, but these were never carried out.⁶⁵ Some veteran Carlists, as a sign of resistance, simply refused to accept FET membership cards.

However, the Reguetés at the front lines reacted as did their peers in the Falange. Rear guard politics seemed very unreal in the battle zone, but unity seemed very reasonable and very necessary. There was no interparty conflict, for too many other things required immediate attention.⁶⁶

Nonetheless, it was fundamentally impossible to effect a meaningful compromise between the monarchist-regionalist program of the Traditionalists and the party-minded statism of *falangismo*. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, animosity flared up in the rear lines. One French journalist asked a Falange leader what his group would do if the monarchy were really restored. The Falangist replied: "There would simply be another revolution. And this time, I assure you, we would not be on the same side."⁶⁷ At the militia review in Burgos on October 12, 1937 (the annual "Día de la Raza"), the Carlist leader, José María Zaldívar, threatened to withdraw his Reguetés if they were not permitted to drill on a separate half of the field. The Reguetés were not marched off, but the festive event was partially ruined by the long altercation which resulted. In the chasisement that followed, Zaldívar was expelled from the FET

and several other Carlist chiefs were deprived of party rights for a period of two years.⁶⁸

Franco endeavored to rope in the more recalcitrant Traditionalists when he appointed Fal Conde to the National Council on November 20, 1937. A long correspondence ensued, during the course of which Fal respectfully begged off because of his opposition to "*the idea of the party* as a medium of national union, a base of the state, and an inspiration of the government, which I understand as contrary to our Traditionalist doctrine, to our antecedents, and to our very racial temperament."⁶⁹ After Raimundo Fernández Cuesta became Secretary-General of the party in December 1937, he continued this correspondence.⁷⁰ It ended when Fal's appointment was finally canceled on March 6, 1938.⁷¹

Initially, the Carlists had received the *jefatura provincial* in eight of the sixteen provinces of rebel Spain. According to the original understanding, such posts were to be divided evenly between the two groups, and where one received the *jefatura*, the other was to be given the *secretariado*. However, after Fernández Cuesta became Secretary of FET, the Carlists found their initiative increasingly circumscribed by the national command. After a Ministry of Syndical Organization was established at the end of January 1938, whatever influence the Carlists had achieved in syndical organization was progressively curtailed.

When Serrano Suñer became Minister of the Interior and Falange Propaganda Chief early in 1938, the Traditionalists found their propaganda activities more sharply limited than ever before.⁷² Dionisio Ridruejo and Antonio Tóvar, who directed state and party propaganda in 1938-39, were determined that national syndicalist ideology, and only national syndicalist ideology, would be expounded in the "new Spain."⁷³

The Carlists' only lasting political satisfaction was achieved

* For example, José María Iribarren's 1939 biography of General Mola was blue-penciled whenever any praise of the Carlists appeared. Even a quotation from Shakespeare that Navarre would one day be "the astonishment of the universe" was eliminated. When Iribarren wrote that 14,000 Requests and 4,000 Falangists had originally reported to Mola, the censor simply switched the proportions. (From José María Iribarren's manuscript, "Notas sobre la gestación y peripetias desdichadas de mi libro *Con el General Mola*," May 15, 1944.)

through the clerical laws of 1938. When the first regular Franco cabinet was set up in January of that year, Rodezno was given the portfolio of Justice, and he chose Arellano as his Subsecretary. Their main goal was to rewrite Spanish religious legislation, crushing any form of laicism, granting the Church complete educational rights, tying the state to Catholicism, and rigidly circumscribing any of the other Christian churches.⁷⁴ With able assistance from Pedro Sainz Rodríguez in the Ministry of Education, they were overwhelmingly successful. All opposition from the Falange was overridden, and the Jesuits were brought back to Spain within sixty days. The Carlists had finally scored a success within the Franco state, and to many of them this helped greatly to compensate for their other frustrations. It may not have been possible to build either a Carlist or a Falangist party-state in Franco Spain, but in all ordinary civil affairs, the church-state was dominant.

Most veteran Falangists resented the overwhelming triumph of clericalism under the regime. Certain segments of the party became the last respectable strongholds of a certain brand of anticlericalism. A brawl in Seville during the autumn of 1938 between a Falange youth demonstration and a Church procession created a major scandal, which the government tried desperately to cover up.⁷⁴

On the civilian front, the Carlists had nothing to match the Falange's Auxilio Social, set up during the first year of the war. The Carlist civilian auxiliary service of Fronts and Hospitals functioned as a part of the FET.⁷⁵ It continued to do valiant work under Carlist leaders, but it was connected only with front-line relief; at the end of the war this service was no longer needed, and the Carlists were left with nothing. Falangist control of the social services of the FET was virtually undisputed. This meant little, however, for by late 1939 the Carlists were deserting the FET *en masse*. The evident degeneration of the party into an office-holding clique did not disillusion them, for Traditionalists had never expected anything of the Franco-Falange in the first place. At the war's end, they simply returned to the mountains they had left in the summer of 1936.

Several of the more loyal Carlist leaders were temporarily arrested or banished during the five years that followed. Fal Conde was permitted to return to Spain when the fighting ceased, but he was placed under house arrest at Seville in 1939 and was sent to internal exile

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at Mallorca three years later.⁷⁶ As isolated and politically impotent as ever, the Traditionalists settled down to survive *franquismo* just as they had survived constitutional Monarchy and Republicanism.

The influence of Germany and Italy on the Falange during the Civil War was never more than secondary. Neither country made a direct effort to intervene in the domestic politics of rebel Spain; each feared it might affront the other if it attempted a politically aggressive policy. At first, the Italians seemed to believe that the Germans were pressing them forward in order to foist upon them any blame for overly ambitious intervention in Spain. Count Ciano informed Roberto Cantalupo, the Duce's first ambassador to Salamanca, that Italy's policy would be to avoid any kind of heavy involvement.⁷⁷

The Germans appeared equally diffident. On December 5, 1936, their Foreign Minister, von Neurath, defined Germany's aims as "predominantly of a commercial character."⁷⁸ Two months earlier, Ernst von Weizsäcker, the chief political counselor at the Wilhelmstrasse, had informed the German representative that there was absolutely no authorization for them to press for a National Socialist-type revolution in Spain. The Germans never wavered from this attitude.⁷⁹ Hassell, their ambassador in Rome, urged:

Anyone who knows the Spaniards and Spanish conditions will regard with a good deal of skepticism and also concern for future German-Spanish relations (perhaps even for German-Italian cooperation) any attempt to transplant National Socialism to Spain with German methods and German personnel. It will be easier with Latin Fascism, which is politically more formalistic; a certain aversion to the Italians on the part of the Spaniards, and their resentment of foreign leadership in general, may prove to be a hindrance, but that is a matter for the Italians to cope with.⁸⁰

The Italians demonstrated a complete disinclination to cope with it. They had little interest in or acumen for Spanish politics, and they had never shown any great confidence in the future of Iberian fascism.*

* The Marqués de Valdeiglesias declares that during the first week of the Civil War, the current Italian ambassador told him at Biarritz that his last report to Rome had dismissed the possibilities of a successful Rightist rebellion as nil. (Conversation in Madrid, Feb. 17, 1959.)

The only foreign "intervention" of any sort that took place in Salamanca occurred during the spring of 1937. In the months immediately preceding the unification, Faupel had feared that the military dictatorship would discard the fascist party before it even got started. In January 1937 he had written:

The Government believes at present that by taking over part of the Falange program it can carry out social reforms even without the Falange itself. This is possible. But it is not possible without the cooperation of the Falange to imbue the Spanish workers, especially those in the Red territory to be conquered, with national and really practicable social ideas and to win them over to the new state. For that reason collaboration between the Government and the Falange is still indispensable.⁸¹

As has been seen, Faupel urged both Hedilla and the Generalissimo to work for political unification and the formation of a revolutionary state party. However, this encouragement never went beyond conversations arranged on the very personal initiative of the German ambassador. Faupel fully realized that the Army was the basic power in rebel Spain; he admitted that it would be impossible to back the party if it ever tried to buck the Army:

If in his attempt to bring the parties together Franco should meet with opposition from the Falange, we and the Italians are agreed that, in spite of all our inclination toward the Falange and its sound tendencies, we must support Franco, who after all intends to make the program of the Falange the basis of his internal policy. The realization of the most urgently needed social reforms is possible only with Franco, not in opposition to him.⁸²

Faupel was not pleased by the results of the April *diktat* and greatly distrusted the "reactionaries" in Salamanca. As previously mentioned, he pressed the Caudillo for leniency in dealing with Hedilla, but his request for a formal protest was denied by the German Foreign Office. In return, both Franco and Serrano came to detest Faupel for his officiousness and gratuitous counsel, even though the German ambassador seems at first to have trusted in the sincerity of the *cuñadísimo*.⁸³ When he tried to foist on Fermín Yzurdiaga, FET Chief of Press and Propaganda, a plan for a German-directed propaganda and information-exchange institute to be named for Charles V,

the Caudillo's annoyance increased.⁸⁴ Faupel was finally recalled in October 1937.

Dr. Eberhard von Stohrer, his successor, was more congenial to the rebel leaders. The new ambassador emphasized that Germany should avoid "any interference in Spanish domestic affairs."⁸⁵

We have thus far confined ourselves to indicating our particular sympathies for that movement in the Falange which is called the "original Falange," the "revolutionary Falange," or the "Camisas viejas," which is closest to us ideologically and whose aims, in our opinion, also offer Spain the best guaranty for the establishment of a new and strong national state which could be useful to us. We have, therefore, readily placed our experience at the disposal of the Falange, have shown our party organizations, social institutions, etc., in Germany to picked representatives of the Falange, and have advised them upon request. We have thereby considerably lightened their task here, but we have naturally not been able to strengthen them to the extent that the victory of this element is assured.⁸⁶

The Falangists naturally felt strongly sympathetic to the German and Italian parties. There was considerable propaganda interchange and the Falange organized pro-German "galas." Many of the first leaders of the party's Auxilio Social were sent to Germany for training in the Winterhilfe.⁸⁷ That, however, was the limit:

On request, the Falange receives from the German press office a wealth of material on German conditions and the organization, etc., of the NSDAP. There is no importunate propaganda or "intervention in the internal affairs" of Spain. Any objection of this type formerly made can at most refer to the beginnings of the Falange (the Hedilla affair).⁸⁸

In Berlin, neither the ambition nor the interest of Nazi leaders was aroused by the Falange. Dionisio Ridruejo recalls that the party was never mentioned on either of the two trips he made to Germany, in 1937 and in 1940. During the spring of 1938 Weizsäcker wrote that it no longer seemed worth while to attempt to cultivate the Falange as an independent entity.⁸⁹

Many of the party's foreign connections depended on Serrano Suñer in the period following unification. His Catholic conservatism

drew him more toward the Italian Fascist Party than toward the Nazis, but the Italians took little interest in Spanish internal developments. They had not even a consistent foreign policy. Mussolini could not bring himself to risk a heavy involvement in Spain until the resounding defeat of the Italian expeditionary force at Guadajara in March 1937. By that time, the Duce was so confused about the real facts of Spanish affairs, misinformed as he was by groups of mutually suspicious intriguers, that he sent Roberto Farinacci on a formal mission to Salamanca; according to his military attaché, Farinacci's main task was to gather accurate information.⁹⁰

A secondary political objective of this mission was to sound out the willingness of Spanish authorities to accept a proposed Italian candidate for the Spanish throne. Such a regime would supposedly be set up with the Falange playing the role of the Italian Fascist Party.⁹¹ However, independently of each other, both Franco and Hedilla rejected this scheme, and it was quickly forgotten.

Immediately following the unification, Signor Danzi, the Italian Fascist Party's representative at Salamanca, offered a copy of his party's statutes to the Caudillo, so that they might be used as a model for the FET. As the German ambassador predicted, these were largely ignored.⁹² After that, the Italians seemed to lose interest altogether. They left the FET and its masters quite alone.

When Dionisio Ridruejo accompanied Serrano Suñer on a state visit to Rome in the summer of 1938, he was drawn aside by Ciano and asked which men were of present or potential importance in the Spanish party. Ridruejo replied, "Either Serrano Suñer or Fernández Cuesta." Ciano then closed the matter by saying that the ex-Cedista FET members he had seen reminded him of the elderly, conservative wing of the old Partito Popolare. He indicated that he considered it impossible to build a real fascist party with such material.

A year later, after visiting Spain, Ciano changed his attitude:

The central factor in the country is now the Falange. It is a party which is still only beginning to build up its formation and activity [on the contrary, it was already on the downgrade], but it already has grouped around it the youth, the most active elements, and in particular the women [evidently referring to the special labors of Auxilio Social and the Sección Femenina].⁹³

However, Ciano's more positive estimation of the Spanish party came long after Franco and Serrano Súñer had made the Falange their own. The principle of nonintervention in Franco's domestic affairs was already well established, and the Falange would henceforth reflect only those characteristics of the Italian party that were desired by the Caudillo. During the crucial months in Salamanca politics, neither Germany nor Italy had been able to arouse herself for a serious effort at intervention. Italian suspicion, German disinclination, and the mutual hesitation of both nations prevented them from seeking political castles in Spain. Francisco Franco, the only man who ever outplayed Hitler, was left to build his peculiar little system unhindered.

XV

THE "NEW SPAIN" OF THE CAUDILLO

ON FRANCISCO FRANCO became the principal ^{Great Awakening} ~~enigma~~ of twentieth-century Spain. No one better kept himself from projecting a clearly definable political image. A great deal of confusion and contradiction arose about Franco's supposed "aims," chiefly because he had so few of them. The Left cursed him for restoring to power the forces of reaction, but he never showed any real inclination to implement a fully reactionary program. Monarchists reviled him for delaying a restoration, yet he always favored them and eventually even paid a subsidy to their favorite candidate. The conservatives hated his "Falangism," but he never showed the slightest enthusiasm for granting real power to the party.

Franco apparently won an early reputation for bravery in the Moroccan *tercios* of the Legion. At the age of thirty he was so badly wounded that his life was despaired of. However, after his front-line career ended, the young officer from Galicia realized that prudence and caution were the prime requisites to professional advancement. Franco soon showed himself to be a born politician; early in his career it became evident that his major preoccupation was self-advancement. Franco knew that the future of the military lay with nationalist sentiment and with the conservative parties of order. There were no personal predilections behind his politics. The Church meant less than nothing to him as a young man, and his famous brother, Ramón, worked with the Anarchists. During the forlorn Sanjurjo plot of 1932, Franco refused to lift a finger.¹

Partly because of Franco's good CEDA connections, Gil Robles made him Chief of Staff in 1934. Power affected neither his extreme personal asceticism nor his political perspective. Franco refused to move against the legitimate government both in October 1934 and in February 1936. He fully realized the strength and determination of

the Left, and he hesitated long in weighing the prospects of the Mola-UME conspiracy. He joined the military plot only a month or so before the Civil War broke out, and he demanded control of the most efficient segment of the Army as his price. Having thrown in his lot with the rebels, it was no more than natural that he should seek the top command. Authoritarianism was the only program the generals had, and it could function effectively in the Spanish environment only under a *jefatura única*.

As we have seen, the Generalissimo very much lacked an ideological direction. The only element of political idealism in his make-up was expressed in his definite, if vaguely conceived, insistence on the prestige and unity of the Spanish nation. That is, according to his own lights, he was a patriot. This vague concern with national glory had little relation to daily policy. The Generalissimo had only one requirement for the structure of the Spanish state: it had to be workable. He played no favorites; anyone with a safe political record who was willing to cooperate was acceptable to him.

The Falange was accepted as the state party because it seemed the best bet for an authoritarian anti-Leftist military regime in an age of fascism. Franco conceived of the FET as the party of the state, but he never thought of his regime as a real party-state. The Falange, far from controlling the state, was no more than an instrument for holding the state together. Whenever its political pretensions threatened to disturb the internal equilibrium worked out by the Caudillo, he quickly cut the party down to size.

The long continuation of the Falange "line" was essentially a display of hollow rhetoric designed to conceal the intellectual poverty of the conservatives and the generals. It provided an emotional appeal that could distract young idealists and keep them out of the way of their elders. Equally important, nationalist exaltation helped divert attention from serious economic shortcomings. The Caudillo realized that he could never rely fully upon the party, because its own immaturity and the frustrations continuously imposed on it soon robbed it of any popular backing. But the party served admirably for checking monarchists, prelates, and bankers. Franco asked no more of his government than that it continue. He quickly achieved great skill in bribing, balancing off, or discrediting each of the heterogeneous forces behind the "Glorious National Movement."

That national syndicalism should become the Spanish version of the corporative state was practically inevitable; some sort of syndicalism offered the only logical means of reharmonizing the national proletariat after the great social conflict of the thirties. The syndical system, however, was carefully trimmed and regulated to fit many of the requirements of capitalists. The financial world received great privileges not because Franco cared for bankers but because he needed the support of the upper middle classes to provide a technical, organized base for a regime of "order." Similarly, the Church got almost anything it asked for. Only the Church could stimulate strong emotional support among wide sectors of the peasantry and the middle classes.

Thus the tangled web of state policy was spun, and the only person who knew where the center lay was the Caudillo. Like a divine right monarch, he was answerable only to God. Chapter XI of the party statutes declared:

As author of the Historical Era in which Spain achieves the possibility of realizing her historical destiny, and with it the goals of the Movement, the *Jefe* assumes absolute authority in its utmost plenitude.

The *Jefe* is responsible before God and before History.

Virtually everyone of any importance joined the party at one time or other during the Civil War. That is to say, anyone who hoped to find a place in the "new Spain" had to affiliate himself with the "Crusade." All Army officers *ipso facto* became members of the FET; so did all important government employees. In addition, a law of October 1, 1938, declared that anyone who had been jailed for political reasons in Republican territory would automatically become a member of the FET.² Instead of a select, energetic political movement, the Falange had become a grand national honorary society.

The structure of the FET had been fully worked out by the end of the Civil War. Only twenty members were necessary to form a *local*, and in the heyday of *falangismo* there were *locales* in most of the villages of Spain. The *jefe local* and *secretario local* were appointed by the *jefe provincial*, who in turn was appointed by the *jefe Nacional*, Franco. Franco appointed the National Council, which in turn named half of the members of the Junta Política; the

other half were appointed directly by the *Jefe Nacional*. This was a tightly circumscribed sphere of command.*

The Caudillo's party served the Caudillo's new state in a number of important ways: First, it provided the ideological rationale and the bureaucratic form by which a new medium could be constructed to contain the Spanish proletariat—the national syndicates. The product of this work was not scrupulously faithful to the spirit of the original Falange, but nothing in the "new Spain" was done with scrupulous fidelity to the spirit of *Josantonismo*. Begun in 1939, the syndical system was complete by 1944. The syndicates may have been a fraud, but they worked. According to Chapter VIII of the party statutes, they were to be staffed and administered by the FET.

The SEU, the Falange student syndicate, was revived on November 21, 1937. Two years later it was given a monopoly on student representation, and in 1944 the membership of all university and secondary school students was made compulsory.³ This provided a state-controlled student organization with an authoritarian structure somewhat similar to that of the party. More important, it provided the instrument for indoctrinating the most impressionable, and potentially most rebellious, minds in the nation.

Effectively frustrated in all the higher echelons of government, the FET filled in the framework of local government in the provinces. Here the identification of the party and the state was very close, for in 1941 the offices of Civil Governor of the province and *jefe provincial* of the party were in practice fused. All the petty, insignificant posts of local administration were thrown open to the Falange spoils system. This killed two birds with one stone: the Caudillo solved the problem of staffing the local governments, and the Falangists were given jobs, which kept them content and provided compensation for their lack of significant political influence. By introducing Falangists into the bureaucracy, which was for the most part an artificial and arbitrary procedure, Franco bound them

* Article 42 of the party statutes declared: "The Caudillo will secretly designate his successor, who will be proclaimed by the Council in the event of [the Caudillo's] death or physical incapacity." Hollow though it was, this was the only provision originally made for the continuity of the Franco state.

to the service of his state, and they could henceforth rebel against him only at the risk of losing their livelihood.

The Falange took over all the social services in Spain through its Sección Femenina. The Sección had been set up in 1934 by family friends of the Primo de Riveras and placed under the direction of Pilar Primo de Rivera, José Antonio's younger sister. By 1936 it was represented in thirty-four provinces and had nearly two thousand members in Madrid and about the same number in the rest of Spain.* The organization's size and scope expanded enormously during the war, and by 1939 it had 580,000 members.⁴ During the war, the women had engaged in any activity that could be of value to the war effort, from cultural work to washing Army uniforms by hand. In the latter part of the war, some sort of service was demanded from every able-bodied unmarried woman in Spain who was not otherwise employed.⁵

Late in 1939 the Sección Femenina was reorganized on a permanent basis, with a formal structure in many ways similar to that of the regular party.⁶ Pilar Primo de Rivera was named *Jefe Nacional* of the organization, which functioned in many fields, including physical education, youth work, and health services. Special attention was given to cultural facilities, especially in the rural areas. Mobile educational units were set up, and many kinds of social assistance were provided. By 1940, 1189 youth centers were said to have been inaugurated.⁷ Under normal circumstances, unmarried women who did not work were formally required to serve six months in the organization's Servicio Social.

Although its efforts were seldom spectacular and fell far short of the immense amount of social work needed in Spain, it can safely be said that the activities of the Sección Femenina proved of much greater benefit to Spain than did those of its masculine counterpart. The Sección provided a modest basis of social achievement with which the young women of the lower classes might identify themselves, at least in the village, and so added an element of strength

* In those days most of the girls had to combat family opposition in order to join. Dora Maqueda, the most energetic of the founders, recalls, "The Sección Femenina was our poison and our glory." (Conversation in Madrid, Jan. 10, 1959.)

and solidarity to the Caudillo's regime. The Sección Femenina offered the only direct example of an effort to obtain social justice under a government whose propaganda harped incessantly on *la patria, el pan y la justicia*.

The FET provided the ideological framework for the new state. Vociferous elaboration of the Twenty-six Points offered a rationale for nationalist authoritarianism.⁸ With an endless barrage of sneering, ranting adjectives, Falange propaganda struck at the "decadence" and inadequacies of the Western democracies. Endless harping on the "treason" of Spanish liberals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was intended to secure historical identification with the absolute national monarchy of the sixteenth century. Liberalism and relativism, doubt and questioning, were bad; authority and conviction were good. No one was to doubt that the Caudillo had contrived the best of all possible worlds.

This historico-political rationale fitted in nicely with the apothecosis of the reactionary, dogmatic Spanish Catholic Church. The two supplemented each other, *falangismo* employing in political affairs the same reliance on authority and absolute hierarchy that characterized the Church.

Franco's various uses of the Falange were all intended to prove that only political discipline under the Caudillo could assure social justice and economic progress. And what was more important in 1939, the same sort of disciplined development was declared to be the only way for Spain to achieve a rightful place in international affairs. The "new Spain" would be just, powerful, authoritarian, and efficient. Only the third adjective fit.

The end of the war was bound to bring changes in the personnel and the administration of both the party and the government. Some Falange militants still thought that their hour would soon arrive. With the easing of the enormous pressure exerted by military affairs, considerably more time and energy could be devoted to economic and political reorganization. The popular base built up among the Falange combatants could be used as a springboard for launching the real national syndicalist revolution.

However, there is nothing to indicate that the majority of the

party's ex-combatants had such positive feelings. Their principal sensation in the spring of 1939 was an overwhelming sense of fatigue. The Civil War had lasted too long. It had been a tremendous ordeal, and everyone was very tired. The veterans asked only to be allowed to return home in peace. Even the ex-militiamen of the Falange, with their few vague ideas of what composed the national syndicalist revolution, had no moral energy left for political reform. Their only deep political sentiment was a rather pitiless hatred of the Republicans who had maintained the strife for the better part of three long years. Few people had any interest in political disputes within the victorious nationalist camp.

Furthermore, the very uncertain international situation of 1939, which reached a climax when Germany began another world war, militated against any domestic quarreling. Spain was socially torn apart and economically prostrate, and every ounce of national energy was needed to set the country back on its feet. During 1939 many wartime Falangists simply dropped out of the party with a quiet feeling of relief. For the first time in the Falange's history, the party membership declined instead of rising.*

Once formally established in Madrid, the dictatorship concerned itself first and foremost with cementing its power. Ramón Serrano Súñer had come out of the political adventures of the war with greater influence than ever. As the primary political architect of the regime, he enjoyed the personal confidence of the Caudillo and was the undisputed Number Two man in Spain. Both Franco and Serrano would have preferred that the latter take over control of the Falange; they were tired of having to deal with the shadow leadership of Fernández Cuesta. However, most *comisarios viejas* still resented Serrano and clung to Fernández Cuesta, despite his failings. With characteristic delicacy, Serrano decided not to irritate feelings by pushing himself forward at this time. Another combination was in order.

The long-awaited cabinet shake-up occurred on August 9, four

* The first (and last) "purge" of the Falange came at the end of 1938, when a mild effort was made to oust those guilty of petty crimes during the war. This was sporadic and removed few names from the party rolls. (*BMFET*, Nos. 22 and 33, June 15 and Oct. 10, 1938.)

months after the cessation of hostilities, and it further diminished the power of the *camisas viejas*. Serrano retained the Ministry of the Interior and took over the vacant post of González Vélaz as President of the party's Junta Política. Fernández Cuesta was sent to Rio de Janeiro as Franco's ambassador, and there was no real Falangist left in the national cabinet.

Brigadier General Muñoz Grande, supposedly a "Falange General," was appointed Secretary-General of the party. As a military man, Franco had somewhat greater trust in him than in Fernández Cuesta. Muñoz Grande also became director of the militia. Pedro Gamero del Castillo, one of Serrano's old favorites and formerly *jefe provincial* and Civil Governor of Seville, was named Minister without portfolio and Vice Secretary-General of the FET.⁹

The dictatorship's control of the party organization was strengthened in 1939 by the reappearance of a number of former Falange leaders from Madrid and elsewhere who had spent the war languishing in Republican prisons. Thirty months of privation had completely removed any doubts they might have had about Franco's rule and the composition of the FET; after their harsh experience the "new Spain" was all sweetness and light by contrast. The liberated Falangists, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, Miguel Primo de Rivera, José María Alfaro, Manuel Valdés, and many others, became unconditional supporters of the new state. Within the party, they backed Serrano Súñer, as the architect of the new Falange, against Fernández Cuesta, who had sporadically but ineffectively been trying to hold the line against the new opportunists. Their status as *camisa vieja* leaders lent them considerable moral prestige within the party, which in turn redounded to the benefit of Franco.¹⁰ When the shake-up occurred, all these new figures were given top jobs. Sánchez Mazas became Minister without portfolio; Alfaro was named Subsecretary of Press and Propaganda and placed on the Junta Política; Valdés became Subsecretary of Labor; Miguel Primo de Rivera was appointed *jefe provincial* of Madrid and also given a place on the Junta Política.

By this realignment Franco evidently hoped to achieve a military-civilian synthesis that would assure a modicum of stability in the new state. Number One was Franco, a general. Number Two was

Serrano, a civilian. Muñoz Grande, the Secretary-General, was a soldier, but his immediate subordinate was civilian. So it went down the line. Balanced representation and mild contentment were what the Caudillo envisaged for the victors in the "new Spain."

The Falange old guard, however, was virtually ignored in the central party hierarchy, although it had several seats on the National Council. Of the nine regular members of the Junta Política, only one, Ridruejo, was an authentic member of the old guard. The other eight chairs were occupied by two monarchists (José María de Areliza and the Conde de Mayalde), two "renovated" Falangists (José María Alfaro and Miguel Primo de Rivera), two renegade Carlists (Esteban Bilbao and José María Oriol), and two outright opportunists who had never professed belief in an explicit political creed of any kind (Demetrio Carceller and Blas Pérez González).

The military hierarchy was determined that nothing like an SA or black shirts' militia organization should arise in the "new Spain." The Falange would never be allowed an effective, independent militia. When Ridruejo had proposed such a thing in the National Council, he was nearly expelled from the party. Before the war ended, Franco stated in one of his infrequent press conferences: "We do not need to maintain a very large permanent Army. A small permanent Army is more suited to our needs." However, that was not really what he meant. He continued, "The efficiency of that Army has to be so great and strong that no other military organization may surpass it. Spain has to organize itself as a 'nation-in-arms.'¹¹ There was to be military and preliminary training for everyone.

As it turned out, the permanent Army was large rather than small. This was no more than an old Spanish custom, for the nation had always sustained a military unit much larger than her actual requirements justified. The tensions of the Second World War, added to the disturbing presence of the captive portion of the population, greatly increased the incentive. Universal conscription was maintained, and all military training was handled by the regular Army.

After the Civil War ended the Falange militia was carefully deprived of any independent force. All militia veterans were grouped together in the *ex-combatientes'* organization under the nominal

leadership of José Antonio Girón, the most popular of the militia leaders. The *ex-combatientes* were rendered little more than a harmless chowder-and-marching society.

An official Falange militia was reconstituted by a decree of July 2, 1940. It was to be composed of three sections: pre-military trainees, young men who had already served their regular tour of duty, and those over military age. The organization was completely controlled by the regular Army command, which staffed all the important posts, and all members were subject to the official code of military discipline.¹² There was no connection with the party's chain of political command.

Some *camisas viejas* had feared that they would be swallowed up by the victorious military clique after the war ended. A few had even spoken of the desirability of a monarchical restoration, to serve as a moderating influence between them and the Army. However, such fear of the military ignored the nature of Franco's policy of divide-and-rule. He was not likely to give the Army, or anyone else, full satisfaction against the Falange.

At the end of the war the Falange's student syndicate, the SEU, still enjoyed partial autonomy, and *Haz*, the SEU review, was published more or less independently of the bulk of the Falange press. During the war, most of the original SEU leaders were killed or called to the front. New enthusiasts, most of them under military age, stepped in during these three years to help direct the syndicate's propaganda and activities. Prominent among them was the nineteen-year-old Enrique Sotomayor, who took a leading role in the preparation of *Haz* during 1938 and 1939. Sotomayor and his friends were full of ideas for building the future of the SEU. They wanted to reform the syndicate and planned a broad Frente de Juventudes ("Youth Front") designed to diffuse SEU ideals among the youth of Spain and implant a strong national-Catholic-syndicalist spirit in the new generation.

The nominal leaders of the SEU were largely opposed to this project. As far as they were concerned, the war had ended in 1939 and the new order was now established. Satisfied with their own positions and with that of the SEU, they had no desire to see a pleas-

ant bureaucratic situation disrupted by such a disturbing new entity as a militant youth front.

Nonetheless, Sotomayor and his comrades worked out their plans and sent them to Serrano Suárez. To the consternation of the official SEU chiefs, Serrano approved the proposals and sent them to Franco. The Caudillo was also favorably impressed. On August 16, 1939, an appointment was arranged in Burgos between the Generalissimo, Sotomayor, and two other "young Turk" chiefs of the SEU.¹³ Afterward, Sotomayor reported that Franco actually wept and declared that all his hope, like that of the nation, lay in the country's youth. The Caudillo said that he looked for an early development of the Frente de Juventudes and that he planned to appoint Sotomayor *Jefe Nacional* of the SEU, which had no official leader at that time.

The word quickly got around and SEU officeholders mobilized their counterattack. Muñoz Grande, Secretary-General of the FET, agreed with them that it would be dangerously imprudent to grant control of the SEU to idealistic, energetic young men. Together they made remonstrances to Serrano and to Franco. The Caudillo evidently had second thoughts; he favored the Frente de Juventudes plan as a means of strengthening the popular support of the regime, but he had no desire to disturb the bureaucratic equilibrium of the party or to create a divisive new influence. He therefore conditionally agreed to appoint as *Jefe Nacional* José Miguel Guitarte, the current *Inspector Nacional* of Juvenile Organizations.¹⁴ The condition was that Sotomayor should be made Secretary-General of the SEU, from which position he was to organize the Frente de Juventudes. Though a *camisa vieja*, Guitarte was one of the pro-Franco group who had only recently been liberated from Republican jails and was therefore a "safe" Falangist.

On August 19, 1939, three days after the conversation between Franco and the Sotomayor group, these modified appointments were announced.¹⁵ Close friends urged Sotomayor not to accept this new post, insisting that his hands would be completely tied. However, Sotomayor felt that this was the only opportunity they would have to develop a youth front and that he should therefore accept the position despite all obstacles.

Shortly afterwards, he began a series of speaking engagements

to stir up enthusiasm among young people and propagate the front. He and his collaborators were planning a Frente de Juventudes in twelve sections, which would not be a mere police straitjacket over the young people but would foster their energies and forge them in a national syndicalist mold. Their concept was based on the usual Falange pessimism about the great liberal era of modern history and fortified by a strong dose of Spenglerism. If every civilized epoch were to be ended by a group of barbarians, they reasoned that the task of the new Falange would be to create a disciplined host of national syndicalist barbarians strong enough to destroy the old order from within before alien forces attacked from without. To accomplish its mission, the youth group might have to be harsh and violent, "Catholically barbarous, morally barbarous."¹⁶ But it would be a national, historical, Catholic barbarism which would save the country from the pagan, materialist barbarians on the other side of the walls. If necessary, the young were to be taken from their families for proper training. However, the Youth Front ideologues always took care to bolster their spiritual edifice with strong doses of Catholicism and what they liked to style a return to "primitive Christianity," which must have been primitive indeed.

The essential theme in all of Sotomayor's talks was that the youth and a revolutionary nationalist spirit had been chiefly instrumental in winning the war. If these forces were not united in an energetic, action-bent Youth Front, all the struggle would have gone for nothing—the old divisions and cliques would take over the country once more.

I know that this proposal for a strong vanguard of the young will seem dangerous and out of line to excessively cautious spirits.

The same people who were interested in prolonging our war are today desirous of a hungry, rancorous, downtrodden Spain, for the same reasons multiplied a hundred times. The same people who for centuries have come to us enclosing and conquering, those who were counting coin after coin while we were losing man after man, are now waiting for us to lose our enthusiasm in order to begin spreading their old corrosive negations.

The negative slogans return once more. Not this. Not that. But once and for all, what do they bring? What does the Spanish reaction represent and pretend today?

Perhaps nothing encourages us so much as the rage of those who oppose us.

We entertain the immense joy of being hated by them!

Let those who so happily join the chorus of murmurers consider the terrible responsibility they share.

There is only one road open: Revolution.

NOW OR NEVER!

*Let all be united in the impetus of a closed front of youth.*¹⁷

Sotomayor's words were eloquent and stimulating. His deeds were effectively squelched by the bureaucratic guard of the regime. He resigned after three months, having accomplished nothing.¹⁸ The Frente de Juventudes idea remained on file, but the directing elements in the party saw to it that nothing was done for the time being. An organization bearing this title was finally established over a year later, on December 6, 1940; it was much more limited in aspiration than the project originally conceived by the Sotomayor circle. The watered-down Frente de Juventudes fitted neatly into Franco's conservative-syndicalist-clerical-military state structure.

As 1939 wore on, those who had expected basic and revolutionary reforms were slowly but surely divested of their illusions. A great deal of pomp and formalism were displayed, the trappings and sounds of Hispanic fascism were everywhere in evidence, all talk of re-establishment and reaction was discouraged, but the institutions of government remained firmly in the hands of select and loyal elements of the government clique.

Whenever Falange leaders asked for extension of the social program, a larger program of nationalization, control of credit, and extension of Falange influence into all sectors of national life, it was replied that the nation was too weak, and in too dangerous a condition, for far-reaching reforms, which were liable to create new antagonisms on the Right among those who had helped to win the war. It was said that the nation was too poor to afford a socialized economic program, and that all the government's effort had to be spent

on strengthening Spain's position against the wave of international conflict that was already beginning to roll across Europe.

× Many old Falangists felt cheated and betrayed. After losing their leaders and the best men from their ranks in the struggle against the forces of Left-liberalism, they saw themselves being deprived of the fruits of victory. Their attitude was reflected by a German diplomat, who replied to the question "How do you find the new Spain?" by saying, "When I find it I shall tell you."¹⁹ A new political-financial oligarchy, which reminded one of nothing so much as the old order, was arising from the ashes of desolate Spain. The outwardly imposing edifice that had been created for the Falange was indeed to be used as a "totalitarian instrument"—not for "the nation" but merely for the regime.

The Falange was horizontally cut off from the Council of Ministers and had no direct, organic connection with the policy-making bodies of the national administration. While the conservatives and opportunists largely controlled the upper echelons, the party was left to amuse itself with the gigantic bureaucracy that gorged itself on the Franco spoils system. All government employees were supposed to be FET members, but no party leader of doubtful intentions was placed in a position of influence. The only department under Falange control was the Syndical organization, which until 1940 was largely a paper creation.

The ranks of the *camisas viejas* had been badly thinned by the war. It has been estimated that sixty per cent of the original members of the party were killed during the conflict. This further reduced the possibility of any resistance to Franco.

The only parts of the party organization that retained any independent fervor were sections of the veterans' group, the *ex-combatientes*. There the inevitable weariness and apathy conflicted with a desire not to see the fruits of victory rot in the hands of the military-conservative clique. On the whole, the longing for peace and tranquility, combined with a blind instinct to have unity among the victors, won out. However, some of the local leaders of the *ex-combatientes* were not inclined to rest on their laurels. There were still Falangists who thought that the "new Spain" properly belonged to the national syndicalist party in deed as well as in word.

These small groups sent out feelers toward each other, and toward the end of 1939 organized a clandestine "Junta política" in Madrid. Its titular president was Colonel Emilio Tarduchy, a veteran of both the Falange and the UME, an old war horse of radical Spanish nationalism.²⁰ The secretary was Patricio Canales, a *camisa vieja* leader from Seville, who was currently occupying a high position in Press and Propaganda. Various members sat in the Junta from time to time, representing the several regions of Spain. These were: Ricardo Sanz (Asturias), Daniel Buhigas (Galicia), Ventura López Cotevilla (Santander), Luis de Caralt (Catalonia), José Pérez de Cabo (the Levante), Gregorio Ortega (the Canaries), Antonio Cañas (Morocco).²¹

Their principal contact within the military hierarchy was General Juan Yagüe, still the "Falange General." A great deal of Yagüe's life since 1936 had been spent in political maneuvering and intrigue. When restored to command some six months after his outburst of April 1938, Yagüe merely picked up where he had left off. He had never been directly disloyal, but he was always maneuvering for some sort of political advantage or rearrangement. In personal affairs, Yagüe was ruthlessly honest, and he had a fairly strong, though nebulous, attachment to the Falange program. He had always been opposed to the composition of the official FET, both because it had blocked his own ambitions for political influence and because it stifled the possibility of an authentic Spanish nationalist revolution.

During the year 1940 the clandestine Junta endeavored to extend its base of support.²² Its logical ally would have been Yagüe, who had his own network of contacts and followers among the military. However, Yagüe informed the Falange group that although he would be at their disposition in time of need, he did not want to bring the two conspiratorial networks together at that moment. With Yagüe was associated José Antonio Girón, the official leader of the *ex-combatientes*. Girón's personal influence was effective only among the *centurias of ex-combatientes* in Castile, but these nuclei could be very important. Canales thus went to Valladolid to talk with Luis Vicén and Anselmo de la Iglesia, who were the local leaders of the party in that area; but de la Iglesia happened to be out of town, and Vicén flatly refused to take part in any conspiracy. Girón himself

replied that he would go only so far as Yagüe. Girón and the Falange of Castile therefore remained on the margins of this new intrigue.

Nowhere could the Falange conspirators whip up solid support. The great mass of veterans wanted only to be left in peace, and even the old guard itself was not united in its opposition to Franco. If the conspirators were to be able to pull off an effective *coup* against the Caudillo, they needed outside help.

During the year 1940, members of the clandestine Junta had several conversations with Thomson, the Nazi Party representative in Madrid. They informed him that certain elements in the Falange were interested in obtaining German aid to establish a thoroughgoing national syndicalist regime in Spain. Thomson consulted his superiors in Berlin; he reported that they considered Spanish politics a "bag of flies" in which no one ever knew what would turn up next. The conditions they applied to any possible German assistance were so rigid that the Spanish conspirators could not accept them. Nevertheless, the talks continued. The final session occurred some time in February 1941. The Nazis continued to insist on a set of stringent conditions that would virtually convert Spain into a German satrapy. All this was unacceptable to the Falangists, who were considerably shaken to find that several Spaniards had already offered themselves to the Nazis as quislings for the establishment of a new order in Spain.

Meanwhile, one of Yagüe's adjutants had denounced that general's own machinations to Franco. The Caudillo called Yagüe to his office and broke down the general's defenses. Yagüe emerged broken and weeping. Instead of punishing him, Franco promoted him, employing one of his favorite tactics. This destroyed Yagüe's political independence and greatly reduced his moral authority; he was no longer of any benefit to the Falange conspirators.

Realizing that the government had doubtless learned of its activities, the secret Junta met in Madrid during March of 1941. The members now were Tarduchy, Canales, Caralt, Sanz, and López Corevilla. During previous months they had concocted a plan to assassinate Serrano Suñer, whom they held responsible for many of the Falange's ills. However, they now rejected this project; another

representative would be appointed by Franco, and he might well be more ruthless and less diplomatic than Serrano.

Franco, in fact, was the main problem. There was no longer much chance of building up internal resistance or presenting an alternative to his control. The only thing that might be attempted was to topple him with a single bold stroke; if this could not be done, they might as well disband and accept his leadership. Faced with a hopeless domestic situation and the threat of international involvement, there was little choice. The conspirators did not see how they could control the chaos that would certainly follow Franco's death. When they put to a vote the question of whether to assassinate the Caudillo or obey him, the result was four ballots to none, with one abstention, for the latter course.

By this time, the provincial *ex-combatiente* cells supporting the conspiracy had grown restive and entirely dispirited. They no longer had any appetite for intrigue and wanted to dissolve their little groups. In March 1941 their leaders told the Junta members that the conspiracy was hopeless and ought to be given up. Everyone had reached the same conclusion, for the Junta had already disbanded itself.²³ The plot was soon discovered by the authorities, but since the opposition group had voluntarily come back to the fold, little punishment was meted out. Most of the conspirators were not even touched.*

One of them was executed the following year, but not for treason. José Pérez de Cabo, author of the first book on national syndicalism and the leader of the conspirators around Valencia, was an administrator of the Auxilio Social in the Levante.²⁴ After being denounced by a leading Falangist for having sold part of the Auxilio's flour supplies on the black market, he became the scapegoat of anti-Falange

* One branch of the conspiracy continued to exist. That was the tiny Catalan section built up by Eduardo Ezquer, who had never ceased to plot since José Antonio expelled him from the Falange in the spring of 1936 for insubordination. Though living in provincial exile, he had contacts with the Barcelona SEU, and may have had five hundred followers at one time. The police doubtless learned of these activities, but they did not move to stop them immediately because of their innocuous nature. However, when his efforts persevered into 1942, Ezquer was arrested once more, and his little band was broken up.

gists in the Army. His only possible moral justification was that he might have used the black market funds to finance the anti-Franco plot, but this merely damned him in another way. A last-minute effort by Falange leaders to obtain a reprieve ended in failure. The Carlist General Varela, the Minister of War, wanted to saddle Falange leaders with heavy responsibility for the widespread black market operations, which in the early nineteen-forties almost supplanted the regular economy and had recently provoked new legal restrictions.²⁵ The unlucky Pérez de Cabo made an easy target.

The conspirators felt that their operation was in great part frustrated by the campaign waged to attract the *ex-combatientes* to the regime. This effort was organized and led by Pedro Gamero del Castillo, the Vice Secretary-General of the party (1939-41). Many and various government jobs were offered to veterans, and twenty per cent of the winning scores in bureaucratic examinations were reserved for them. Such benefits, added to the scant political indoctrination of the *ex-combatientes*, their general weariness, and their desire for normalcy, drained away whatever revolutionary impetus was left. Amid the pressure of foreign threats and national economic misery, the party's rank-and-file subsided into quiescence, even while the façade of their National Syndicalist state was being ever more elaborately adorned.

The syndical system of the Franco state languished within a morbid sphere of shadow existence until an official *Delegado Nacional* was finally appointed on September 9, 1939. The new syndicate head was Gerardo Salvador Merino, a *camisa vieja* from Madrid who had moved to Galicia in 1935. In 1937, after several months on the Asturian front, Salvador Merino had been named *jefe provincial* of La Coruña by Manuel Hedilla. There he had immediately won a considerable reputation as a champion of national syndicalism and the interests of the proletariat. On one occasion he scheduled a mass rally of Coruña workers at the local bull-ring; when middle-class citizens mounted a lively protest, Salvador Merino had ordered that the workers be permitted to "break the ranks of the bourgeoisie."²⁶ Such attitudes had cost Merino his first post within a year's time, but they won for him a certain political reputation. He served at the

front during the last year of the war and learned the virtues of discretion.

By his own admission, Salvador Merino was an ambitious man. When the fighting ended, he looked for a promising position. His pro-syndical record then stood him in good stead. The government was looking for someone capable of undertaking, with talent and effectiveness, the sizable task of syndical organization. Merino was both intelligent and aware of the need for caution. The *politiques*, such as Serrano Suñer and Gamero del Castillo, found him a likely prospect for the post, and a seemingly reliable one. Few men burn their fingers twice in the same fire, but that is precisely what Salvador Merino eventually did.

He took up his labors slowly and carefully. In 1939 there existed only the bare rudiments of a syndical organization. So far no coherent plan or philosophy of syndicalization had been put together. Merino and his collaborators prepared to build the whole system from the ground up. What they planned was a genuine expression of national syndicalism, equidistant between Marxism and the Catholic "free syndicates" (company unions). According to Merino, there were certain fundamental areas of national life not open to debate: the prerogatives of the Church, the unity of the nation, and so forth. Beyond that, any aspect of economics or politics might be made subject to readjustment. Merino intended to satisfy workers' demands to the full, and to make the syndicates the most powerful civil institution in Spain.

He was badly handicapped by the almost complete lack of preparation among Falangists for handling the technical problems of syndical organization. He found it necessary to prepare his own personal planning staff to establish the cadres and the framework of syndicalism. Merino chose a group of industrious collaborators, some of whom were not Falangists but came from diverse political groups. Together they set to work.

There was a constant need to lull the suspicions of the conservatives, and Salvador Merino was forced into a continual balancing act. He refused to identify himself too clearly with any of the political cliques in the Falange and would not participate in petty

conspiracy. He always endeavored to hide from the eyes of other politicians the far-reaching nature of the plans being laid.

Merino felt more sympathetic to the Nazis than did other Spaniards; the revolutionary goals of the German party struck a sympathetic note in him.²⁷ Similarly, Merino felt more at ease with military Falangists like Yagüe and Muñoz Grande than with the *politique* elements. Although he tried to maintain a position of external equilibrium, the fall of Muñoz Grande early in 1940 left him in an exposed position at the very outset of his work.

To soothe the Right and lay the groundwork of syndicalism, the first task undertaken was to finish the construction of the large industry-wide National Syndicates, which organized the workers in each sector of production. This merely completed the outer frame of syndical organization, and had no social significance. It simply brought together all textile workers, for example, so that they could be dealt with effectively as an economic unit. This was a form of syndicalism that the Right understood and appreciated: organization and administration from above, with no wage pressure from below or any other direction.

On January 26, 1940, the Law of Syndical Unity was proclaimed. Government representation for private economic interests, established by the 1938 laws, was abolished. All economic representation was to take place within the syndicate set up for workers and management in each line of activity. On May 3, 1940, it was announced that the syndicates would soon take over the function of controlling prices and economic standards, formerly exercised by the Regulatory Commission established some eighteen months previously.²⁸ Meanwhile, Salvador Merino informed the Caudillo that the real backbone of the syndical system lay in the *Delegaciones provinciales*, which had to be set up on a firm basis. He wanted to begin the Obras Sociales ("Social Works") of the organization in order to attract and hold the workers' attention. Merino was beginning to move too fast, and he soon committed tactical errors.

On Victory Day, March 31, 1940, the first anniversary of the end of the Civil War, he arranged for several thousand proletarians to march in the gigantic parade which was to move down the Castellana in Madrid.²⁹ This drew the anger of the Army hierarchy. General

José Enrique Varela—Carlist, reactionary, Minister of War, and one of the principal enemies of labor in the officer corps—vowed that he would have Merino ousted.

The syndical chief planned other demonstrations and benefits, especially for the industrial workers. His basic aim was to set the masses of Spain marching once more, but this time under national syndicalist leadership. He realized that if an authentic and representative syndical system were actually established, it might easily get out of control. Salvador Merino says that he was prepared to risk this, hoping to use the power of the syndicates to exert pressure on governmental authority in other areas. It eventually became impossible to mask his intentions, and competing interest groups grew more and more alarmed. His projects, one after another, were blocked by rival departments.

Serrano, who had at first adopted an interested and expectant attitude, became increasingly apprehensive over the possible growth of Merino's power. He considered having the syndicate boss kicked upstairs, and suggested to Merino that he relinquish direct control of the organization to become Minister of Labor. Merino refused, realizing that such a promotion would greatly diminish his influence over the syndicates and prevent him from realizing his plans. Serrano then asked Merino what other post he would accept. Salvador Merino answered that he would exchange the syndicates only for the Secretary-Generalship of the party, and then only if it were combined with the Ministry of the Interior, where real power lay. Serrano Suárez replied that Merino was hopelessly ambitious, as indeed he was.³⁰

By the beginning of 1941, Merino had earned the reputation of being the leader of the opposition group within the government. Nonetheless, he strove desperately to maintain his equilibrium between the various discordant cliques inside the Falange. Merino had hopes that, in a pinch, Franco would see fit to save him from the reactionaries who had begun to shout for his head. He calculated that if he could hold control of the syndicates for another year or two, he would build so strong a position that he could hardly be ousted without causing a major disruption in the state. But this was not to be, for his enemies had begun to combine, and time was running out.

1 Opposition to Merino came from three sectors: the military Right-
 2 ists, led by Varela; the political archconservatives, led by Esteban
 Bilbao (a renegade Carlist, and one of Franco's principal yes-men
 3 on the Junta Política);* and the powerful industrial-financial in-
 terests, represented by Demetrio Carceller, who also sat on the Junta
 Política.³¹

Merino survived the political crisis of May 1941.³² But he lasted only for the few weeks it took the Generalissimo to repair the slight damage inflicted upon his household. All the Rightists were insisting that the syndicate leader was growing more dangerous by the day. They waited until the first opportune moment, and struck when he was fully occupied with personal affairs. On July 7, 1941, Merino was married in Madrid and left the capital on a brief honeymoon. While he was absent, it was charged that he had once been a member of the Masonic Order. This was a serious accusation, for hundreds of Masons had been shot in the "new Spain," of which the Order was felt to be an archenemy. When Merino returned to Madrid, he was dismissed from his post and banished to the Balearic Islands.³³ That was the end of the political career of Gerardo Salvador Merino. It is not clear that anyone except the party's Secretary-General tried to defend Merino, even though he felt that he had contributed enough to the "Movement" to overcome the stigma of his earlier affiliation with the Masonic Order. His removal suited all those made uncomfortable by his presence, and it also marked the end of the last independent syndicalist initiative in Franco Spain.

Merino's only competitor for representation of the working-class interests had been José Antonio Girón, the new Labor Minister appointed two months before the syndical chief's eclipse. For personal reasons, the two were strongly antagonistic, and it appears that Girón worked for his rival's downfall. Girón succeeded Salvador Merino as the nominal champion of Spanish labor. However, from

* Bilbao was the typical, grotesque sort of political wordmonger who constantly mixed up famous quotations. However, some Spaniards enjoy this, and Serrano had a certain weakness for him. Bilbao coined the ridiculous epithet "Francisco Franco, Caudillo de España por la Gracia de Dios," which was stamped on all Spanish coins. (Spanish jokesters soon corrupted this to "Francisco Franco, Caudillo de España por una gracia de Dios," which more or less means "Francisco Franco, Caudillo of Spain by a joke of God.")

1 this time forward immediate direction of the syndical organization
 was kept in the hands of obedient, unenergetic party hacks, who never
 threatened to mobilize the Spanish masses. Everything was tightly
 2 controlled from above, but there was no protest. The Army and the
 Bank were very strong.

On September 9, 1939, the government established its Institute of Political Studies. Designed as the brain-trust of FET, it was conceived partly as a training school for certain types of party workers and partly as a general study center for ideology and new projects of every sort. The principal divisions of study were the following: Constitution and Administration of the State; National Economy; International Relations; Social and Cooperative Arrangements. The Director automatically became a member of the Junta Política.³⁴

The first head of the Institute was Alfonso García Valdecasas, least significant of the three "founders" of the Falange.³⁵ Valdecasas had temporarily laid aside the monarchical convictions that he had developed during the last years of the Republic. Some of his fundamental political attitudes were well represented in the speech he made at the Comedia meeting in 1933, when he declared that Spain must repudiate with equal disdain the capitalist materialism of the United States and the Communist materialism of the Soviet Union.

If the Institute had lived up to the role cut out for it, it could have become a very important organization. However, like all the agencies of the party, it was destined to a stunted growth and a warped and insignificant maturity. As Franco had already made clear, a real ideological party-state was not his goal. All that was expected of the Institute was that it properly trim its sails to the wind. This task it accomplished with great success.

A decade later under its third Director, a converted Socialist named Francisco Javier Conde, the Institute almost became a center of covert fascist liberalism, combating clericalism and inviting foreign socialists to Spain. Conde was both prudent and ingenious, having earlier prepared the principal ideological justification of Franco's peculiar *caudillaje*; he had tried to apply the sophisticated sociological formulas of Max Weber and the notion of political charisma to explain the basis of Franco's power, which otherwise

rested on force. Eventually Conde's position became too awkward to maintain; after his replacement the Institute once again dozed in a pleasant state of limbo.

During 1938 and afterward, a host of ex post facto generalizations tricked out as political theory were put forth to rationalize the present and future of the Franco state. The most impressive attempt was José Pemartín's *¿Qué es lo nuevo?* (1938), a book of three hundred pages of disquisition and a host of diagrams intended to show just how a model syndicalist corporative state would be put together. Pemartín declared that Spanish fascism should be the translation of Traditionalism into modern terms.³⁶ Meanwhile, the Falange Left did not cease to inform its readers that "fascism is nothing else than the nationalization of the doctrine of Marx."³⁷ Spanish capitalists did not take these pronouncements seriously, trusting in the discretion of the Caudillo.

The leading Spanish political theorist in the early heyday of the Franco state was Juan Beneyro Pérez. In *El Partido* (1939) and *Genio y figura del Movimiento* (1940), he foreshadowed what was later refined into the principle of *caudillaje*:

The concept of the Caudillo is a synthesis of reason and ideal necessity. It is not only force, but spirit; it constitutes a new technique and is the incarnation of the national soul and even of the national physiognomy. As a technique, it is the natural consequence and organic necessity of a unitary, hierarchical, and total regime. As an incarnation it is the exaltation of a mystique. It becomes a new concept by which a man arises as rector of the community and personifies its spirit, a concept which proceeds directly from the Revolution. It has a fully and typically revolutionary context, like the idea that nourishes it.

In the totalitarian regimes the Party appears exalted in this precise function of selecting the *Jefta*. [In practice, it would seem to have worked exactly the other way around.]

... As a minority, it is to integrate whatever is healthy and robust in political life. Therefore the unification itself has a task of selection, since it seeks homogeneity even in the solvency of its elements. . . . The Party thus becomes the depository of a force

that is continually renewed and knows how to orient each generation in a revolutionary spirit. Thanks to the concept of the permanent revolution, and owing to the instrumentality of the Party, struggles disappear and all energy is concentrated on the task of national affirmation.³⁸

Beneyro Pérez did not hesitate to proclaim the totalitarian quality of the Franco state and its similarity to all other fascist regimes,³⁹ but a reverse tendency soon appeared, strongly connected with the vicissitudes of World War II. Early in 1942 García Valdecasas declared:

In the original [Twenty-seven] Points of the Falange, the State is defined as a "totalitarian instrument at the service of the integrity of the Patria." It is, then, deliberately expressed that ours is an instrumental concept of the State. Every instrument is characterized as a medium for something, by a task which it serves.

No instrument is justified in and of itself. It is worth while insofar as it fulfills the end for which it is destined. Therefore, the State is not for us an end in itself, nor can it find its justification in itself.

... The State ought not to pursue ends nor undertake tasks that are not justified as a function of the integrity of the Patria. On the contrary, its forces are dispersed and wasted in improper enterprises, which, when attempted, aggravate the process of bureaucratization to which we have previously referred.

... In order to justify itself in a positive sense, the State must act as an instrument for the achievement of ultimate moral values.

... Genuine Spanish thought refuses to recognize the State as the supreme value. This is the meaning of the polemical attitude of all classical Spanish thought against the *razón de Estado* enunciated by Machiavelli.⁴⁰

A few good things were even said for liberalism, and even more care was taken to differentiate *falangismo* from other antiliberal ideologies. Thus Javier Martínez de Bedoya in 1943:

A worldwide transmutation is being effected. Signs of it are Bolshevism, Italian Fascism, German racist socialism and the other styles and modes which we have described in previous pages. They are eruptions, beginnings, already pregnant with what is to come,

but entities in no way definite, permanent, or conclusive. And, of course, Bolshevism, fascism, and racism alike are restricted national phenomena, without worldwide breadth or profundity.

Perhaps the voice of Spain, the presence of Spain, when it is fully worked out and developed, may give to changing reality its most perfect and fertile expression, the forms which can fix it firmly in universal history.⁴¹

This re-evaluation and re-expression of Falange doctrine reached its climax with José Luis de Arrese's *El Estado totalitario en el pensamiento de José Antonio* (1944). Arrese, then party Secretary-General, declared that José Antonio had early insisted that the Falange concept of the Spanish nation was based on a *destino en lo universal* grounded in Spanish history and in theological truth [*sic*]. "We do not, therefore, seek a totalitarian State."⁴² This was not what the party ideologues had said in the early days, but it served the needs of the regime between 1943 and 1946.⁴³

The Caudillo did not ask for a rigorously ideological state, but only for a general theory of authoritarianism. His formula was a conservative syndicalism, bounded by all sorts of state economic controls, spiritually tied to Catholicism, ready for any kind of practical compromise, and always backed up by the Army.

XVI

POLITICS DURING WORLD WAR II

UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE manipulators who controlled the Spanish government in 1939, Muñoz Grande did not wear well as Secretary-General of the party. Perhaps because of his military background, Muñoz Grande lacked the kind of skill needed to keep so heterogeneous an outfit running smoothly. He was more of a nationalist than a syndicalist, and he was uncomfortable in his new position from the very beginning. Personally austere and honest, Muñoz Grande had little executive talent, and complaints from several sides were frequent. Effective control of the party continued to remain in Serrano's hands, which only increased Muñoz Grande's sense of futility. Disputes and disturbances were continual, and by the end of 1939 it was plain that such a situation could not endure.

Muñoz Grande's retirement was announced on March 15, 1940.¹ No successor was named at the time, and the party was left under the nominal direction of Pedro Gamero del Castillo, the Vice Secretary-General. In 1939 Gamero's principal task seems to have been the administration of the Falange spoils system. He found some compensation for almost everyone willing to play the Caudillo's game. The aim of this policy was to buy off or morally compromise through collaboration all the *camisas viejas* or *ex-combatientes* who still showed hostility toward the official FET. By the open-handed distribution of tangible rewards the Serrano group planned to shatter the moral unity and internal resistance of those among the old guard who continued to oppose *franquismo*. Their success with this tactic was considerable.²

Gamero had never been a national syndicalist. Insofar as he had a real political creed, he still looked toward an authoritarian, conservative Catholic state. For this reason he had worked for the

unification of parties in 1937 and had consistently supported Serrano Súñer ever since.

However, after March of 1940 he had to take up the task of administering the formal party apparatus, the control of which, as usual, actually rested with Señor Serrano in the Ministry of the Interior. Gamero was commonly regarded as a political manipulator, and no one really trusted him. The *camisas viejas* frowned on the Vice Secretary-General as an opportunist and a purveyor of graft. Although he was more able and intelligent than Muñoz Grande, his role of administering the party from the Number Three position made life almost as difficult for him as it had been for his predecessor. Throughout his term of office, Gamero maintained close contact with the monarchists. He was one of the few members of the Spanish government in 1940 who looked favorably on the United States, nourishing as he did private hopes about drawing North American capital into the task of reconstructing Spain.

The party limped along in this fashion throughout 1940. The Falange, official and otherwise, once again began to split up into a set of private cliques. There were the in-group circles at Madrid, the unambitious cadres of provincial leaders, the impotent *ex-combatientes* (some conspiring, the others vegetating), the Tarduchy Junta, the local Ezquer conspiracy in Catalonia, and the potentially powerful syndical organization run by Salvador Merino.

By the beginning of 1941 what remained of the old guard in the Falange organization was fed up with Serrano Súñer. The devious policy he had helped originate four years earlier, which he had unfailingly implemented by compromise, corruption, and outright denial of responsibility, had sapped the marrow from the party. There appeared to be nothing left of it but a noisy propaganda machine, an overgrown bureaucracy, and a few immature students.

In Madrid the old guard continued to circle around the home of Pilar Primo de Rivera, the perennial head of the party's Sección Femenina. Early in 1941 they delivered a virtual ultimatum to Serrano Súñer, asking him either to take over direct control of the FET, reuniting the party and re-establishing its influence in the state, or to throw off his pseudo-Falangist pose and go over to the conservatives and reactionaries.

As was his wont, Serrano first reacted in an extremely circum-spect fashion. He knew that things had not worked out in the FET as planned. Instead of producing a strong conservative, nationalistic, corporative party with a firm organization and a consistent ideology, four years of political juggling had produced an amorphous fish-ry. But by this time Serrano was interested in more important things. There were no visible limits to his ambition, and he had been moving constantly upward. After France fell to the Germans, foreign affairs shared primacy with domestic politics. It was to the former sphere that Serrano was now turning his attention. —

On October 16, 1940, Serrano Súñer had taken over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This new position occupied most of his time and redoubled his political problems. Monarchist opposition to the politician who was regarded as the gravedigger of the restoration and the strong man of the dictatorship had never ceased. Conflict with Serrano's Germanophile foreign policy was now added to their resentment against his domestic program, for Serrano's new task was to reverse the Anglophile attitudes sometimes displayed by Jordana and Beigbeder, his predecessors. Beneath the surface, there was much antagonism over Spanish neutrality. After the fall of France, Serrano believed that the Allies had lost the war on the continent. He felt that the hour of the Axis had arrived, and he was fully prepared to make a deal with Germany. On the other hand, it so happened that Anglophilia was fairly strong among a part of the Spanish upper classes, especially the monarchists. While the extent of such feelings can easily be exaggerated, they did increase internal discontent.

If the hour of the fascist state had definitely arrived in Europe, it would be prudent to increase the fascistic emphasis of the Spanish government as well. Serrano thought that it might be wise to accept the first alternative proposed by the *camisas viejas*: take direct control of the FET and build it up to a position of real influence. This would provide him with the opportunity of creating a party-state with himself at the head of the party. However, it was most doubtful that the Caudillo would or could countenance such an independent increase of his brother-in-law's power. Furthermore, it was Serrano, not Franco, who was compromising his political position by shouldering formal responsibility for a clearly pro-Axis policy. At the

height of his power, Serrano was in a very delicate situation, where he could not afford either to retreat or stand still.

The latent discontent within the Falange came to a climax in May of 1941. This crisis was precipitated by the appointment on May 5 of Colonel Valentín Galarza as Minister of the Interior, Serrano's old post. Formerly one of the chief leaders of the UME, Galarza was a permanent Army politician whose most recent job had been to remove whatever fangs remained in the Falangist militia. As a careerist who put the officer corps first, he was deemed profoundly antipathetic toward the goals of the Falange. The appointment of this military intriguer sparked intense resentment among *camisas viejas*, and within a few days nearly ten *jefes provinciales* had resigned, the most prominent being Miguel Primo de Rivera at Madrid.

Anti-Galarza feeling increased during the next few days with the appearance of an unsigned article in *Arriba*, entitled "El Hombre y el Curriñche" ("The Man and the Pipsqueak"). The pipsqueak was not identified, but it was understood to be Galarza. The Army leaders now demanded the head of the Falangist responsible for this insult. The author of the article seems to have been Serrano's personal favorite, the poet Dionisio Ridruejo, who was still the official Director of Propaganda for the Ministry of the Interior. However, Antonio Tóvar, Press Subsecretary of the Falange, was nominally responsible for *Arriba*, and he gallantly took responsibility for the article.

To placate the military, Franco dismissed both Tóvar and Ridruejo, even though they were junior protégés of Serrano.³ The *cuñadísimo* claimed that he had not even been consulted about the dismissal, which he considered as evidence of a dangerous tendency to bring the Army gang into formal control and disrupt the party-conservative-civilian-military synthesis that he had labored so long to build up. He strongly believed that something had to be done to right the balance and placate the Falangists. It has been said that Serrano was so perturbed that he even sent a private letter of resignation to the Caudillo.

Franco, however, was well prepared to deal with this crisis. It had been necessary to back up the military in the Galarza appointment, but the Caudillo was not ready to let the Army gain the upper

hand over the Falange. He decided to appoint a new Secretary-General, José Luis de Arrese, who had previously been *jefe provincial* of Málaga.

By profession an architect, Arrese was a *camisa vieja*, and was related through marriage to José Antonio's mother. Although he had been arrested in the 1937 purge, he had later been found reliable and had made a good record at Málaga, particularly as champion of low-cost housing for workmen.⁴ Arrese had at first been a sincere opponent of Franco's tactics of compromise and division. He first met the Caudillo at an official reception during one of Franco's inspection tours; Arrese's sincere, modest manner favorably impressed the Generalissimo, who wanted to win the Málaga *jefe* over to his side. A personal foe of Galarza, Arrese had just resigned as *jefatura provincial* because he felt that it would be impossible to work with the new Minister of the Interior.

After leaving the Málaga post, Arrese went immediately to Madrid, where he received the surprising news of his appointment as Secretary-General. He had a very strong sense of loyalty to the "Movement" and was quite willing to accept the position, but he nevertheless insisted to the Caudillo that more compensation must be given the Falange to offset the recent elevation of Galarza. The mere naming of an old-guard Falangist as Secretary of the Falange meant little.

Franco was quite willing to broaden the base of his cabinet in order to spare the regime any sort of Falangist revolt. At a meeting held in Arrese's home, Serrano Suárez, Miguel Primo de Rivera, and other Falangist leaders prepared a possible cabinet realignment. The proposals were largely accepted, and a government shake-up on May 19, 1941, gave the Falange two new seats in the cabinet: José Antonio Girón, leader of the *ex-combatientes*, became Minister of Labor, and in an appointment ridiculous even for Franco Spain, Miguel Primo de Rivera was named Minister of Agriculture. Furthermore, the services of Press and Propaganda were taken out of the Ministry of the Interior and transferred to the newly created Vice-Secretariat of Education in the FET. Girón and Miguel Primo de Rivera snapped at the opportunity for cabinet rank, and the changes were made with great speed.⁵

Serrano could not but approve of the new alignment, which re-

established the equilibrium he had sought. At the same time, however, the new situation reduced his own influence in the Falange. The leadership of the party was still being juggled around just as Franco desired, and there was little prospect that even a conservative Falange would become that institutional force that Serrano had hoped to create. The only leverage left to the *cuñadísimo* was his post as chairman of the Falange's Junta Política, and he wanted to make the most of it.

Arrese was himself interested in delimiting more precisely the zones of authority in the party hierarchy. Since Franco had not fully trusted the previous Secretaries of the Falange, Serrano had exercised inordinate influence. In order to provide adequate administrative leadership, Arrese proposed to Serrano that they make suggestions clarifying their respective functions. Arrese understood Serrano to agree that the Secretary-General would handle appointments and administration within the FET, leaving the chairman of the Junta to deal merely with questions of ideology and general policy. Arrese therefore approved the proposals sent to Franco, who immediately signed them into law. His surprise was great upon finding that Serrano's actual proposals gave the chairman of the Junta power to initiate and review all significant policy, thus reducing the independent authority of the Secretary-General to the vanishing point. Arrese hurried to inform Franco that he had, in effect, been double-crossed.

It was now Franco's turn to be surprised, for he thought Arrese had approved the Serrano proposals. This presented a dilemma. Franco had already been disquieted by Serrano's independent behavior during the May crisis, and he now began to doubt the *cuñadísimo's* loyalty and selflessness. Serrano's position was becoming awkward, for he had earned the enmity of many people both inside and outside the party. On the other hand, Franco had confidence in Arrese, whom he believed to be a fully loyal administrator. He thus deemed it prudent to nullify the effects of the Serrano proposals. Since he could not immediately cancel what he had just decreed, he permitted Arrese to dictate a series of appointments that otherwise should have been made by Serrano.⁶

The events of 1941 and the rise of Arrese thus brought a definite decline in Serrano's influence. The *cuñadísimo's* star was on the wane. He occupied the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for another year, but his power in the FET faded away during 1941. He had never been so powerful and independent as outsiders had believed; he had simply been Franco's deputy in diluting the revolutionary fascist impulse generated during the Civil War. Neither of his pretended goals, Catholic corporatism or neo-fascism, had been achieved, and in the end he suffered the customary fate of court favorites and big political fixers. He could well remark, as he did to his friend Ridru-ejo, that "nothing could undo the ill we have done Spain."⁷

Arrese was not a new Serrano, and he exercised less political initiative. Scrupulously loyal, he blocked all attempts of syndicate leaders to form a "Left-Falangism" around him. The appointees of Salvador Merino hoped to continue planning for a dynamic syndical leadership even after their leader's dismissal, but Arrese regarded them as potentially schismatic and gave them no support. Instead, he brought in safe Franco-Falangists to keep the syndicates quiet.

Arrese regarded disunity within the Nationalist front as tantamount to suicide. Although he was a vehement anti-capitalist and wanted to see the Spanish state implement sweeping social and economic reforms, Arrese did not place the economic goals of national syndicalism ahead of the personal prerogatives of the Caudillo. He believed that Franco's leadership in the Civil War had given him an historical mandate to guide Spain's destinies during the near future. Furthermore, Arrese's strong religious convictions prompted him to

⁶ Quoted by Ridru-ejo in an interview conducted by Luis Ortega Sierra, in *Pruebas*, No. 76 (June, 1957), p. 14.

In his memoirs, Serrano did not hide the fact that the new party he had helped construct was no more than an ideological façade and an organizational tool, the regime's basic institutional strength lying in the Army. "Neither the legislation nor the governmental policies [of the regime] would ever come to be entirely uniform. In the last analysis, the center of gravity, the true support of the regime (in spite of the appearances which we foolishly forced ourselves to exaggerate) was and would continue to be the Army: the national Army . . . would even be (perhaps fortunately) the substitute for a state that had not completed its being, that had not completed its institutional body and true organic form." (*Entre Hendaya y Gibraltar*, p. 127.)

support a policy of political compromise. Devoutly believing that Christian unity was necessary to save Europe from Communism, he eschewed the violent fascist elements in the Falange's ideology.

The dictator trusted his new choice for Party Secretary because of the latter's honesty and personal decency, but also because Arrese lacked any dangerous talent for independent political intrigue. Franco had calculated that the responsibilities of office would finish the task of bringing Arrese around to his own viewpoint, and in this he was not mistaken. Arrese became a sincere supporter of the Caudillo, and an invaluable executor of his new policy of injecting more religion and less radicalism into the Falange. He openly declared that compromise and moderation were necessary if Spain was to rebuild a prostrate fatherland, heal class division, and escape a world at war. Admitting that all the organs of the Falange did not function with the efficiency desired, he warned of the dangers of demagoguery. Arrese never tired of repeating that the Falange was Catholic, and that its ties with the Army were closer than ever.⁷ He declared that the party's aims were to "(1) Spiritualize life. (2) Make Spain more Spanish. (3) Implement justice." But he warned that "Spain—and may some who wear the blue shirt but hide the red shirt hear it quite well—will be nothing if it is not Catholic."⁸ Evidently the Falangist was to be half monk, half soldier: "We believe in God, Spain, and Franco."⁹

Arrese has conceded that during his first term at the party helm the Falange's policy and propaganda line clearly shifted from a theoretical emphasis on revolution to a more or less self-admitted acceptance of evolution.¹⁰ Although he could declare on public occasions that "without fanaticism and intolerance nothing can be done," his actual role in Spanish politics was characterized by great moderation.¹¹ The Arrese leadership was Franco's greatest success with the party since Serrano had brought off the unification five years before.

The new cabinet of 1941 definitely broadened the base of the regime. It brought the Falange greater official influence than it had ever enjoyed during the Franco regime, with two seats on the Council of Ministers. However, it was influence given to a docile party. By agreeing to collaborate fully in the new cabinet the Falangists

relinquished any right to moral aloofness or personal independence. All plans for a party conspiracy against the regime had ended. Those who did not like the latest phase of the "new Spain" simply packed up and went home.

The role of the FET in the evolution of the Franco state was made more explicit by a decree of November 28, 1941, which abolished the twelve National Services set up for the party in 1938. Serrano may have originally hoped to make the Falange organization parallel and complementary to the regular structure of the government ministries, but the Generalissimo finally decided to discard the entire idea. Instead, four Vice-Secretariats were established within the party: the Movement (executive administration of the Falange bureaucracy); Social Works (syndicates and *ex-combatientes*); Popular Education (which, in effect, took over state propaganda, even on the local level); and Services (which included a number of secondary sections, such as communications, health, and so forth). Outside its work in propaganda and the syndicates, the Falange had no direct contact with national administration. Beyond talking about and administering the labor front, its political significance was secondary and its political initiative non-existent. Of the one hundred and six members sitting on the party's National Council in 1942, no more than about forty could reasonably be considered Falangists of any sort. Approximately twenty were military men, and a half-dozen were Carlists. The rest were miscellaneous Rightists and middle-class opportunists.¹²

The Falange had been tamed. No one really thought about a national syndicalist revolution any more. The Franco formula was unopposed. As one Leftist critic said, "This Falange of the *camisas viejas* took refuge in editorships. It never leaves that sphere. When ordered, it shows against reaction or against marked Reds."¹³ But it took no initiative.

The more ardent spirits in the party hoped to exhaust their frustration and find a radical outlet for their ideological passion by joining the "Blue Division," a Spanish force being organized to succor the German Army on the Russian front. Here disappointed Falangists could once more shoulder arms against atheistic Bolshevism and give vent to their pent-up emotions by ramming a bayonet down

a Russian throat. By no means all members of the Blue Division were enthusiastic Falangists, but a great many of them were, and such ardent young fanatics as Dionisio Ridruejo and Enrique Sotomayor joined. Losses on the Russian front were severe, and scores of promising young Falange leaders never returned to Spain. Some of those who survived the first year refused to give up the fight, even after the Blue Division was officially dissolved. Those who remained were made into a "Blue Legion," which fought on at the eastern front almost to the very end. The veterans who returned to Spain in 1943 were hardly sure that they had done the right thing, for they found the political situation at home worse than ever. Arrese told Ridruejo, "I am a *franquista*," and said that the Caudillo was more clear-headed than any political figure in Spain, which was doubtless true.

One significant change did occur in 1942, however. It began innocently enough with a religious demonstration in Vizcaya. On August 16 of each year it was the custom of local Carlists to attend a special mass at the shrine of the Virgin of Begoña, in Bilbao. Quiet veterans, who always displayed great enthusiasm on such occasions, burst from the church shouting "Long live the King!" and other Carlist slogans, among which were undoubtedly curses hurled at the Falange. Several young Falangists who happened to be in the square outside the church responded violently to what they considered a "treasonous" and reactionary demonstration. The pugnacious Carlists replied to the taunts by throwing themselves on the hands of Falangists, one of whom was a crippled war veteran. To save his comrades from a bad beating or something even worse, a Falangist named Domínguez threw a hand grenade (which he was carrying illegally) into the crowd of Carlists, wounding six of them. The Falangists then went to the local police station to denounce the Carlists.

The matter was complicated by the presence inside the church of General Varela, the Minister of War. A Carlist and a reactionary, Varela was an old enemy of the Falange. Since the Carlists had immediately filed their own complaint against the Falangists, Varela received a telephone call from the vacationing Caudillo, who asked for a personal report. Franco immediately realized that the Begoña

incident could have serious repercussions inside the regime. He questioned Varela very specifically as to whether the Falangists had planned a personal attack against him. Varela admitted that this was not the case; it had been merely a street incident between young hotheads.

Widely varying reports of what had occurred were noised about. A Falange pamphlet dated August 18, 1942, and signed by the National Sports Delegate of the SEU claimed that all the Carlists present had sung a verse that ran:

Tres cosas hay en España
Que no aprueba mi conciencia:
El subsidio,
La Falange,
Y el cuñado de su excelencia.*

It was further charged that former Basque separatists were now disguising themselves as Carlists, which was doubtless true.

The Carlists circulated a pamphlet entitled "The Crime of the Falange in Begoña—A Regime Found Out." They claimed that the entire incident was planned by the Vizcayan Falange and that a bomb attempt had been made on Varela's life. They called upon their followers "to resist boldly this insupportable situation, equal to that in the Republic during 1936."⁴

Both Carlists and Army leaders were demanding punishment, and so the Falangists involved were tried by a military court. Domínguez was summarily sentenced to death; there were other bad marks on his record, for during the war he had passed over the battle lines and had already been reprieved from one death sentence. Arrese did his best to have the death penalty commuted, for he wanted to avoid the possible consequences of a judicial execution. But Serrano, in one of his last official decisions, ruled that the juridical history of Domínguez, with one previous death sentence on his record, made clemency impossible.

The Carlists and some Army leaders were still not satisfied. The

* "There are three things in Spain / That my conscience does not approve: / The subsidy, / The Falange, / And the brother-in-law of His Excellency." (The subsidy, a typical Franco gimmick, was being paid to the main branch of the old Bourbon dynasty.)

Traditionalists bitterly resented their lack of influence in the FET, and ten Carlist chiefs resigned their posts in the "Movement." The most important Carlist, General Varela, identified his Traditionalism with the Church and the Army, not with a political party. Anglophile and anti-fascist, he thought the moment had arrived to put the remaining Falangists on the run. Not content with the death of Domínguez, he and Galarza sent messages to the military Captains-General throughout Spain, asking for their response to the Falangist insolence of having attacked "the Army" in Begoña.

With this move, however, the anti-Falangist reaction overreached itself. Varela and Galarza had no authorization from Franco for their circular, and their action, bordering on insubordination, merely armed the Falangists against them. Franco viewed Varela's action as needlessly provocative and almost subversive; such independent maneuvers could not be tolerated inside the government. Instead of pressuring the Falange, Franco would now have to ease out Varela and Galarza.¹⁵

At the beginning of September Varela was replaced as Minister of War by General Asensio, one of the three nominal "Falange generals." Galarza was dismissed from the Ministry of Interior, to be replaced by Blas Pérez González, an early protégé of Serrano Suárez and Gamero del Castillo. Pérez was a loyal *franquista* but also had a reputation for pro-Falangism.

The upshot of these cabinet changes was that Serrano Suárez would have to go, Foreign Ministry and all. Franco had been contemplating this move ever since Serrano's opposition during the 1941 cabinet crisis. To the Caudillo, Serrano was not only dispensable, he was becoming a positive liability. Serrano was the "Axis minister," but the geopolitical situation no longer looked so favorable for the fascist powers. The outcome of the 1942 German offensive was in doubt, and an Anglo-American second front could be expected in France or the Mediterranean any day. If the Anglophile Varela went out, the Anglophobe Serrano could not stay. Thus Franco's personal and diplomatic predilections coincided with practical political necessity.

On the whole, the official Falange leaders were pleased with this settlement, which eliminated both Varela and Serrano. To facilitate the maneuver, Manuel Valdés had even fabricated a fake SEU report denouncing Domínguez as a British spy.

Some of the more idealistic *camisas viejas*, who had stuck with the party through thick and thin, were outraged at the moral hypocrisy involved in this latest compromise. Most of them dropped out of active affairs altogether. *Arriba* continued to editorialize about Left-liberals and opportunists within the party, but it now concluded, "In the end, we are all Spaniards." The Iron Age of Franco Spain was nearly over. The age of permissiveness was beginning.*

Indeed, the FET had been maintained as a party only because of the fascist vogue and the great need for a state ideology and a political framework. As the vogue began to disappear in 1943, the political framework also began to change. The party, which had already shrunk in 1939-40, was further depleted in 1943. Its conversion into a tame bureaucratic instrument was complete. Although it grew more artificial and more isolated with each passing season, it survived, like the regime, because its enemies could never agree among themselves on how to remove it or with what to replace it. The confusion of 1936 was never lifted from Spanish politics.

The FET was still valuable to Franco as a bulwark against a monarchist restoration, which would bring a precipitate end to his regime. In 1943, as Italy fell out of the war and German armies were everywhere in full retreat, monarchists built up strong pressure for a change. Several leading monarchists, including members of the Falange's National Council, signed a petition asking that the Caudillo make ready to restore the Bourbon dynasty. It was argued that only such a move could save Spain from eventual Allied intervention and the return of the Left. Franco was incensed by this gesture, and had the six signatories who sat on the National Council, including Gamero del Castillo and García Valdecasas, expelled from their posts. Nonetheless, the monarchist pressure kept growing.

At this juncture, Franco's pawns freely volunteered their services

* Three years later, Serrano Suárez wrote: "In reality the Falange was a political effort that never reached full maturity. It was an idea, a current of thought, of emotion and of action initiated and defended by José Antonio Primo de Rivera, to which some thousands of men tried to be faithful. . . . At certain moments that current has been almost identical with a concrete party. At certain moments it seemed to be on the verge of identifying itself with the present regime in Spain. Then [at other times] that current was something quite different, far from any concrete historical realization." (*Entre Henaya y Gibraltar*, p. 366.)

to continue his game of divide-and-rule. The Carlists had split into three or four factions after the extinction of their main line, but they were determined never to permit the return of the orthodox "usurpers," even though they might run the risk of foreign intervention. When the monarchist crescendo of 1943 was at its height, a lieutenant serving one of the current Carlist pretenders, Don Carlos (grandson through the female line of the former pretender Carlos VII), made an alternative suggestion to Falange leaders. He proposed that they all create a large diversionary action among Spanish monarchists in favor of Don Carlos. This would deprive Don Juan, the regular Bourbon candidate, of that near-unanimity of monarchist support he would need to impose himself on the regime.

This proposal, first advanced in March of 1943 by a Carlist lawyer from Valencia, was accepted with alacrity. Through the anti-monarchist Falange, the government financed a "clandestine" Carlist campaign in favor of Don Carlos. Within three or four months this raised some doubt in the minds of the middle classes as to the sole legitimacy of the claim of Don Juan. The orthodox monarchists were temporarily forestalled, and the regime survived another threat.

Such inner division and mutual enmity guaranteed the continuity of the pseudo-Falange state under so skillful a maneuverer as Franco. As the original proponent of this 1943 gambit wrote fifteen years later:

If we should see ourselves in the same situation one hundred times, we would do the same thing one hundred times, for a hundred years of the government of Franco, with all the corruption of its administration, is preferable to one year of Don Juan, which would be the swift bridge to Communism.¹⁶

Franco's strength was based on the weakness and mutual hatred of his opponents.

XVII

PLAYING OUT THE STRING

AFTER THE TIDE OF THE WAR turned in 1942-43, the regime began to make serious efforts to escape the onus of its foreign ideological affiliations. There was no longer much talk in Spain about supporting international fascism, and the regime's opposition to the Soviet Union was officially predicated on the need to protect "Christian Europe" from "Asiatic Communism." Hitler made one last effort to draw Spain into the war in January 1943, when the party Secretary, Arrese, made a visit to Germany. Arrese's Catholic convictions made him a fully reliable representative of the Caudillo in such a situation; his lack of enthusiasm for radical fascism would keep him from lending any support to a mere pro-Nazi front abroad. He replied to the entreaties of Nazi leaders by saying that Spain was quite willing to make a contribution to the struggle against Communism, but that such a war must be based on the principles of the Christian West, which meant that it could not involve hostility to the Anglo-Saxon powers. Furthermore, there was no logic in alliance with an Asiatic and pagan power like Japan, which was destroying all the achievements of Christian civilization in the Far East. In order for Spain to participate in the Second World War, Arrese said, the entire system of opposing alliances would have to be changed. All Spain would offer was increased support on the Russian front after Hitler had made a separate peace in the West; there was little point in maintaining one Spanish Blue Division in Russia unless another were sent to the Philippines to oppose Japanese Shintoiist aggression.¹ By 1943 Hitler may no longer have been opposed in principle to a separate peace with the West, but his revolution of nihilism had gone too far to make such a move practical. This being the case, the Spanish regime moved farther and farther away.

During the last year of the war, the Franco regime made a des-