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The FET during the Climax of European Fascism, 1939–1941

Franco's total victory in the Civil War determined two issues. The first was the complete defeat of liberalism and the left, whether in the form of the largely democratic Republic of 1931–1936 or the revolutionary regime of 1936–1939. The second was the certification of the personal power and authority of Franco himself, who now had the most extensive jurisdiction of any ruler in the history of Spain, and was at that moment the most formally or theoretically unchecked authority in Europe. Stalin had at least a nominal constitution and Hitler a nominal parliament; Franco had neither. Moreover, a new Law of the Leadership of the State, published on 9 August 1939, further expanded Franco's powers as originally defined by the decree of 29 January 1938. The new measure declared that Franco held "in a permanent manner the functions of government," and was categorically relieved of the need to submit new legislation or decrees to his cabinet "when urgent demands so require it."[1] In addition, revised statutes of the FET, issued a few days earlier, further extended his direct control over the party. Propaganda concerning Franco's personal role and leadership hit its full stride during the final year of the Civil War, with invocations of "Franco, Franco, Franco" in the Italian Fascist style of "Duce, Duce, Duce."

What were not solved were the conflicting political tensions and rival expectations from the diverse forces within the regime. These numbered at least five. Falangists themselves were potentially divided into two sectors: the large majority of the "acomodados" (accommodated), basically franquista and looking to Italy as their model, and the minority of Falangists, mostly younger but made up of both camisas viejas and camisas nuevas, who were revolutionary in outlook and strongly Naziphile. Then there were the alfonsino monarchists, looking toward an authoritarian "instauración," as well as the Carlists, still vigorous and not lacking in influence within the regime, who sought the establishment of their own

system. A somewhat separate current yet was that of "political Catholicism," also rightist and authoritarian, which accepted the FET and Franco, but emphasized the role of Catholic tutelage and Catholic corporatism. By the same token, political Catholicism might be equally content with a right-wing monarchy. The most influential single force within the regime, the military, did not represent a single tendency, for the military had no specific program of their own. They supported Franco, though they would accept a monarchy. There were both Falangist and Carlist minorities within the military, but in general the officer corps after the war became increasingly hostile to the pretensions of the FET.

Thus victory began to accentuate the growing differences between Franco and Serrano on the one hand and varying alignments of high military officials, rightists, monarchists, and political Catholics on the other. At issue above all was whether the regime would become categorically fascist or evolve in the direction of a conservative Catholic and/or monarchist system. Serrano's ambition tended to grow rather than diminish, aiming at construction of a fully institutionalized and largely fascistic authoritarian system. During the final month of the war, he had been embroiled in intense controversy with Gen. Gómez Jordana, the senior general who served as foreign minister and vice president of government and who keenly resented the encroachment of the "cuñadísimo's" influence. It was Serrano, not the foreign minister, who in May led the sizable state delegation to Fascist Italy, the victorious regime's closest ally, in the first major state delegation abroad in peacetime. Serrano returned with a large collection of Fascist books for guidance in the further development of the Spanish system.

This trip was reciprocated two months later by Count Ciano, Mussolini's foreign minister and son-in-law. In their conversation of 19 July, Franco strongly praised the FET. This and other specimens of Falangist activism that he had been shown led Ciano to conclude that "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, but it has already regrouped around it the youth, the most active elements, and in particular the women."[2] To Ciano, Spain was beginning to look more like Italy.

Franco clearly intended to build a strong nationalist and authoritarian system, though just how strong he wished the FET to become was not clear. He completely reorganized his cabinet on 8 August 1939, retaining only two incumbents, Serrano Súñer and Alfonso Peña Boeuf, the professional engineer in charge of public works. Five cabinet posts were given to Falangists and neo-Falangists, compared with three in the preceding government, reflecting an effort to approximate, at least symbolically, the new fascistic era that seemed to be dawning in Europe. Yet three of the

five new Falangist ministers were army men, beginning with Col. Juan Beigbeder, the new foreign minister, who had earned neo-Falangist credentials during the Civil War. Whereas the military had held four of twelve cabinet posts in Franco's first regular government, they held five of fourteen in the second. Juan Yagüe, the nearest thing to a genuine Falangist general, was named Spain's minister of the air force. Yagüe had no particular competence in this area, but he had shown signs of political restiveness. The air ministry would deprive him of regular military command, busy him with new responsibilities, and help placate Falangist sentiment.

Though at first some dubbed this a Falangist government, it was obviously no such thing. The new cabinet represented what had become Franco's regular balancing act between the various politico-ideological "families" of the regime. The nearest thing to a true concentration of power lay in the military, yet even they held little direct corporate power, the individual military ministers being carefully selected in terms of personality, loyalty, and political identity (or lack of it) to fulfill what were primarily individual roles. One study has concluded that during the entire first phase of the regime through the end of the fascist era in 1945, military personnel would hold 45.9 percent of the ministerial appointments and 36.8 percent of the top government positions,[3] concentrated primarily in the armed forces ministries and in Interior, which directed the police. Falangists, by comparison, would hold 37.9 percent of the ministerial appointments and only 30.3 percent of all top administrative positions, concentrated above all in the party administration, in Labor, and in Agriculture.[4] An earlier study of the top administrative positions, however, found that of a grand total of 1,871 appointments to higher-level positions, military personnel provided only 25.1 percent of the personnel involved, compared with a total of 31.6 percent for all Falangists (the great bulk of whom were camisas viejas). Various categories of monarchists accounted for 21.6 percent of senior positions, political Catholics for 14.4 percent in this period, and Carlists for only 6.6 percent.[5]

Just a few days before forming the new government, Franco carried out his first postwar changes in the FET. The new secretary general, replacing Fernández Cuesta, was General Agustín Muñoz Grandes, a professional officer and military africanista who had played a major role in organizing the urban Assault Guards for the Republic in 1931–1932. For most of his career he had been a professional soldier and then police commander, avoiding involvement in politics. Thus he had refused originally to join the conspiracy and revolt of 1936. Though he was soon arrested by Republican authorities, in April 1937 a Republican court had completely absolved him of anti-Republican activities,[6] providing him with the free-

Falangist leaders in 1939: Raimundo Fernández Cuesta, Miguel Primo de Rivera, Pilar Primo de Rivera, General Agustín Muñoz Grandes (*foreground*), Rafael Sánchez Mazas, Pedro Gamero del Castillo, and Ramón Serrano Súñer

dom that he employed to leave Spain and subsequently enter the Nationalist zone. Franco gave Muñoz Grandes a divisional command during the war, and he rose rapidly, thanks to his professional talents and a rather unique combination of austerity and ambition. Franco gave him the surprising post of administrator of the FET, as well as a cabinet seat, because of Muñoz Grandes's professed neo-Falangism (something in which he had not shown the slightest interest before mid-1937), but even more to keep the organization under the authority of a military man.

Muñoz Grandes was similarly made chief of the militia, whose independence and future development had been a major concern of the camisas viejas ever since the unification. José Antonio Girón, a leading figure among the latter, was named the first head of a new Organización Nacional de Excombatientes on 21 August. This was to be a separate veterans' organization for all who had participated in the militia during the war and would be a fairly active group, but only as a comradely association, not a paramilitary force.

The other Falangist cabinet ministers were Serrano Súñer, Pedro Gamero del Castillo, and Rafael Sánchez Mazas. Serrano retained the Ministry

of the Interior and was named head of the FET's new Junta Política. A new vice secretary general was appointed for the FET in the person of Gamero del Castillo, the young right-wing neo-Falangist from Seville, former president of the Catholic student association in Seville and a prime protégé of Serrano. Gamero was also made a minister without portfolio, as was the camisa vieja writer and new vice president of the Junta Política, Rafael Sánchez Mazas. Ramiro Ledesma had once dismissed Sánchez Mazas as "the provider of rhetoric for the Falange," but he was a talented novelist and a close friend of José Antonio, who had considered him the party's "first intellectual" (in itself an interesting commentary on the party). After spending the war in Republic prisons, however, Sánchez Mazas had little appetite or energy for new initiatives.[7]

If the FET did not hold the position ascribed to it by Ciano, Franco's new cabinet and policy priorities nonetheless assigned it a prominent place. While the balance of power in 1939 did not meet all of Serrano Súñer's goals, it created a kind of military/Falangist dyarchy that the military leaders would find increasingly irritating and threatening, generating major tensions and setting the stage for the ensuing internal conflicts of 1940–1942.

The new statutes of the FET of 4 August made the Junta Política a permanent organ of party government, and Serrano Súñer carefully selected the members of the new Junta to obtain personnel who would cooperate with him. The most independent camisa vieja member was Ridruejo, but he was also a close personal friend. The other camisas viejas chosen, Miguel Primo de Rivera and José María Alfaro, had spent the war in Republican prisons and showed every sign of cooperating. The two monarchist-Falangists selected were José María de Areilza and the conde de Mayalde, together with two other neo-Falangists, the law professor and jurist Blas Pérez González and the young businessman Demetrio Carceller.[8] There were also two Carlists and an army officer. Moreover, the new National Council was even less representative of the camisas viejas. Of 100 members, only 24 were party veterans, almost as many were monarchists, nearly 20 were army officers, and only 7 were Carlists.

In general, liberated former leaders and activists who had spent the war in Republican prisons seemed happy to rally to Serrano Súñer and the structure of the FET. These included such luminaries as Sánchez Mazas, now minister without portfolio, Alfaro as undersecretary of press and propaganda, as well as member of the Junta Política, Miguel Primo de Rivera as Junta member and also the new provincial chief of Madrid, and Manuel Valdés Larrañaga as the government's new undersecretary of

Falangist membership card, February 1939

labor. Some of them would, however, momentarily become more ambitious with the course of Axis victories in World War II.

The new statutes maintained the parallel system of Services and Delegations.[9] This achieved only the illusion of a parallel state structure, however, since nearly half the Technical Services dealt with the internal administration of the FET, and most of the national delegates had no governmental authority. One exception was the new syndical chief, Gerardo Salvador Merino, who was given explicit powers to construct the new system of national syndicates.

By 1939 the FET organizations claimed a nominal active male membership of 650,000,[10] the largest political agglomeration in Spanish history. Most younger men who hoped to get ahead in public affairs, obtain state employment, or flourish in various lines of professional or economic activity found it expedient to sign up, and FET membership would continue to increase with Germany's wartime victories, reaching 932,000 in 1942.[11] In February 1939 the two distinct membership categories of "militants" and "adherents" were made fully effective. An effort was later instituted—though never completed—to establish a complete network of party organization, with local FET district, section, and street delegates,

and "jefes de bloque" in the larger cities in imitation of the "block chiefs" in Nazi Germany. This last effort largely failed, for the bulk of the male membership was relatively passive and rarely mobilized. The FET would never develop an organized mass activism equivalent to the totalitarian model of the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany. Hundreds of disillusioned camisas viejas, finding the new Spain not at all the dynamic system of revolutionary national syndicalism to which they aspired, were already dropping out of active participation. Most FET members would remain essentially passive and opportunistic. Though Serrano's speech to the first meeting of the new Junta Política on 31 October referred to the need for a purge of the opportunists in the party,[12] little came of this: the latter were far too numerous to weed out.

Where Falangists excelled was in public display, liturgy, and ceremony. In victorious Nationalist Spain, uniforms and public pomp of all kinds became de rigueur. This reached the point that before the end of 1939, Falangists in Madrid—where political spectacle was most frequent—were given orders *not* to wear their uniforms on ordinary occasions, such as going shopping or spending time in bars, but to save them for official functions, work, and ceremonies.

To overcome the intellectual limitations of the FET and its weakness in theory, an Instituto de Estudios Políticos was created on 9 September 1939. It was designed as a sort of brain trust for the regime and the party, combining features of an advanced training school for higher-level party leaders with those of a study institute for policy and theory. The kind of half-baked ideas served up during the Civil War—one Falangist pamphlet had declared that "fascism is no more than the nationalization of the theories of Marx"[13]—obviously would not do, but it would take the Instituto several years to make any contribution.

The most active doctrinal publicist in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War was the young Juan Beneyto Pérez. In *El Partido* (1939), *El nuevo Estado español* (1939), and *Genio y figura del Movimiento* (1940), he proclaimed the "totalitarian" character of the new state and its similarity to other one-party regimes,[14] while limning out a theory 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 that proceeds directly from the Revolution. It has a fully and typically revolutionary contexture, like the idea that nourishes it. . . .
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> In the totalitarian regimes the Party appears exalted in the precise function of selecting the Chief. . . .
>
> . . . As a minority, it is to integrate whatever is healthy and robust into 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 new generation in a revolutionary spirit. Thanks to the concept of the permanent revolution, and owing to the instrumentality of the Party, conflicts disappear and all energies are concentrated on the task of national affirmation.[15]

Perhaps the nearest thing to a serious philosophical work on Falangism during these first years was Laín Entralgo's *Los valores morales del nacional-sindicalismo,* which appeared in 1941. Laín classified Falangism as belonging to the new political genus of "the national-proletarian revolution," chief examples of which were "Fascism, National Socialism, and National Syndicalism." He recognized that one of the chief problems in "the revolutionary attitude" was "violence":

> This avidity for violent action stems from the most hidden depths of human instinct: the instinct that Freud called aggression, for example. The problem lies in uniting this deep and vital urge to violent action with the normative and with justice. With this understood, just and normative violence has for the man who executes it the value of a purification, is almost a "catharsis" in the Hellenic sense of the word, and the supernatural equivalent and ultimate model of just violence will always be the violent action of Christ against the merchants in the temple. . . . There are occasions—aberrant parodies of this justified and even sanctified violence—in which pure violence, without possessing a justifying motive, appears to man as a means of salvation, a "vox Dei"; the latter may perhaps be the ultimate sense of the "fortiter" of Luther. Of course, violence appears in Sorel as something valuable in itself, with historic virtuality prior to its concretion in the class struggle.
>
> . . . The National Syndicalist, without falling into pseudo-religious derivations, knows well the Christian value of just violence, and demands violent action in the service of social justice and of national justice. And, in the highest term, of Christian justice.[16]

Falangism thus shied away from any naturalistic "fascist theory of violence," and defined National Syndicalism in terms of a sort of hybrid fascism, what a later Spanish sociologist would call *el fascismo frailuno* (friar fascism). Laín emphasized, at least in part, the Christian sources of

the doctrines of José Antonio, and the relation of Falangism to Catholic tradition. Even though he called "the immense and fecund national revolution of National Socialism" a project that was "like a brother to" National Syndicalism, in its specific mode the latter was also seen as distinct.

Though it first dated from 1936–1937, the official "Press of the Movement" was formally constituted on 13 June 1940, and was the largest publisher in Spain. By 1944 it operated 37 newspapers and 5 Monday papers, 8 weekly and 7 monthly magazines, and other publishing facilities. This was indeed the most public and the most tangible of all the FET's activities.[17]

The great bulk of Falangist writing was simply "press and propaganda," but the FET's literary elite also assumed a commanding role in cultural and literary affairs in the first years after the Civil War. If most novels and poems by party members were undistinguished,[18] the work by Laín Entralgo, Ridruejo, Foxá, and several others was of a higher order, and they, with some of the leading conservative writers such as Pemán, would dominate the literary and cultural scene during the years of World War II.[19]

At the height of the fascist era, when fascism seemed to be achieving a new order of nationalist modernity for Europe, the party succeeded in attracting an important group of intellectuals and professional scholars to its ranks. These included such diverse figures as Ridruejo, Foxá, Luis Rosales, José María Valverde, and Gonzalo Torrente Ballester in literature and criticism; Laín Entralgo, Eugenio d'Ors, and José Antonio Maravall in philosophy and history; Antonio Tovar in philology; and Joaquín Garrigues, Rodrigo de Uría, and Francisco Javier Conde in law. These intellectuals all achieved distinguished careers, sometimes at the very forefront of their disciplines, but in most cases would reach the pinnacle of success only in later years, after they had abandoned the fascist enterprise.

The main focus of Falangist high culture would be the new journal *Escorial,* founded by Ridruejo, Laín Entralgo, and others in December 1940, replacing the now defunct *Jerarquía* and *Vértice*. *Escorial* briefly established itself as the most liberal enterprise of the immediate postwar period. As Ridruejo has recalled:

> The journal quickly gained the collaboration of such men as Menéndez Pidal, Marañón, Zubiri, Baroja, Eugenio d'Ors, Marías, and in fact nearly all the writers and poets who had not gone into exile, whatever their political tendency. With the journal we were attempting to counter the climate of intellectual intolerance unleashed by the Civil War and develop a strategy of integration and greater understanding of the adversary. . . . It condemned the "excess of repentance" on the part of those who went from being leftists to reactionaries, leaving us with no hope of equilibrium; it condemned, finally, in one way or another the idea of the intellectual monopoly of the winners and of converting their ideas into dogma.[20]

Though *Escorial* was, like all Spanish culture of that time, officially Catholic, on one occasion it briefly condemned—albeit "not without negative consequences"[21]—the pretentiousness of calling the Civil War simply a "crusade." For its founders, fascism represented the revolution of modernity, a modernity that, though politically authoritarian, was creating a "new civilization" that was dynamic and open to change.

There were also significant efforts to create a new national Falangist theater. Here, as in most other areas, significant works of theory were lacking, with the possible exception of Giménez Caballero's *Arte y Estado,* which had been published in 1935. The latter had called for a national theater grounded in "the new Catholicity"—though not in the old Catholicism—and invoked a new "Christian classicism," with the ultranativist Lope de Vega as a chief inspiration. This national theater was to incorporate a new sense of mystery and hierarchy, and would privilege the heroic.[22]

A major role was to be played by the Syndicate of the Cinematographic Industry and Public Spectacles, formed in the spring of 1939. It encouraged the revival of *autos sacramentales* (sacred plays) and dramas based on patriotic historical themes, as well as innovation in sets and designs. The most important new figure among Falangist writers and critics in this field was Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, though within only a few years he would move in a more liberal direction.

During the years of World War II there was also an emphasis on what might be called "Falangist spectacle," public ceremonies and rituals of strongly nationalist character in mass meetings of thousands. These "were organized according to liturgical principles and were used to present an image of order, discipline, cohesion, and harmony under the guidance of the Nationalist leadership."[23]

Nonetheless, the attempt to create a distinctively Falangist theater lost all its momentum by the final years of the war, exactly as and because the era of fascism was suddenly drawing to a close. This gave way to a general policy of state support for production of the Spanish classics, which were also encouraged in commercial theaters.

THE YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND THE SECCIÓN FEMENINA

Like most radical new states, the Franco regime officially placed considerable emphasis on youth, giving it frequent attention in official propa-

ganda, and Spanish youth were to remain an important part of Falangist mobilization, at least in theory. This was not a question of the state's school policy, for most of that was dominated by the Catholic right from January 1938 on. The FET's role lay in political indoctrination and in paramilitary and extracurricular activities.

The SEU, the Falangist student syndicate, had been officially revived in November 1937, and Falangist pressure had managed to block the rightist and ultra-Catholic Law of University Reform originally prepared by the monarchist minister of education in Franco's first government, even though the Falangists could not control general educational policy. *Haz,* the SEU journal, was revived in September 1938 and was initially published free of censorship. It would remain until 1945 the most radically and outspokenly fascist of all Falangist publications.

Even though José Miguel Guitarte, the first postwar chief of the student syndicate, was selected precisely because he was considered more moderate and manageable, the SEU leaders were outspokenly elitist and aspired to a major role in the new Spain. Thus the official booklet that they prepared and published at the end of the Civil War declared the SEU the "central nerve of the National Syndicalist Revolutionary Movement in Spain,"[24] and SEU spokesmen and writers were vociferous in their denunciations of "rightist" and "reactionary" influences in the new Spain. An Extraordinary Congress was held at El Escorial on 4–8 January 1940 to seal the unification of Carlist and Catholic groups within the SEU, and spokesmen expressed grave concern about the possible "miscarrying of the revolution."[25] Numerous ambitious "projects" were presented, and as Miguel A. Ruiz Carnicer has written, "It was intended that the SEU control all the activities of Spanish university and cultural life,"[26] even to the point of restoring an autonomous paramilitary "university militia" that would permanently militarize student life. All the while *Haz* vociferously denounced continuing efforts at "the counterrevolution" in Spain.

The SEU's Fifth National Congress, convened at Alcalá de Henares from 9 to 16 December 1941, continued to advance broad ambitions. It was addressed by key Falangist cultural and university luminaries such as Antonio Tovar[27] and Laín Entralgo, who endorsed the SEU's goal of leading a full "revolution" in the universities, controlling the ideological formation of science in Spain and of the professoriate generally.[28]

SEU membership at first expanded rapidly. Starting with 9,700 on the eve of the Civil War, the Syndicate registered 34,670 members in 1938 and grew to 52,886 three years later. Members were drawn not merely from the universities but from advanced technical and professional schools as well. Enrollment was greatest both absolutely and proportionately in Madrid, Valladolid, Seville, and Granada, though there was also

a large proportionate membership in several other centers; it was weakest in Barcelona.[29] A significant minority of the members were female. Alarmingly, however, membership dropped to 50,170 in 1942, perhaps reflecting changes in the international context. SEU leaders were divided on the issue of obligatory enrollment, which would solve the membership problem but seriously dilute revolutionary zeal. Obligatory membership was officially decreed by the Law of University Organization (LOU) of 1943. Though the SEU leaders tried to describe the LOU as a victory for them, it was more nearly the opposite, for it denied the Syndicate and its radical goals the tutelary role over university life that they sought.

The leading firebrand in the SEU at the close of the Civil War was Enrique Sotomayor, who had become director of *Haz* at the age of nineteen in 1938. In consonance with the strong support for fascism by students in many parts of Europe, on 16 August 1938 Sotomayor and two other young turks from the SEU leadership had a personal interview with Franco to lobby for the creation of a radical nationalist youth front. Afterward Sotomayor claimed that on this occasion Franco had been moved to tears, declaring that all his hopes lay in the youth of Spain and that before long he would name Sotomayor head of the SEU. Sotomayor rapidly completed his law degree at the University of Seville, where he also temporarily directed the Falangist newspaper *F. E.* In the interim, however, more conservative advisers encouraged Franco to have second thoughts about the young activist, who among other things spoke of a revolutionary union of nationalist students and workers. Thus it was that the more moderate Guitarte, one of those gratefully liberated from the Republican zone and initially named national inspector of the Organización Juvenil (OJ) in May 1939, was made national chief of the SEU in his place on 20 August 1939.

Sotomayor was given the second place in the SEU hierarchy, as secretary general.[30] As Saez Marín has written: "From this point began the legend of the SEU revolutionary, whose speeches and declarations would form a mythical reference for generations of young Falangists later on. And almost exclusively because of activities developed in little more than three months."[31]

Against the advice of his most radical friends, Sotomayor accepted the appointment under Guitarte. His manner seems to have been charismatic, combining a youthful grace, informality, and energy with an air of engagement and authority. He used his new platform to propose creation of a broad, new, and totally inclusive Frente de Juventudes (Youth Front), to be composed of twelve different sections and categories.[32] In Sotomayor's version, revolutionary Falangism was to be distinguished from Italian Fascism by its greater radicalism and spiritual authenticity. Its revolu-

Assembly of leaders of the Frente de Juventudes

tion would be "morally barbarous" compared with the materialism of liberals and the left, but also "Catholically barbarous," recapturing the dynamism and commitment of "primitive Christianity." If necessary, children would even be taken from their families for a revolutionary education. These concepts were forcefully advanced in a major speech in Madrid's Teatro Calderón on 1 November, and also in a pamphlet distributed at the same time:

> I know that to excessively cautious spirits all this about a strong vanguard of youth must seem dangerous and extravagant.
>
> . . . For the very people who were interested in prolonging our war, the same reasons multiplied a hundred times make them today require a hungry, rancorous, and inert Spain. The same people who for centuries have been hemming us in and defeating us, who were counting coin after coin while we were losing man after man, today await us at the juncture of our discouragement to go on spewing out the corrosive negations of always.
>
> . . . The negative slogans reemerge again. Not this. Not that. But, once and for all, definitively: What do they offer? What does the Spanish reaction represent and propose today?
>
> . . . Perhaps nothing gives us such zeal as the rage with which they oppose us.
>
> . . . We feel the immense joy of being hated by them!
>
> Let those who so blithely join the chorus of murmurers consider the terrible responsibility which is theirs.
>
> . . . There is only one path open to us: revolution.
>
> . . . NOW OR NEVER!
>
> . . . All Spanish youths must band together. *Let all the impetus of the Revolution be united in a compact front of youth!*[33]

No one since Ramiro Ledesma himself had so captured Ledesma's rhetorical vein of frenetic revolutionism, and it was not surprising that Sotomayor suffered much the same fate as Ledesma. After the speech of 1 November, all his publications were censored, and he resigned within a month, to be replaced by the much more pliable Diego Salas Pombo.

Plans for a Frente de Juventudes were not abandoned but proceeded more slowly, and by February 1940 were nearly completed.[34] In April membership in the OJ became compulsory for all children of FET members. The full Frente de Juventudes, after some further delay to ensure discipline and subordination, was then officially announced on 6 December 1940. José Antonio Elola was made national delegate six months later, and during 1941 and 1942 a cadre of leaders and instructors was slowly developed. Though the goal was patriotic and cultural "formación" and political indoctrination, in the long run the Frente's most extensive activities would have to do with camping and sports.

The largest sector of the Frente was the Falanges Juveniles de Franco, defined by articles 13 and 14 of the official statutes as "voluntary units which, within the Frente de Juventudes, aspire to achieve, through the exercise of the greatest virtues of the race, primacy in all Falangist enterprises." Though the official goal was that all the young become "incorporated" into the Frente, there was never sufficient investment in youth organization to make it broadly encompassing, and the voluntary principle ensured limited enrollment.[35] According to their own statistics, the Falanges Juveniles—even at their height—at no time mobilized more than 18 percent of the boys and 9 percent of the girls in Spain between seven and eighteen years of age.[36] Membership remained voluntary, and members were primarily children of ardent Nationalists, but even many of these received only limited indoctrination.

As during the Civil War, the various functions of the Sección Femenina continued to outperform other auxiliary services of the FET—a remarkable situation for a fascist movement ardently devoted to the principle of masculine superiority. By 1940 a total of 1,189 youth centers (though mostly very small) were administered by the Sección Femenina. In addition to its health services, it increasingly turned its attention to cultural activities and even women's physical education. The tone, however, remained relentlessly conservative. Women were always taught that family

A parade of the Falanges Juveniles in 1940

and children were their "only goal to achieve in life," as the celibate and childless Pilar Primo de Rivera put it. The basic idea of all this was that "woman forms man," to whom she must remain absolutely subordinated. As Delegada Nacional, Pilar outdid even herself in a speech of February 1943, when she insisted: "Women never discover anything. They lack creative talent, reserved by God for virile intellects; we can do no more than interpret what men present to us."[37]

THE CARLISTS IN 1939

As the Civil War ended, the only organized dissident force among the Nationalists were the Carlists. Most Carlists had not abandoned their principles, nor had they followed orders to dissolve their separate local groups. Carlism's important contribution to complete victory in the Civil War led some Carlist leaders to believe that the time had come to implement their program. They were not at all impressed by the Falangist faith in the "era of fascism" now expanding in Europe. Thus on 10 March 1939 Fal Conde had addressed a lengthy missive to Franco accompanied by a highly detailed "Outline for the Future Political Organization of Spain Based on Traditionalist Principles"—a plan for a sort of Carlist constitution to restore the traditional monarchy. Fal made it clear that such a monarchy would be based on a neotraditionalist state, regional and municipal autonomy, and corporative or "guild" social and economic organization. There would be no place in such a system for the FET, for Fal repeated that "the party, we have said, corrupts," whether fascist or liberal.[38] Franco sympathized with many Carlist principles, but he had not the slightest intention of restoring a genuine Carlist monarchy.

By this point the Carlists held only four provincial leadership positions in the FET in all Spain. Only in Navarre was their situation relatively secure, and even there not completely. In recently conquered Catalonia, they considerably outnumbered genuine Falangists, but held only one of the four Catalan provincial chief positions. Therefore on 1 March 1939 the Carlist leaders of Catalonia addressed a letter to Franco insisting on Carlist leadership and control of the partido único in the region.[39] This request also was largely ignored. In Catalonia the Carlists lost control of their principal newspaper and figured prominently only in the leadership of the Militia. A number of "token Carlists" were taken into the regional FET leadership for the sake of appearance, but they continued to be largely excluded from power.

On 5 April 1939, the prince regent Don Javier entered the British embassy in Paris to express to British representatives his concern over the course of the Spanish regime, its unbalanced autarchic economic policy, and its pro-Axis orientation. He declared that the Carlists were opposed to fascist autarchy and favored closer relations with Britain in particular, but drew little response from British diplomats, who dismissed the Carlists as "medieval reactionaries."[40]

Later, on 31 August 1939, a "Junta Suprema del Requeté" met privately in Pamplona, where twenty-four former Requeté officers signed a pledge to maintain the unity of Carlism and oppose all "treason" to Spain.[41] There had been physical altercations between Falangists and Carlists at the San Fermín festival in July, and incidents of this sort would continue for several years. In fact, however, the Carlists were even less able than the alfonsino monarchists to influence Spanish policy.

The Carlists were the more disarmed because their banner of traditional Spanish Catholicism had been raised and embraced by the regime itself. Both Falangist and non-Falangist elements within the FET accepted traditionalist Catholicism as basic,[42] and the genuinely anticlerical minority was almost without influence. In Rome Serrano Súñer explained to the Italian Fascist leaders that one of the main reasons Franco and the Falangists felt closer to them than to the Nazis was because of the impor-

tance of Catholicism. Franco indeed backed out of a close cultural agreement with Berlin signed at the close of the Civil War because of protests from the Vatican about the anti-Catholic content of Nazi culture. Cardinal Gomá, who was primate and archbishop of Toledo until his death in 1940, nonetheless regarded Serrano and the FET with suspicion because of their fascist tendencies, but agreed with most of his fellow prelates that Franco himself was a providential figure for Spain. In general, the leaders of the Spanish Church during the era of the Second World War continued to support the Spanish state strongly, and also accepted the special relationship with the Axis, though Catholic spokesmen normally tried to "translate" the special relationship with the fascist powers into terms compatible with right-wing Catholicism.

THE FIRST YEARS OF WORLD WAR II

Though Franco never fully adopted the entire core fascist revolutionary ideology, there is no question that he identified his regime politically with the fascist powers and considered himself not merely an associate but virtually an ally of the Axis. Of all the years of his long dictatorship, the first three years after the Civil War, 1939 to 1942, were the period of greatest danger for Franco, for his regime, and for Spain, for these were the years when Franco was most inebriated with his total military victory, his sense of power and destiny, and his perception of being closely associated with the rising tide of new forces in European and world history. These were the years of the "fascist temptation" of Franco, and the period in which he felt most purely self-confident and most convinced of his own wisdom, even on matters about which he knew little or nothing. Thus the Portuguese ambassador Pedro Theotonio Pereira, who detested the Spanish dictator, observed of him in August 1939: "I find him besotted with state power and with personal power. Of everyone in the Spanish government, he is the one who says the strangest things to me and who speaks in the language closest to the Axis."[43]

In the closing days of the Civil War, Franco signed a treaty of friendship with Germany that required mutual consultation in the event of a military attack against either country. He also joined Hitler's Anti-Comintern Pact, though the latter was a gesture without concrete obligations. On 8 May 1939, the new Spanish government officially withdrew from the League of Nations. If the leaders of the regime clearly felt closer to and more at home with Italian Fascists than with German Nazis, they also recognized that the latter were taking the lead in forging the authoritarian, nationalist and anti-Communist new order with which the Spanish leaders identified, in opposition to the "capitalist plutocracies."

This did not mean that the regime was a satellite of either Axis power, for Franco's policy was based on pragmatism and his judgments of the best interests of Spain and of his regime.[44] Thus a ten-year treaty of mutual friendship had been signed with Portugal, largely at Madrid's request, just a few days before the German pacts, and this was harmonized with the traditional British alliance with Portugal. The state visit of Serrano Súñer to Rome immediately after the war ended[45] was designed to express in part the Spanish regime's closer sense of identity with Italy than with Germany, and was partly a response to the fact that Italy had made a more extensive contribution to the triumph of the Nationalists. As indicated earlier, Foreign Minister Ciano returned the visit in July.

Franco, in contrast, held at bay a proposed visit in May from Hermann Goering, arguably the highest-ranking Nazi leader after Hitler. To lead the Berlin counterpart to Serrano's visit to Rome, the Generalissimo selected the semiliberal and anti-Falangist General Antonio Aranda, one of his ablest commanders, who accompanied the returning Condor Legion to Germany. In Berlin Aranda stressed the importance of good relations with Britain and tended to downplay the role of the FET[46]—the latter, of course, a common attitude among the military.

Of all the regime's objectives, few were more important than the negotiation of a concordat with the Vatican, a proposal already broached before the end of the Civil War. For Franco this would be the culmination of his neotraditionalist religious policy, roofing the solid edifice of Catholic support for his new half-fascist, half-Catholic fundamentalist system—however uneasy the contradictions to which this gave rise. During the Civil War, the most radical and Nazi-influenced Falangists—going even farther than Ramiro Ledesma—had talked of the need for a Spanish national church, a real "national Catholicism" not unlike that which was being developed by the Nazi organization of "German Christians" in the Third Reich. But this had been a failure even under Hitler, and talk among Falangist anticlericals about a national church was quieted even before the war ended. *Arriba*, the new central FET organ in Madrid, underlined the desirability of a regular concordat, and Muñoz Grandes issued orders to all provincial chiefs on 25 October forbidding imitation of such Nazi styles as "Nazi uniforms, goose steps, fascist salutes, etc."[47] If the Vatican had been willing to sign a concordat with Germany during Hitler's first year as chancellor, Franco believed that it ought to be all the more interested in an accord with so ultra-Catholic a state as his.

The Vatican did not see matters so simply, despite the regime's resumption of the state ecclesiastical subsidy on 1 December 1939. It had been burned by dealings with Hitler and Mussolini, while the outbreak of war in Europe complicated the international outlook. Moreover, the demands

of the regime, which insisted on the state's right to nominate bishops, further strained relations. At one point the Spanish representative to the Vatican was withdrawn briefly, and no progress was made in negotiations during the fall and winter of 1939–40.[48]

The key institution in the regime was neither the FET nor the Church but the army. Though the size of the peacetime army was soon cut by nearly 75 percent, Franco and his chief associates planned a state-led, intensely state-regulated economy that would privilege military production. A huge ten-year naval expansion program was announced on 8 September 1939, though it soon had to be cut drastically; not to be outdone, the new minister of the air force, the Falangist General Juan Yagüe, presented a ten-year program of his own that would involve nearly four thousand new combat planes. This, however, was sharply cut back to only 150 planes per year, involving little more than normal replacement of existing materiel.

The new economic policy announced in 1939 was based on autarchy, or the goal of relative self-sufficiency with greatly enhanced military production, a program derived from Italy and Germany. A decree of October 1939 announced the Law for the Protection and Development of National Industry, which featured a series of incentives, tax benefits, and special licensing arrangements for the creation of new factories. A subsequent Law for the Organization and Defense of National Industry of 24 November identified certain industries worthy of special assistance, and two years later in 1941 the regime created the Instituto Nacional de Industria (INI), a state investment and holding company to stimulate industrialization, modeled on the Italian Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale. The decree of 25 September 1941 announced that the purpose of the INI was to "stimulate and finance, in the service of the nation, the creation and resurgence of our industry, especially those whose principal contribution is to resolve the problems imposed by the requirements of the country's defense or that are directed toward the development of our economic autarchy."[49]

During 1939–41 the regime built a rigid system of state economic controls, regulations, and artificial incentives that in many cases restricted rather than encouraged new economic growth. This autarchist statist model of "fascist economics," together with a foreign trade and technology model heavily skewed toward Germany and Italy, had disastrous effects on the Spanish economy during World War II. The tight controls on grain marketing and pricing, together with other restrictions, discouraged agricultural production, so that part of Spanish society would soon teeter on the brink of famine, while the regime's overall policies made it impossible for Spain to exploit the economic opportunities of neutrality as did other neutral states. "Fascist" or autarchist economics, Spanish-style, heavily tilted toward the Axis, resulted in economic stagnation, failure to recover from the losses of the Civil War, and six years of extreme hardship for Spanish citizens.[50]

The new economic policies, which used the nascent national syndicates primarily as instruments of negative control, did not produce a system of national solidarity of the sort envisioned by José Antonio Primo de Rivera and the original Falangists or preached by the regime's own propaganda. Their terms favored the established industrial and financial powers to the detriment of the defeated and much of the rural population in general, part of which had fought for the Nationalists. The regime granted considerable autonomy to individual ministries and to major industrial and financial enterprises, which was not ipso facto wrong, but such activity was not exposed to either general market forces, broader international trade, or countervailing free trade union or other interests. Thus those who could afford to pay could buy nearly anything they needed, either at higher prices from legitimate enterprises or more frequently on the black market. To Franco, the suffering being endured by the people of Spain was in large measure a judgment elicited by the political and spiritual apostasy of half a nation. As he put it during a speech in Jaén on 18 March 1940, "The suffering which a nation undergoes at a certain point in its history is not a matter of chance; it is a spiritual punishment, a punishment which God imposes on a distorted life, on an unclean history."[51]

As international tensions heightened during the summer of 1939, Franco used the phrase "careful prudence" to describe Spain's foreign policy at a July meeting of the FET's National Council. The new foreign minister in the 1939 government was Col. Juan Beigbeder y Atienza, who had served as high commissioner of the Protectorate during much of the Civil War[52] and had earlier been attaché in Berlin. He was a somewhat odd choice, a tall and nervous eccentric who had in certain respects "gone native" in Morocco. According to Serrano, Franco at first thought the nomination was "madness," but accepted it in part because Beigbeder's appointment would be gratifying to the military. He had encouraged the expansion of the Falange in the Protectorate—though under military dominance—and had also taken the post of the FET's territorial chief, though his Falangism was much more a result of opportunism than of conviction. Nonetheless, this made him, along with Yagüe and Muñoz Grandes, one of the few nominally Falangist military commanders, and, like much of the top Spanish brass, he was relatively pro-German though not fanatically so.[53]

Hitler's signing of the Nazi–Soviet Pact only two weeks after the for-

mation of the new Spanish government was a shock to Madrid, contradicting the basic orientation of Franco's policy. The Falangist organ *Arriba* could only headline it as "A Surprise, A Tremendous Surprise." Sudden outbreak of a general war created a difficult and dangerous situation. Though Franco provided some indication of still favoring German policy, the Spanish government had no reasonable option but to declare its neutrality.

In March 1940 the senior generals who made up the army's Superior Council approved a statement by the increasingly critical-minded monarchist Gen. Alfredo Kindelán that declared it impossible for Spain to enter the conflict because it lacked economic support and materiel. They also complained of the internal divisions within the FET and questioned its role as partido único, declaring that the army was "the only instrument available to orient Spanish politics."[54]

Hitler's startling conquest of France in the spring of 1940 drastically altered this attitude and the regime's policy. Germany's sudden ascendancy opened a new period of temptation combined with danger for both Spain and its government. The clear pro-German alignment that Franco now adopted nonetheless stopped short of immediate or outright belligerence. It also had implications for domestic politics, arguing for some the logic of a more strongly Falangist regime.

Thus by June 1940 most political and military opinion in Spain had swung sharply in the direction of Germany. The army was not at all prepared for a major war, but it was full of combat veterans and for the moment the mood of its officers was for the most part aggressive and pugnacious. As Ignacio Merino has written: "Its combat morale was still fresh. . . . The bodies of the veterans were still tense, while the very young were eager for military action. Going off to war was still a heroic gesture, macho and idealistic."[55]

Moreover, the goal of a new Spanish "empire" had always formed part of the Falangist program, even though it had usually been expressed in cautious and relatively nonaggressive, almost metaphysical, terms.[56] It was employed by Franco, by Falangists, by the military, and by other commentators in several different dimensions. The first dimension was the leadership of "Hispanidad"[57]—the restoration of a Spanish hegemony over the greater Spanish-speaking world that would be first of all cultural and religious, and politically might eventually aim at a kind of commonwealth or federation of Spanish-speaking states headed by Spain. Beyond that, there was the aspiration to reestablish Spain as a power in Europe, and even as a "world power,"[58] conceived in terms of its close association with the New Order in Europe, its leadership in Hispanidad, and its extended empire and influence in Africa and the Middle East, this last connection founded on a special relationship with Islamic countries. Beyond regaining Gibraltar from Britain, direct territorial expansion could probably take place in only northwest Africa, at the expense of France, and that would require the assistance of Germany and Italy. Only radical Falangists and a few other exceptionally ambitious imperialists spoke of reannexing Portugal. This was not a practical goal for the most immediate future, and would ultimately depend on a total victory of the New Order in Europe. The same might be said for any Pyrenean rectification with France, which was not for the moment an agenda item.[59]

Franco's new state proclaimed the mission of empire with vigor,[60] albeit in rather abstract formulae, and its social pronouncements during these years sometimes echoed the Italian Fascist emphasis on a high birth rate for future military manpower. After the fall of France, the attitude of most of the military hierarchy had changed in favor of getting into the war on the winning side, and Falangists became almost uniformly ardent in public expressions of Germanophilia.

Though radical Falangists had become increasingly oriented toward Nazi Germany even during the Civil War, from June 1940 might be dated the tendency of FET propaganda to endorse National Socialism in the most categorical terms. More and more it was to Berlin rather than to the original model of Rome that Falangists would look in the next several years,[61] and the fullest solidarity was pledged to the Axis.[62]

Franco was now firmly convinced of German victory and would remain so, though with diminishing conviction, until mid-1944. On 3 June 1940 he prepared the text of a letter to Hitler congratulating him on the incipient triumph over France and identifying Spain with the German cause, which he chose to define as a continuation of the struggle waged by the Nationalists in the Civil War. At the same time he detailed the economic and military weaknesses that made it difficult for Spain to enter the war at that time, and on the following day Beigbeder handed the German ambassador a list of Spanish claims in northwest Africa.[63]

On 9 June, the eve of Italy's attack on France, Mussolini urged Franco to join him, but the Caudillo, sensing the frustration that might attend Italian and Spanish participation as long as France and Britain were still resisting, politely declined in a cordial response.[64] Despite the German victories and the increasing Falangist orientation toward Nazism, the leaders of the Spanish regime continued to feel closer to Mussolini's government, which they regarded as their own representative within the Rome–Berlin Axis. Thus Ciano asked Serrano Súñer to convince Franco that even if Spain could not enter the war for the moment, it should demonstrate solidarity with the Axis by altering its position of neutrality to a declaration of nonbelligerence,[65] just as Italy had originally done after

the German invasion of Poland. Franco agreed immediately, and Madrid declared its new policy of nonbelligerence—with an obvious tilt toward the Axis—on 12 June.

Two days later, on 14 June, Spanish troops occupied the international zone of Tangier, though this was cautiously announced as simply a temporary wartime measure to guarantee the continued neutrality of the zone. The move was accepted by Britain (which officially reserved full rights for the future), while Franco prudently ignored the crowd of pro-expansionist Falangists who gathered outside the presidency building. The rhetorical Sánchez Mazas, now minister without portfolio, was persuaded by young radicals to give an impromptu speech insisting that Tangier should always remain Spanish, an action that earned him a severe dressing-down from Serrano.[66]

General Juan Vigón, head of the Supreme General Staff, was dispatched to Berlin to discuss possible terms of Spain's entry into the war, while on 19 June the ambassador formally presented Spain's territorial claims: incorporation of all Morocco, annexation of the entire Oran district of western Algeria, extension of the Spanish Sahara southward to the twentieth parallel, and the addition of the French Cameroons to Spanish Guinea. At this time, however, Hitler, convinced that Britain was already defeated, had no interest in Spain's shopping list, which could only complicate German relations with the rump but independent regime of Vichy France as the German forces prepared for the invasion of the Soviet Union.

Franco nonetheless had no real doubts concerning his new international orientation, and at the celebrations attending the Movement's anniversary on 18 July he declared that the struggle of the Nationalists in Spain had been "the first battle of the New Order" in Europe, adding that "we have made a pause in our struggle, but only a pause, because our task has not yet ended," and boasting that Spain "has two million warriors ready for battle in defense of our rights."[67]

From about the end of July, Hitler slowly developed more interest in securing Spain's entry into the conflict. This was partly due to his eagerness to consummate the defeat of Britain by strangling its position in the Mediterranean. Even more important—since he considered the latter little more than a detail—was to align Spain fully with the Third Reich, not merely to conquer Gibraltar but to provide Germany with new strategic bases in northwest Africa and the Atlantic. By this point Hitler was actively accelerating his planning, looking ahead to the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1941 and to later strategic world war against the United States.

Both Franco and Serrano Súñer were firmly convinced of eventual German victory and realized that Spain could profit from the coming New Order only if it entered the war in time. Yet they were also apprehensive about involving their weak and unprepared country in the conflict as long as Britain retained dominance at sea. Whereas Germany for the time being had become almost self-sufficient, the Spanish economy could be devastated by a British naval blockade. To survive for even a brief period, it would require concrete guarantees of major assistance from Germany. Moreover, if a new Spanish empire was to be carved out of French northwest Africa (concerning which contingency plans had been under way in the Spanish General Staff since June), new acquisitions would have to be firmly recognized and guaranteed by Germany from the beginning, when Spanish assistance still had value in Hitler's eyes. To wait until the final victory would be too late.

As German interest grew, Serrano, even though not foreign minister, was deputed to head a special delegation to Berlin that departed on 13 September. On arriving, he gave an interview to the Nazi party organ *Völkischer Beobachter* in which he stressed that the Spanish conflict had been a struggle against "the capitalism of the great democracies" similar to the *Kampf* of National Socialism,[68] employing, as he sometimes did, the rhetoric of the radical sector of the Falange. Between 15 and 25 September, Serrano engaged in several lengthy conversations with Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop and two shorter ones with Hitler. In a personal communication of the twenty-fourth, Franco stressed to Serrano: "We must guarantee the future with a pact and, though there is no doubt about our decision, we have to consider the specificities of the agreement and the obligations of both sides."[69] Serrano was meanwhile dismayed to find that Hitler wanted Spain to enter the war immediately while merely trusting in German good will to provide a certain amount of economic assistance and military supplies; moreover, he refused to make any territorial commitments on northwest Africa in advance. Ribbentrop was even more aggressive, asking for the cession to Germany of one of the Canary Islands as a naval base, together with one or more ports in any southward expansion of Spanish Morocco. On Franco's orders, this was rejected with barely concealed indignation, and any agreement on entering the war now began to be postponed behind a screen of Spanish economic, military, and territorial requests.[70]

Clearly the simultaneous and contradictory requirements of retaining Germany's good will, winning a place for Spain in the New Order, and avoiding premature entry into the war on hazardous terms created the most difficult and dangerous challenge faced by the Franco regime in its long history. To deal with it, Franco needed the most capable and reliable assistance possible, and therefore on 15 October, immediately after Ser-

rano's return, Franco appointed his brother-in-law foreign minister in place of the bohemian and somewhat unreliable Beigbeder. This was not a matter of replacing an Anglophile with a Germanophile, as was often said then and afterward. Serrano was no Germanophile in the strict sense but simply convinced, like most major figures in Madrid at that time, that Spain must come to terms with Germany in a way that would safeguard its interests. Beigbeder's work had become increasingly haphazard, for he tended to change his position according to his audience and had developed friendly relations with the British ambassador. Moreover, Beigbeder had a taste for "exotic" ladies, including, allegedly, a "Miss Fox" in the employ of the British Secret Service, and the Germans had become reluctant to deal with him.[71] Equally important was Franco's concern to have his most trusted collaborator in charge of foreign affairs during this crucial phase. Because he was president of the Junta Política and in some respects the key leader of the FET, and because of his entrance into the Foreign Ministry at the time when Spain's ties to Germany were closest, Serrano would often be called the "minister of the Axis," but this was never more than a half truth.

On 23 October there occurred the only personal encounter between Franco and Hitler, the famous meeting at Hendaye on the French border. Franco once more presented what had become the standard Spanish shopping list—territorial, economic, and military—and was evidently prepared to enter the war at that point if Hitler would promise Spain control of most of northwest Africa,[72] but Hitler refused all guarantees at that time. After enduring some seven hours of the polite, fawning, evasive, and loquacious conversation of the "Latin charlatan," as Hitler would soon term Franco, he later declared that he would prefer "having three or four teeth pulled" to going through such an experience again.[73]

Spain would never represent a high priority for Hitler. He sought Spanish entry into the war primarily to favor Germany's long-range geostrategic position, and also to help drive Britain to terms, but he was in no position to grant Franco's demands. About Spaniards themselves he was at best ambivalent. Though Hitler once remarked that Spaniards were "the only Latins willing to fight," he believed them inevitably compromised by their historical contacts with the Islamic world, and they could never rank high on his racial hierarchy.[74]

Up to this point Franco had apparently held the ingenuous conviction that Hitler was a great leader friendly to Spain, with any obstacles stemming from mediocre or ill-intentioned subordinates. Hitler and Ribbentrop now insisted on the signing of a secret protocol that would pledge Spanish war entry, though without fixing a specific deadline. Franco and Serrano quickly replaced the German draft with one of their own, and

Hitler and Franco at Hendaye, 23 October 1940

Franco signed this second document, which pledged Spain to join the Tripartite Pact (the alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan) at some undetermined date to be mutually agreed on in the future, made at least vague references to Spanish territorial aggrandizement in Africa, and promised Spain's entry into the war against Britain at some unspecified date to be determined after future assistance and consultation.[75]

Though Hitler left Hendaye believing that he had gained most of what he wanted, his propaganda minister Goebbels would write in his diary:

> The Führer's opinion of Spain and Franco is not high. A lot of noise, but very little action. No substance. In any case, quite unprepared for war. . . .
>
> Landesgruppenleiter Thomsen of the AO [Nazi Party abroad] in Spain reports on conditions there simply unbelievable. Franco and Suner [*sic*] are completely the prisoners of the clerical faction, totally unpopular, no attempt made to deal with social problems, enormous confusion, the Falange totally without influence. All areas of the economy in ruins, a lot of grandiose posturing, but nothing behind it. Germany is looked upon with awe as a wonderland.[76]

Though Franco was still interested in joining Germany, Hitler's refusal of serious guarantees meant that the Spanish government would henceforth show increasing resistance to German demands, even though for some time it would hope to win the terms that might yet reconcile all differences. Hitler peremptorily summoned Serrano Súñer to Berchtesgaden in mid-November to insist that a date be fixed for Spain's entry into the war. Before Serrano's departure, a formal meeting was held in Madrid with Franco and the military ministers. England's recent success in the Battle of Britain had diminished the military hierarchy's ardor for the war. At this time the only major interventionist sentiment was fostered by the two principal Falangist generals, Muñoz Grandes and Yagüe,[77] but neither any longer held a cabinet position.

At Berchtesgaden on 18 November, Serrano complained to the Führer about Germany's apparent lack of interest in implementing the article of the recent secret protocol that vaguely referred to Spain's colonial aims in northwest Africa. Hitler candidly replied that under present circumstances Spain's acquisition of these territories could not be formally guaranteed, for it might lead to disputes with other powers. Serrano then detailed the disastrous state of Spain's economic and military production, compounded by severe shortages of all kinds, which made it impossible to enter the war at that moment.[78]

When Serrano returned to Madrid four days later, the National Council of the FET was in full session, a majority of its members favoring entry into the war. This, however, had little effect on Franco's policy, demonstrating the extent to which his emasculation of the partido único served the purposes of his regime. Before the end of the month, he assured Berlin that Spanish preparations to enter the war were about to begin, but still no date was set. Similar sparring continued through December.

By this point economic privation in Spain was becoming extremely severe. The winter of 1940–41 may have seen the worst shortages of food and other necessities during the entire course of the World War, as extreme hunger became a problem for millions of Spaniards. It became clear to Franco that amid such disastrous conditions Spain could not presently plan to enter the conflict, even though the government might still wish to do so at some future date. From the beginning of 1941, dilatoriness would become a studied technique for the Generalissimo, who would henceforth systematically delay Spanish compliance.

German pressures were resumed during January and February. After three ultimatums at diverse levels during late January produced no result, Hitler continued with a long, harsh letter to Franco on 6 February, telling him in no uncertain terms that in "a war to the death" no "presents" would be given to Spain, and warning that should Germany ever lose, the Franco regime itself would have no chance of survival. By this point Franco's enthusiastic appraisal of Hitler seems to have moderated considerably, and he resisted these pressures with his customary evasive tactics, accompanied by requests for large amounts of German supplies, without which Spain could not fight.

Hitler then turned the Spanish problem over to Mussolini, who had just met disaster in his effort to invade Greece the preceding October. The only personal meeting between the Spanish and Italian dictators took place at Bordighera on 12 February, but Mussolini—himself ambivalent about Spanish ambitions in Africa—made little effort to pressure or deceive Franco. He admitted that the initiative for the meeting had come from Hitler and that prospects now were for a long war, while some in his own retinue could scarcely hide their growing demoralization.[79]

Henceforth the German government desisted from overt pressure to force Spanish entry into the war, primarily because Hitler's priorities lay elsewhere and he did not judge Spanish participation to merit a high price. The attitude toward Franco in the German regime was now universally negative (Franco in turn had even denied to German officials that their aid was decisive in winning the Civil War), though ire was especially directed against the "clerical," "reactionary," and "Jesuitical" Serrano Súñer.[80] As usual, Franco ceded on minor points, signing an agreement for

Serrano Súñer, Franco, and Mussolini at Bordighera, 12 February 1941

German–Spanish cooperation on propaganda in Latin America in March 1941 and again renewing the supply facilities for German submarines that several Spanish ports provided for much of the war.

Support for entering the war nonetheless dominated among active Falangists (whether of the new or old varieties) and a small minority of the military leaders. This sentiment increased with the next successes of the Blitzkrieg in Greece and Yugoslavia during April. The most notorious expression of Spanish expansionist sentiment was the publication in April of the book *Reivindicaciones de España* by José María de Areilza and Fernando María Castiella. Though not bellicose in tone, this volume declared that the Spanish conflict had been but the first phase of an extended world war, blamed Britain and France for originating the war, and defined publicly what the Spanish government wanted: Gibraltar, a protectorate over all Morocco, the Oran district of northwestern Algeria, and expansion in equatorial Africa at the expense of British Nigeria and French possessions. The book's clear and vigorous style, with its reasoned historical and geopolitical analysis and lack of shrillness, made it probably the most influential and successful piece of wartime propaganda among the more nationalist sectors of Spanish society.[81]

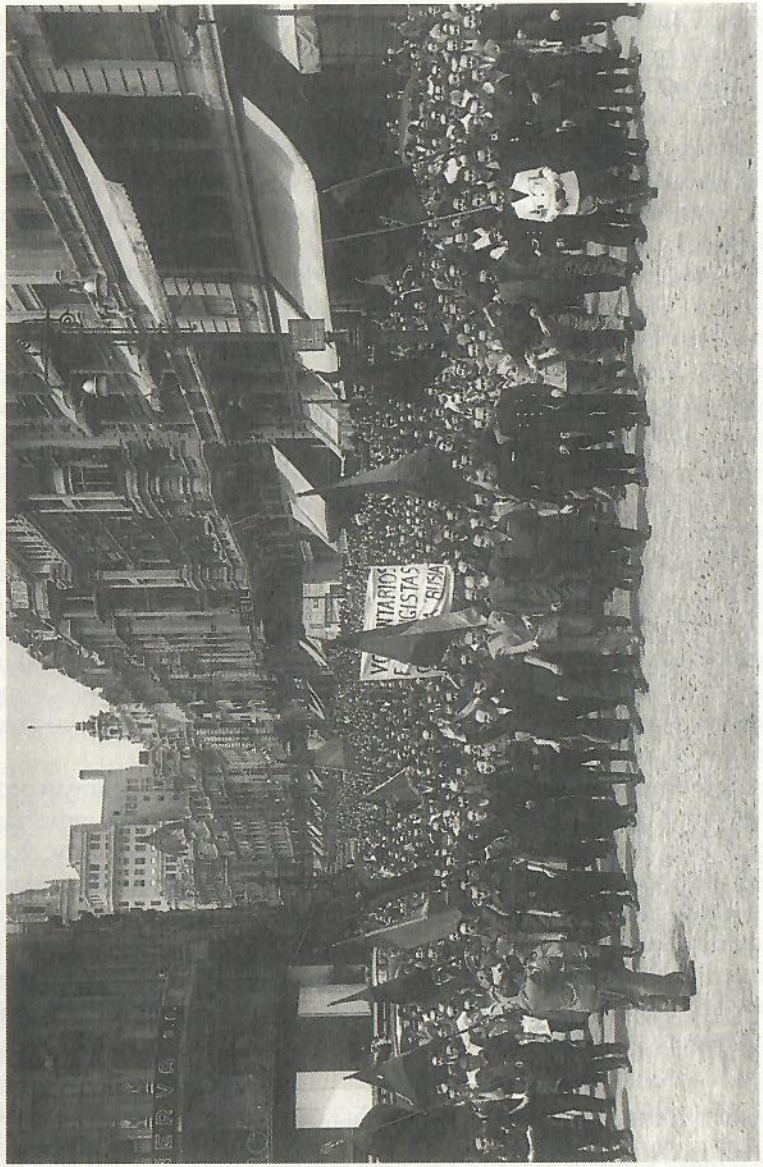
Within the peninsula, tensions momentarily rose. On 26 February *Arriba* had published a strong attack on the Portuguese government for being too moderate, semiliberal, and pro-British. Two months later, just as *Reivindicaciones* was being published, General Aranda informed the German ambassador that he had been ordered to draw up secret plans for a possible invasion of Portugal.[82] It seemed as though Franco, lacking greater possibilities, toyed with the notion of making Portugal his Albania or Greece. There is no indication that such ideas went very far, for Franco was aware that Spain probably could not conquer Portugal any more easily than Italy had been able to conquer Greece, but they indicated the true feelings of the Spanish leaders. On 17 April Franco made one of his most bellicose speeches to the Superior War College, declaring peace to be no more than "a preparation for war," and "war the normal condition of humanity,"[83] as ultra-fascist a pronouncement as Franco ever made.

The most humorous note during these grim months was provided by a personal phone call to Serrano from his Italian counterpart Ciano, delivered in the stilted Spanish the latter had learned as a diplomat in Buenos Aires. The Italian foreign minister demanded the immediate recall of the first secretary of the Spanish embassy in Rome, the Falangist writer and noted wit Agustín de Foxá, on charges of being a subversive and a spy. Foxá's mordant and sometimes ingenious sarcasm had found ripe targets in the pretensions, pomposity, and failures of Italian Fascism, which he liked to refer to in conversation as a "burlesque of the Nazis." Mussolini, hailed as "Fondatore [Founder] dell'Impero," was termed by Foxá "Affondatore [Founderer, or Sinker] dell'Impero." The Spanish government withdrew Foxá for his wicked tongue but soberly rejected the insinuation of espionage.[84]

Relations were still closer with Rome than with any other foreign capital, and late in the spring of 1941 the Italian government made a new effort to draw the Spanish regime more publicly to the side of the Axis. On 9 June Serrano received a personal letter from Ciano urging him to convince Franco that the time had come to announce Spain's adherence to the Tripartite Pact, as pledged in the secret protocol of the preceding autumn. Serrano seems to have agreed and had a very long talk with his brother-in-law, whom he declared not averse to the step, but Serrano warned the Italian ambassador that it would be tantamount to a declaration of war by Spain. In such an event, the Spanish leaders expected Britain to seize at least one of the Canaries and blockade Spain, so that a pledge of economic assistance would be needed first. Yet a meeting between Ciano and Ribbentrop on the fifteenth indicated that Germany had no interest at that point in offering even minor enticements to bring Spain into the war.[85]

Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union one week later provoked a contradictory response in Madrid. On the one hand, the attack on the Communist heartland aroused a strong emotional response, particularly from Falangists, but it also steeply raised the stakes for any prospective ally of Germany. Thus, at Serrano's suggestion, within forty-eight hours the government requested an opportunity for Spanish participation in some form short of official entry into the war. Before a huge crowd in front of Falangist headquarters on the twenty-fourth, Serrano delivered his famous "Russia Is Guilty" speech, invoking Soviet responsibility for the Spanish war with its attendant destruction and loss of life, and declaring that "the extermination of Russia is required by the history and for the future of Europe." The anti-Soviet struggle was declared an extension of the Spanish Crusade, and Spain "a moral belligerent" in the new conflict.

Since Franco had no intention of declaring war on the Soviet Union at that point, Serrano suggested the formation of a "Blue Division" of FET volunteers to fight beside the Germans on the Russian front. This found acceptance among Franco and other cabinet members, and registration of volunteers began on 28 June, the seventh day of the German invasion. Falangist enthusiasm was intense; among the volunteers were six members of the National Council and seven provincial governors, as well as some of the most militant younger leaders such as Dionisio Ridruejo and Enrique Sotomayor, the latter soon to be killed in battle. Army commanders were rather less enthusiastic, and insisted on maintaining military control. All officers of the Blue Division were drawn from the regular army, as were nearly 70 percent of the volunteers; civilian Falangists ultimately comprised less than a third of the total manpower. Command was given to Muñoz Grandes, one of the best organizers among the few Falangist



Falangist demonstration in Madrid to support the German invasion of the Soviet Union, 24 June 1941

generals. The first units of an initial force of 18,694 officers and men began to leave Spain on 17 July for further training in Germany, followed by a volunteer contingent of combat aviators who formed an "Escuadrilla Azul" (Blue Squadron). The Division later formed as Wehrmacht Division 250, fighting in German uniforms on the northern sector just below Leningrad. It entered into combat on 4 October, under overall German command but always technically subordinate to the Ministry of the Army in Madrid.[86]

The genuine enthusiasm in the ranks of the Nationalists in Spain was undeniable. The summer of 1941 marked the last major peak in wartime feeling on behalf of Germany. This led Franco to present the most outspokenly pro-German public speech that he ever delivered in his annual address to the National Council on 17 July. He denounced the "eternal enemies" of Spain, with clear allusions to Britain and France, who still engaged in "intrigues and betrayal" against it. "Nor can the American continent dream of intervening in Europe without exposing itself to a catastrophe," Franco insisted. "To say that, in this situation, the outcome of the war could be affected by the entry of a third country is criminal madness. . . . The war was wrongly conceived and the Allies have lost it." His concluding sentence hailed Germany for leading "the battle sought by Europe and Christianity for so many years, and in which the blood of our youth will be united with that of our comrades of the Axis, as a living expression of solidarity."[87] Even the Axis ambassadors commented on the imprudence of these remarks.[88]

In the following month an agreement was signed with Germany to provide 100,000 workers for the increasingly strained German industrial force, though none left Spain for months. In the long run, fewer than 15,000 were sent, compared with approximately 10,000 Spanish workers who labored daily for the British in Gibraltar throughout the war. For that matter, Spanish consulates in France managed to recruit 40,000 unemployed Republican émigrés for German jobs,[89] whom Hitler later dreamed of converting into pro-German revolutionaries to overthrow the reactionary "Latin charlatan" Franco.[90]

FALANGE EXTERIOR IN LATIN AMERICA

The Falange's Servicio Exterior had been created before the Civil War but began to develop, like the party itself, only after the war began. Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval, a member of the party and of the Spanish diplomatic corps since 1933, had been named national delegate of the Servicio Exterior by Hedilla in January 1937. Though there was significant membership in such regions as Spanish Morocco[91] and the Philippines,[92] as well as very modest memberships in a number of European countries,[93] the most important goal was to expand both the party and support for the Nationalists among the Spanish residents and pro-Spanish citizens of Latin America. According to Rosa Pardo Sanz:

> The first sections were created in Chile, Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and Uruguay. Their beginnings were hesitant, with great autonomy vis-á-vis the peninsula and grave leadership problems. Their inexpert chiefs, who became involved in various scandals of corruption and of abuse of authority, recruited individuals of doubtful moral and ideological reputation and damaged the image of the nascent organization.[94]

After the unification, another professional diplomat, José del Castaño Cardona, was named national delegate and given broad responsibility to organize support among pro-Nacionalist elements in Latin America. The FET apparatus was expanded, with an effort to create accompanying Technical Services, particularly Latin American sections of Social Welfare, to generate money and other support. A wide range of conflicts developed between divergent elements within the FET, and there was friction with regular Spanish diplomats, who found the Falangists overweening and sometimes excessively radical. By the end of the Civil War, the Servicio Exterior had created sections in most Latin American countries and was given orders to develop the full structure of the FET organization in the western hemisphere, including syndicates and excluding only militias. The largest FET membership, approximately a thousand affiliates, was in Uruguay, whereas the combined membership in all the rest of Latin America was only about four thousand. Nonetheless, the name inspired admirers, leading to the formation of such separate Latin American parties as "Falange Nacional Chilena," "Falange Boliviana," and "Falange Socialista Boliviana."

As foreign minister, Gómez Jordana had theoretically been in a position to supervise and control the Servicio Exterior, since the national delegate was a diplomat under his command. The general did not favor any extended role for the party abroad, and political pressure in Latin America began to build with the first expulsions of members of Falange Exterior by hostile governments in Cuba and Mexico in April 1939. As a result, during the next three months all the regular offices of the Servicio Exterior in Latin America were closed, though a series of cover organizations were formed in those countries in which the FET was active, and the appointments of jefes for various countries continued officially until March 1940.

After Serrano Súñer took over the foreign ministry in October, Spanish

policy became more ambitious. Serrano planned to use the Servicio Exterior as a major tool and made Ximénez de Sandoval national delegate once more. The budgets of both the Foreign Ministry and the Servicio Exterior increased, and a limited number of Falangists were brought into the diplomatic corps, much like the *ventottisti* in Italy in 1928. Activities abroad took on a more pronouncedly fascist tone, and in May 1941 Ximénez de Sandoval was made chief of Serrano's diplomatic cabinet. This coincided with the last Falangist offensive in Latin America, which had begun in April and by July resulted in the announcement of a plan to send "Missionaries of the Falange" to every Latin American country.

But the impoverished Spanish state totally lacked funding for a major cultural and political offensive, while opposition mounted rapidly from hostile liberals and leftists in Latin America and even more from the only great power in the western hemisphere. The artificiality of these pretensions was underscored by one of Serrano's press officials, Ramón Garriga, who claims that in July 1941:

> I told Serrano that the Germans did not understand why we talked so much about Empire when it turned out that Spain could not send a single typewriter or radio set to Buenos Aires or Mexico, but that today it was the Argentines or the Mexicans who could teach the Spaniards how to build a bridge or a highway rapidly and well.
>
> "We really have exaggerated too much, and I will give orders not to be so ridiculous," he replied, making an entry in his notebook.[95]

August 1941 would prove to be the point of inflexion. In the face of a concerted counterattack by North American diplomacy and pressure in every country where there had been any significant Falangist organization, all plans for expansion had to be abandoned even before Pearl Harbor. Apparently, no "Missionaries of the Falange" were ever sent.

There was nonetheless more concern about "Spanish fascism" in Latin America in 1942 than in 1941, due to a mounting hysteria in Washington[96] that was ably fomented by British intelligence and deliberate disinformation.[97] Nonetheless, the truth of the matter was that the problem had receded even before the United States entered the war.

TENSIONS WITHIN THE FET AND THE SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION

During the first phases of World War II, the FET was involved in a series of sharp tensions and struggles that were not resolved until September 1942. This was in retrospect almost inevitable, given the prominent role of the Falange, the wide disparity between the political criteria of Franco and other sectors of the regime compared with those of Falangist radicals, and the encouragement given the latter by the German military victories.

Though the extremist sector of the party had criticized the governmental realignment of August 1939 for not giving more power to the Falange,[98] it had further increased the influence of Serrano Súñer, making him president of the Junta Política and naming two of his supporters (Gamero del Castillo and Sánchez Mazas) to the new cabinet. There seems to have been some notion on the part of Serrano and his closest colleagues that in the new alignment he would be responsible for new political ideas and initiatives, and that Franco, as victorious Caudillo, might wish to leave his laurels untarnished by ordinary politics and would therefore relinquish much of the political administration—though this was to underestimate Franco's insistence on personal control. The appointment of Muñoz Grandes as secretary general to some extent limited Serrano's power, but Serrano expected to take personal charge of policy and ideology, leaving Muñoz Grandes to deal only with the technical details of FET organization. As vice secretary, moreover, Gamero provided a certain check on Muñoz Grandes. Fernández Cuesta was shunted aside as ambassador to Brazil, but he would later be given the much more important post in Rome.

Muñoz Grandes abruptly resigned in March 1940, after only seven months in his post. Though known to possess skill in military organization and command, he had little political talent and limited personal authority in the new position, and found it almost impossible to deal with the sprawling, amorphous, and internally disharmonious structure of the FET. He found his relationship with Franco equally unsatisfactory, complaining that whenever he raised serious issues of abuse and corruption or party reorganization, the Caudillo simply diverted the conversation into his customary patter of small talk, evading all major issues.[99] For the time being, the FET was left under the administration of twenty-seven-year-old Vice Secretary General Gamero del Castillo, a basically conservative young man of sense and discretion whom Serrano trusted and who lacked the prestige, independence, or radical ambition to create a separate power base. Though nominal membership continued to increase, the FET organizational system would languish for the following year.

Its principal rival was the military. Though most army officers at least to some extent shared the Falangists' Germanophile attitude toward the European war, nearly all resented the bureaucratic quasi-monopoly of the FET, its ideological radicalism, and the elitist presumption of Falangist militants. Few took their ex officio membership in the FET very seriously, and almost all were gratified by the decree of 2 July 1940 that reconstituted the militia strictly under military command. The jefe nacional was the

monarchist General Staff officer Col. Valentín Galarza, Franco's secretary of the presidency and essentially anti-Falangist. The militia comprised four distinct sections,[100] to which was added on 23 February a fifth section, the University Militia, charged with the task of maintaining patriotic order within the universities.[101] There would be no rivalry with a "Spanish SA" similar to that which had developed in Germany during 1933 and 1934: the Falangist militia was even more strictly subordinated to the military and given even less of a direct paramilitary role than the MVSN (Fascist militia) in Italy.[102]

Throughout the years of World War II, the most politically active figure in the military hierarchy was Gen. Antonio Aranda, who was overtly anti-Falangist, even though he occasionally tried to pretend otherwise. He had intervened several times as captain general of Valencia to moderate the repression there, and rumors had even circulated that he had two Falangists executed for trying to drag Republican prisoners from military jails to be killed privately,[103] though this seems unlikely. Aranda hoped to replace Gen. Juan Vigón as head of the new Supreme General Staff, a post for which he was qualified, but by 1940 Franco had begun to doubt his loyalty and made him instead director of the Superior War College, a less prestigious position that also deprived him of command of troops. Franco's suspicion was more than justified; British documents reveal that he was the centerpiece of the bribery operation in which no less than thirteen million dollars was paid out to a sizable number of Spanish generals through the Swiss Bank Corporation in New York in return for their efforts to maintain Spanish neutrality. Aranda himself seems to have netted at least two million of that.[104]

While Aranda and many others schemed pro and con, Serrano Súñer tried to work toward the juridical institutionalization of Franco's highly arbitrary regime. Under Serrano's leadership, in the summer of 1940 the Junta Política of the FET had begun to draft a set of constitutive laws to regularize the structure of government without particularly reducing the Caudillo's personal powers. The text of this Law of the Organization of the State was composed of five sections, dealing with the state, the powers of the Chief of State, a proposed new corporative Cortes, the Junta Política itself, and the scope of a new national economic council. Article 1, echoing the original Falangist program, declared the state to be "a totalitarian instrument at the service of the integrity of the Patria. All its power and all its institutions are devoted to this service, and are subject to law and to the political and moral principles of the National Movement." Twenty of the draft's thirty-seven articles were devoted to defining the scope and structure of a proposed new corporative Cortes, which was to be rather like that of Fascist Italy. The most controversial aspect was article 28, which declared: "The Junta Política is the supreme political council of the regime and the means of liaison between the state and the Movement." Article 31 went on to stipulate: "The Junta Política must be fully heard in matters which affect the constitution of power and the fundamental laws of the state, international political treaties and concordats, and the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace. The competence of the Junta Política includes those matters indicated by the Statutes of the Movement."[105]

This alarmed non- and anti-Falangists because it threatened to give the upper echelon of the party a constitutive place within the highest structure of state power, and it elicited a formal letter of protest from Esteban Bilbao, one of the few significant representatives of Carlism within the regime, against the "systematic interference of the party" in the organism of the state.[106] Franco evidently agreed and ordered the project shelved.

Less easily short-circuited was the secret conspiracy against Franco that had begun to gestate among a small core of camisas viejas. The aftermath of the Civil War had made it clear that the new regime was not so much a revolutionary fascist state as a rightist authoritarian system flavored with fascist rhetoric. In these circumstances one German diplomat replied to the question, "How do you find the new Spain?" by saying, "When I find it, I shall tell you."[107] A number of the most radical young camisas viejas refused to accept this, and determined to take action.

Quite aside from the shadowy and perhaps nonexistent "FEA," several attempts had been made to create clandestine Falangist opposition groups. During 1937 and 1938, Patricio González de Canales, a militant young camisa vieja from Seville who held posts in Falangist publications (and later in state commercial administration), had sought unsuccessfully to build a small network of a crypto-"Falange Autónoma." In 1939 the camisas viejas Narciso Perales, Tito Meléndez, and Eduardo Ezquer (a former provincial chief in Badojoz who had been expelled from the FET in November 1937) had been arrested on charges of trying to form their own "Falange Auténtica," though only Ezquer—an inveterate intriguer and conspirator—would remain in jail long.[108]

At the close of 1939, a small group met at the home of Col. Emilio Rodríguez Tarduchy, a veteran of Primo de Rivera's UP, the UME of 1933, and the original Falange. A clandestine junta política was formed, with Tarduchy as president and González de Canales, whose position in the FET enabled him to travel freely, as secretary. Seven or eight other camisas viejas, representing various other small sectors of party veterans in diverse parts of the country, formed the rest of the junta's fluctuating membership.[109] Their most coveted ally would have been General Juan Yagüe, who was close to José Antonio Girón and other elements of the Falangist

Excombatientes organization but refused to move directly against Franco, insisting that the Falange must change the regime from within. Though the conspirators later claimed to have gained the support of several thousand Falangists in various parts of Spain, most of this support was doubtless quite tenuous, and they completely lacked influence among key power holders.[110]

The clandestine junta then turned to outside support and especially to Hans Thomsen, Landesgruppenleiter for the Nazi organization among German residents in Spain. Thomsen, however, would or could offer German support only on terms that would have reduced a new Spanish government to the status of a satellite, while the conspirators were further discouraged by rumors that a clique of rightist dissidents was also intriguing for German assistance. The German government is said to have refused aid unless the Falangists would agree to place themselves under the direct orders of the Führer.[111]

Franco meanwhile was aware of Yagüe's personal contacts with the German embassy and his sometimes public criticism of cabinet ministers and anti-Falangists. His insistence on a greatly increased air force budget was a source of conflict within the government, while political foes complained that he was an inveterate intriguer who sheltered Masons and former Republicans within the air force officer corps. The results of an earlier investigation of Yagüe's conduct had been delivered to the Generalissimo on 8 February 1940, but Franco apparently found them inconclusive. On 15 March the air force minister sent him a note complaining that the military juridical commissions had been much less lenient in reducing sentences of former Republican officers in his branch of service than in the army and navy, but this lament only renewed suspicion that Yagüe was politically soft on Reds. What finally brought matters to a head was the new situation suddenly created by Hitler's triumph in the west in June 1940. This caused Franco to take much more seriously the rumors of German intrigue to provoke a change in his regime. When the military governor of San Sebastián invited the new German occupation authorities across the Spanish border to a reception at which he shouted, "Viva Hitler," Franco quickly had him replaced. Yagüe was called in for a final dressing down by Franco in the presence of Army Minister Varela on 27 June, in the course of which Yagüe was summarily dismissed as minister.[112]

The Falangist plotters nonetheless continued their meandering course. After toying with and rejecting the notion of assassinating Serrano Súñer, they finally faced up to their only direct alternative—the assassination of Franco himself. At a final meeting in Madrid near the end of March 1941, they concluded that there was no one with whom to replace him and that

Falangism lacked the strength to continue without him. Among the five conspirators, the vote was four to nothing, with one abstention, against attempting assassination.[113] The conspirators attributed their failure to gain more support to Vice Secretary Gamero del Castillo's success in attracting Falangists to bureaucratic positions within the regime.

The most important development within the Falangist sphere in the immediate postwar period was the elaboration of the national syndical system. In an effort to remain faithful to the original Falangist program of organizing the entire economy into a "gigantic syndicate of producers," the text of a proposed "Law of the Bases of National Syndicalist Organization" was prepared in the spring of 1939 by a special interministerial commission composed of the ministers and undersecretaries from the three ministries of Syndical Action and Organization, Industry, and Agriculture. The result was a rather radical document declaring that the economy of Spain would be "subordinated to the imperative of social justice that our revolution demands" and would reflect "the new moral style."[114] It was therefore "up to the party, as its genuine and primordial mission, to transfuse the National Syndicalist Organization with the emotion of its spirit and the intransigent dynamism of its youthful vigor." After this opening barrage of typically fascist rhetoric, the proposed law declared that the Organization would assume "with an exclusive character the representation of the various economic activities before the state," eliminating such intermediaries as chambers of commerce and professional bodies. Similarly, anyone lacking the Organization's "labor card" would be barred from employment.

The Organization was to be headed by a national director and an appointive national syndical council, with sweeping powers to impose economic sanctions. There were to be directors for each large "economic zone" of Spain and for each province, while on the local level there would be syndical juntas, syndical commissions, and commissions of juries, all their personnel appointed from above.[115]

This draft was sharply criticized by a report of the National Council of the FET for such fundamental defects as devoting nearly half its great length to vague rhetoric, leaving the impression that membership might be voluntary, making the syndicates organs of the party rather than of the state, appearing merely to incorporate existing economic institutions, and failing to define fully the "vertical" characteristics of the vaunted "vertical syndicate."[116]

The proposal was again strongly attacked when presented to the Council of Ministers on 2 June 1939. Juan Antonio Suanzes, then minister of industry and commerce, a naval officer, and boyhood friend of Franco, denounced it as "something absurd, crazy and confusing for the economic

order, full of demagogic verbiage." Most ministers agreed, and Franco passed it on to the National Council for revision. There it met a further hail of criticism, even from some camisas viejas; in view of the general disapprobation, apparently not a single camisa vieja voted in favor of the text.[117] It became clear that the days in office of González Bueno, the first syndical minister, were numbered. Even Franco seems to have been taken aback by the extent of the criticism, and though the Council then helped to prepare a more moderate new law, Franco never again referred major matters to it for discussion.

The eventual Law of Syndical Unity, announced on 26 January 1940, lacked most of the original revolutionary rhetoric. It reaffirmed the principles of unity and hierarchy, subordinating the Syndical Organization to the state rather than to the party. Chambers of commerce and professional colleges were permitted to survive, though all private economic organizations would be subordinated to the new system.

In the government of 1939, the functions of the still nonexistent Ministry of Labor were attached to those of the Ministry of Agriculture, held by the right-wing engineer and neo-Falangist Joaquín Benjumea Burín. (This further indicated the limited importance attached to the latter ministry.) Gerardo Salvador Merino was named national delegate of syndicates of the FET, and was charged with the creation of the new syndical system. Since the new press and censorship powers that had been established in February 1938 were exercised through the Ministry of the Interior, Salvador Merino thus became the only high official of the party who was given a major administrative function in Franco's system without becoming a government minister. Conversely, separation of the Ministry of Labor from the syndical system would remain fundamental to Franco's mode of *divide et impera,* and would continue for many years.

Salvador Merino had come to the Falange from the Socialist Party[118] and had served as FET provincial chief of La Coruña during part of the Civil War, winning a reputation for worker organization and radical rhetoric. This, in fact, had originally cost him his post as provincial chief, but he was known for intelligence and organizational ability. He was, as it turned out, highly ambitious and by 1939–1940 an ardent Naziphile whose goal was to build a powerful and relatively autonomous syndical system as the decisive element in the new regime.[119] This aim was similar to that of Edmondo Rossoni for the Italian Fascist syndicates during the 1920s[120] and ultimately proved no more successful.

During his first year, Salvador Merino built a structure of three Sections and nine Services under the Syndical Organization. Though the syndicates were declared to be "vertical," employers and workers were organized in separate sections, which in practice was not very different from the system in Fascist Italy, and, as in Italy, the employers would enjoy greater autonomy, even though that autonomy was circumscribed during the first years of the system. Structure was hierarchical,[121] all appointments being made from the top down. Moreover, local worker sections were subdivided according to each major branch of industry in every district, fragmenting the worker network on the local level. While FET leaders often engaged in radical anticapitalist rhetoric, conservative Falangists and other government spokesmen were sometimes more frank in declaring that the state and the employers rather than the workers dominated the system.[122] Moreover, ultimate authority for national economic regulation lay primarily in the hands of central government ministries and agencies—just as in Italy at that time—not in those of the syndicates.

Salvador Merino nonetheless continued with his ambitious plans, drawing an increasing amount of attention to himself. On the Day of Victory, 31 March 1940, first anniversary of the end of the Civil War, he arranged for a large number of workers to participate in the gigantic Madrid parade, drawing the ire of right-wingers, especially in the military. Later, in a speech of 8 July, he warned:

> We have a strictly authoritarian and directive concept of our responsibility, and by the force of authority we shall either succeed in imposing our doctrines or the Revolution will be lost; and we add that if the National Syndicalist Revolution is lost the greatest loss will be of those who feared our demagogy and who failed to develop faith in our doctrines. . . . Only a period of weeks or at most of months is left to make them understand that through the complete achievements of the syndicalist conscience must be developed a new political concept of the Patria and of the duties of citizens with regard to it.[123]

At that point in mid-1940 he began the formation of a national Labor Service that could begin to provide employment for some of the masses of unemployed. He also began to create special elite worker "centurias of labor" to participate in and to discipline labor parades and other activities. Each centuria would be composed of 120 men, three units forming a "bandera" and three Banderas a "tercio." The new centurias played a major role in the massive labor participation in the huge public celebration of 18 July 1940 in Madrid, fourth anniversary of the beginning of the Movimiento Nacional. To the military and to the right, this looked suspiciously like the rebirth of a sort of workers' militia, all the more since Salvador Merino's speech that day referred to "the eternal enemies . . . on the left and on the right."[124]

Salvador Merino convened the First Syndical Congress in Madrid from 11 to 19 November, which was followed by the Law for the Constitution

of Syndicates, promulgated on 6 December 1940. This defined syndical organization in fuller detail, replete with the standard rhetoric, in this case declaring the sindicatos "ordered in militia, under the command of FET de las JONS,"[125] which tended somewhat to confuse the terms of the earlier Law of Syndical Unity. Membership was obligatory for employers in the organs of economic control, but individual membership for workers theoretically was not.

In reality, the pace of organization was rather slow. Full national syndicates were declared to have been organized in ten sectors of the economy—the most important being textiles and metallurgy—by the close of 1940, yet the number of workers organized totaled only about 110,000 in Madrid, possibly 300,000 in Barcelona province, and approximately 197,000 in Asturias. A National Agrarian Council was set up for agriculture in June 1941, as the system slowly absorbed the functions of CONCA, the Catholic small farmer syndicate.[126]

It was the pomp and publicity attending Salvador Merino's activities, together with his evident ambition, that aroused the apprehensions of rightists and rivals in other branches of the state, particularly military leaders who considered him a dangerous fascist demagogue and subversive, a kind of crypto-Red. Merino sought to create strong syndical provincial delegations in each province and to begin a sizable series of new "social works" for workers, but in fact his more ambitious projects were usually blocked by other departments of government. Serrano eventually recognized that Salvador Merino might become unviable politically, and even suggested to him that he might be moved into the cabinet as the first real minister of labor. Since that would have required giving up control of Sindicatos, Merino refused. When asked what other position he would accept, he replied that he would only be willing to take the currently vacant post of secretary general of the FET, and then only if it was combined with the Ministry of the Interior. Serrano Súñer replied that Merino was hopelessly ambitious,[127] which was indeed the case.

Like the FET's vice secretary, Gamero del Castillo, Salvador Merino maintained extensive contacts with Nazi groups in Germany for information concerning their structure and organization. In defiance of the regular party procedures, these contacts were usually made directly, without going through the Servicio Exterior.[128] Thomsen, the Nazi leader in Madrid, thus made arrangements for a special trip to Germany in which Salvador Merino could inspect the German Labor Front (DAF), meet with selected officials, and discuss possible arrangements to provide Spanish workers for German industry.

At this point the German embassy in Madrid constituted the largest German diplomatic delegation anywhere in the world, its personnel totaling approximately five hundred, not including many others in various large German consulates. The Sicherheitsdienst (SD) of the Nazi SS also maintained two different intelligence networks of its own in Spain, relying especially but by no means exclusively on Falangists. One SD report at the beginning of 1941 declared that "at the present time, three general lines, and about 20 to 30 different groups, coexist within the Spanish Unified Party, all of which openly call themselves followers of their own particular political ideas."[129]

This was something of an exaggeration, but certainly at that time Salvador Merino occupied the strongest radical position, even more pro-Nazi than the bulk of the FET. On 7 May 1941 he met with Goebbels in Berlin. Even though Thomsen would later claim that this had been set up so that Merino could elicit German support for pressuring Franco, eliminating Serrano, and raising the Falangist radicals to power in order to bring Spain into the war,[130] there is no corroboration of this in surviving records. In his diary, Goebbels merely referred to Merino as "a clever and likable man, one of the few Spaniards that I have any time for."[131] The primary outcome of this trip was the initial signing of an agreement between the Syndical Organization and the DAF to recruit Spanish workers for labor in Germany.

In fact, the trip coincided with the outbreak of the first high-level political crisis in Madrid since the end of the Civil War, a crisis that in certain respects was the most difficult Franco would ever have to face. At its root lay the growing restiveness of many of the camisas viejas and Falangist radicals who had cooperated with Serrano Súñer in the FET. On the one hand they complained that Serrano had failed to give the Falange authentic leadership, and that Franco had failed to live up to his adoption of the Twenty-Six Points; on the other they claimed that Serrano had appointed too many of his former CEDA colleagues to positions in the FET and the state administration. Under Vice Secretary General Gamero del Castillo, the party leadership had often seemed restricted to the narrow internal issues of the FET bureaucracy, itself poorly developed. Gamero himself had lamented in *Arriba* on 19 January 1941:

> Our finest colleagues and many others in Spain are daily asking a basic question: the question about the relationships between the present problems of Spain and the possibilities of the party. For the truth is that the Falange neither rules a State of its own—which has not yet been built—nor combats an opposing state, which has been destroyed.

> At the present time the Falange has been called upon to perform a dangerous service of partial eclipse. It has to work in the most difficult circumstances, weakened by a deep substratum of political heterogeneity that at times reduces the visible result to zero.

A few days before the close of 1940, Ridruejo had told an SD agent that a big political change was about to take place, and in January Gamero himself informed Hans Lazar, press attaché in the German embassy, that Falangists were insisting that "an activist, homogeneous Serrano Súñer government should be formed as soon as possible," asking that Berlin indicate to Franco that it wished for Serrano to assume greater power.[132]

Falangist ambitions were further fueled by developments in Romania, which of all countries had a government structure most similar to that of Spain. Since September 1940 power had been shared by the military dictator, Marshal Ion Antonescu, and the Iron Guard, Romania's fascist movement, though the autonomy of the latter was considerably greater than that of the FET in Spain. The Iron Guard, demanding full power, rose in revolt against Antonescu in late January 1941 and was soon crushed. A Falangist demonstration in Madrid in support of the Iron Guard was quickly prohibited by Spanish authorities.[133]

At this point certain Falangist leaders attempted to hand Serrano Súñer a sort of ultimatum, demanding that he actively assume the real leadership of the FET and lead it to victory within the Spanish system or cast off pretenses and admit that he was no more than a rightist reactionary. Their goal was to limit Franco to the role of Chief of State, with Serrano to hold the posts of president of the government and minister of foreign affairs. Other Falangists would be given the ministries of the Interior and of National Education, while Agriculture and Industry and Commerce would be combined into a national syndical superministry of Economics, to create an economic dictatorship. They also demanded that Serrano dismiss various rightists and neo-Falangist moderates from key posts around him. Otherwise they threatened massive resignations by camisas viejas and even a campaign of sabotage against the regime.[134]

Serrano of course realized that there was no way he could meet all these demands. Franco had no intention whatsoever of allowing anyone else to direct the government, and Serrano therefore sought a compromise that would increase his influence as de facto leader of the FET and of the party within the system.

Apart from Franco himself, the most serious obstacle to the Falangists' ambitions was the military. German intelligence reported that in mid-January three generals (the hyperactive Aranda and the more conservative

García Escámez and García Valiño) had protested to Franco about the corruption and maladministration that persisted amid acute economic shortages—corruption and maladministration that they insisted were most serious in the FET itself. They were said to have urged Franco to work toward a monarchist restoration.[135]

The major monarchists in the military hierarchy at this time were José Enrique Varela, who was minister of the army, and Alfredo Kindelán. Though Varela was married to a Carlist and was a nominal Carlist himself, he tended to agree with Kindelán that the restoration of the main branch of the dynasty was the most feasible alternative, combined with neutrality in the war and even greater cooperation with Great Britain.[136]

Conversely, from mid-1940 to mid-1941 the Spanish royal family and its closest advisers assumed, not unnaturally, that it would be necessary in some fashion to come to terms with a hegemonic Nazi Germany in order to guarantee a rapid restoration in Spain. For a decade the royal family had supported the doctrine of "instauración" of a more authoritarian, neotraditionalist monarchy that might unify both branches of the dynasty behind Don Alfonso and his heir, Don Juan. In the first months of 1941, monarchist leaders believed it necessary to press for a restoration as soon as possible, for if Germany should win the war, such an outcome would be likely to reconfirm Franco's semifascist caudillaje. Thus immediate steps toward restoration must be taken at least to some degree "in agreement with the Wilhelmstrasse." One monarchist document declared that "our policy must be very cautious in the international field, but given his [the Pretender's] place of residence [Rome] and the geographic situation of the German army, we must endeavor confidentially, to the degree that we can, to win from the diplomacy of the Axis a sympathetic attitude." Though the goal must be continued Spanish neutrality, it was important that the restoration "in no way appear to be part of a political maneuver against the Reich."[137]

Thus between January and April someone who presented himself as a representative of the new Pretender, Don Juan, held brief conversations with a representative of the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin, seeking German support for a monarchist restoration in Madrid that could avoid a potential military coup against Franco and the breakdown of the government.[138] As Tusell observes, "The contacts made with Germany were indirect, superficial, and of scant duration, and, moreover, enjoyed a very cold reception."[139] One effort at contact by means of a German journalist in Rome was communicated by the German authorities to Serrano Súñer,[140] while the Italian leaders in Rome correctly perceived the royal family as basically more Anglophile than pro-Axis.[141]

Meanwhile the gadfly Aranda met with the Nazi leader Thomsen and

the key German businessman and diplomatic contact Johannes Bernhardt in Madrid on 20 April to propose a different scenario that he hoped might be more appealing to the Germans: German acceptance of a proposed Spanish military coup that would eliminate Serrano Súñer and reduce Franco's authority but still permit the FET to function, albeit with reduced influence.[142]

Though it was typical of Aranda to claim more influence than he actually possessed, the criticism of domestic policy among the military was sharper than ever. Military leaders generally agreed with Franco's increasing reluctance to enter the war, but they disagreed strongly with other aspects of state affairs. Criticism was fueled by increasingly severe shortages (the rationing of bread had been introduced in January 1941), the rapid growth of corruption, and the frequent inefficiency of the new state system, with its clumsy bureaucratic controls. Ever more intense hostility was focused on the pretensions of Falangists, and more concretely on Serrano Súñer, who was detested by the military and many others not simply because of his power but also because of the manner in which he exercised it. Serrano never wore his authority lightly; he became increasingly intemperate in speech and manner, arrogant and overweening, the object of constant attention in the official media. His pro-Axis statements, particularly those made to his favorite interlocutors of the Italian Fascist press, were more frequent and extreme than those of Franco. Army officers and anti-Falangists resented his pride, power, and quasi-leadership of Falangism; monarchists held him partly responsible for the regime's failure to recognize the monarchy; and malcontents and critics of diverse stripe detested him simply because he was the "cuñadísimo"—so that German intelligence could describe him in Berlin as "the most hated man in Spain."[143]

Franco and Serrano largely agreed on foreign policy, but Serrano backed a more coherent and integrated, and to that extent a more fully fascist, political system than Franco was willing to permit. The Generalissimo's extreme personalism, suspicion, relative caution, and refusal to commit himself to a systematic, juridically defined system—fascist or otherwise—all caused Serrano increasing frustration. He was also aware of the intense hostility, rumors, and gossip of which he was the object, and believed—not incorrectly—that he was the target of so much criticism because in large measure he served as a kind of scapegoat for Franco. Serrano's public arrogance partly masked the fact that he found his position increasingly uncomfortable.

Falangists finally seized the initiative at the close of April, when Gamero del Castillo abruptly threatened to resign his vice secretarial position within the party. On 1 May both Pilar and Miguel Primo de Rivera sent letters to Franco threatening their own resignations. Pilar's missive stated: "I in conscience cannot continue collaborating in this thing that we are making people believe is the Falange but which in reality is not it. . . . The Falange . . . for some time has been no more than a languid disorganization in which the only thing that remains upright is the Sección Femenina."[144]

The communication from Miguel Primo de Rivera was yet more explicit:

> My respected General: For some time we have clearly felt discontent, expressed to you on repeated occasions, and reiterated to the president of the Junta Política and to whatever superiors we have had, that the politics of Spain differ notably from the thought of the person who inspired all the men of the Falange to ardent service.
>
> . . . Though it is true that the complete fulfillment of the doctrine of José Antonio would be hard to carry out in the present circumstances, heavily burdened within and dangerous without, it is also true that the instrument created to make that doctrine effective some day, that is, the Party Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las J. O. N. S., absolutely lacks the means and minimal possibilities of carrying out its difficult mission.
>
> The National Council, proclaimed by Your Excellency to be the fundamental leadership organ of the Party, so completely lacks any authentic mission that it has only met once since its constitution more than a year and a half ago, and that was only to listen passively to the reading of the Syndical Law and that of the Frente de Juventudes.
>
> The Junta Política, the council that supposedly inspires the politics of the New State, is a disgraceful parody of what such an organism ought to be in the practice of a strong and renovative policy.
>
> The Militia of the Party . . . only exists in a law without articulation, so that in all our territory there are scarcely one hundred Spaniards who know what the Militia of the Party is, or who commands it directly.
>
> The Frente de Juventudes, proclaimed five months ago and called by Your Excellency the priority work of the regime, is without command, since no one has been named to that position, and makes of our hopeful youth . . . a large, perplexed body of lads who, if this continues, will one day come to doubt that our Crusade was anything more than a slaughter among Spaniards.
>
> . . . The reason for all the aforesaid is that, and very especially since General Muñoz Grandes left as Secretary General, the Party lacks direct leadership, a lack of leadership very keenly felt by the National Delegations, the provincial commands, and all those Services which ought to function under direct, clear, and constant leadership.

Nonetheless, the Primo de Rivera siblings expressed their "loyalty" to Franco, concluding in each case that they remained "at his orders."[145]

On the following day, Serrano delivered an unusually aggressive speech at a ceremony in Mota del Cuervo, denouncing the foes of Falangism, claiming that the party should dominate policy, and stressing that "those who lead this work can be none other than the minority moved by light and by faith." "The problem," Serrano insisted, "does not exactly lie in broadening the base—such is the depraved language of liberalism—but in tightening its coherence and employing it in its full and rigorous meaning by those who understand and love the Falange, . . . not by that eclecticist centipede requested by those who are too blind to see our paths and too disabled to follow them."[146] Two days later, on 4 May, José Antonio Maravall published an article in the same vein in *Arriba,* stressing that present contradictions could be overcome only by recognizing that "decisions must be made by the politicians and not by the technicians."

Similarly, on 4 May there was published a decree signed three days earlier in which Antonio Tovar, the Falangist press undersecretary in the Ministry of the Interior, stipulated that "political responsibility for and censorship of" all FET publications "will fall directly on the National Delegation of Press and Propaganda," technically freeing them from state censorship and thereby creating a politically autonomous fascist press in Spain.[147]

Franco's reply to all this was immediate. On 5 May he announced a series of major new military appointments. His trusted undersecretary (or chief executive assistant) of the presidency of the government, the monarchist General Staff colonel Valentín Galarza, was named minister of the interior, a crucial political post nominally vacant since Serrano had been moved to foreign affairs the preceding October. Thus a vital cabinet position, in a post that dominated domestic political affairs, was taken over by one of the leaders of military opposition to the FET. When José Lorente, a close associate of Serrano and the acting undersecretary of the interior who had in fact been overseeing the ministry, refused Franco's offer of the undersecretary of the presidency, the Generalissimo then appointed to this sensitive position a naval officer, Capt. Luis Carrero Blanco. Several days later two leading monarchist generals, Luis Orgaz and Alfredo Kindelán, received the key posts of high commissioner of Morocco and captain general of Barcelona, respectively.

All this brought a firestorm of criticism from the camisas viejas, who considered the administration of the Ministry of the Interior—which they considered "their" ministry—by what they called the "Casino Militar of Madrid" a supreme insult to their ambitions. Lorente made his vehement criticism publicly known and was said to be preparing the resignation en masse of the top personnel in the ministry. Franco quickly countered this by discharging Lorente and appointing in his place the Carlist Antonio Iturmendi—another enemy of the Falange—as undersecretary of the interior.

Falangist indignation reached its maximum. Primo de Rivera and eventually nine other provincial chiefs of the party turned in their resignations, and Serrano told Franco that he might do the same thing. On 8 May *Arriba* carried a prominent article entitled "The Dots over the 'I's: The Man and the Pipsqueak," with a clear allusion to Galarza as "the pipsqueak," while resignations within the party continued to mount. Tovar added his own, and Ridruejo, presumed author of the article, was soon dismissed, while Galarza quickly canceled the decree exempting FET publications from state censorship. On 9 May, however, the General Secretariat of the FET declared inoperative Galarza's new appointments of provincial governors, alleging technical deficiencies in the respective decrees. During the next few days there were street altercations in several cities between Falangists and military men and between Falangists and police. Two people were killed in León.

Franco had fundamentally miscalculated—for perhaps the first and last time in intra-regime affairs—and matters only became worse when the competent minister of finance, José Larraz, resigned for strictly personal reasons on 10 May. When Serrano indicated that he intended to add his own to the other resignations, the Generalissimo had to take action. He had not intended to push Serrano that far, and on the thirteenth wrote a gentle letter to his brother-in-law that succeeded in heading off the intended resignation.[148]

Franco had no intention of reducing his own authority by rescinding any of the new appointments, but he recognized the need to conciliate the Falangists. Serrano, Miguel Primo de Rivera, José Antonio Girón, and several other FET leaders met at the Madrid home of José Luis de Arrese, apparently on the fifteenth, to consider alternatives. Serrano proposed compensation by awarding Girón the still-unclaimed portfolio of labor.

Franco's resolution of the matter was announced in a further series of personnel changes on 18 and 19 May. The announcement of the eighteenth officially discharged Gamero del Castillo as vice secretary as well as Tovar and Ridruejo (the dismissal of the latter two being dated 1 May, before the crisis began). On the following day Franco announced the appointment of Girón to Labor and of Arrese to the long-vacant post of secretary general of the FET.[149] Moreover, the Falangist Carceller, who had headed the Ministry of Industry and Commerce since the preceding October, would retain his cabinet position, while the nominal Falangist Joaquín Benjumea had been moved from Agriculture to Finance.

The propaganda elite: Dionisio Ridruejo, Antonio Tovar, and Serrano Súñer

Franco badly needed a reliable leader for the FET who could control the radicals but would also be beholden only to the Caudillo and not to his brother-in-law. He had decided that his choice would be Arrese, the camisa vieja provincial chief of Málaga. Arrese was an architect from a prominent ultra-Catholic, right-wing Basque family and had married a first cousin of José Antonio. He had literary ambitions and, as noted earlier, had written a book-length attempt at an exposition of the Falangist social program.[150] Jailed for some months as a camisa vieja rebel in 1937, he had afterward demonstrated a full and sincere desire to collaborate. Franco had become acquainted with Arrese during an inspection tour of Málaga and had been impressed by his pleasant and servile manner, together with his achievements in local social administration.[151] Though Arrese was one of the provincial chiefs who had just resigned, Franco shrewdly decided to take the calculated risk that he could become a reliable subordinate independent of Serrano and of the Falangist ultras as well. Arrese snapped up Franco's offer of the post of secretary general, but suggested that the FET would require some further recognition. Franco countered by awarding the agriculture portfolio to Miguel Primo de Rivera, which was announced on the twenty-second.[152] In addition, control of censorship and propaganda was soon taken away from the Ministry of the Interior and placed under a newly created Vice Secretariat of Press and Propaganda of the FET. On these terms, together with a number of secondary appointments, ended the only real rebellion in the history of the FET.[153]

The full development of the crisis had taken Franco at least partially by surprise, and its duration of more than two weeks made it the longest cabinet crisis in the history of the regime. Existing divisions and tensions were at this point far too deep to be solved by any single reorganization, but the resolution of the crisis revealed Franco's growing skill in finding ways to balance off against each other the contending forces within his system. The outcome managed to meet the minimum demands of the military while conciliating their Falangist rivals.

Though the latter did not grasp it at this time, the crisis also recorded the high-water mark of Falangist pretensions within the Franquist state, coming at the moment when the prestige and military strength of Nazi Germany were at their highest levels, and the prospects for a more general fascistization of Europe unsurpassed. Indeed, as some of the new Falangist ministers assumed office, they would deliver further bombastic and revolutionary pronouncements indicative of their general expectations. Similarly, military leaders were rather chagrined by the way in which the whole process had played out, for the initial expansion of military influence that had initiated the crisis had, in typically franquista fashion, become considerably counterweighted by the time the new changes were concluded.

The calculated risks that Franco took in the appointments of Arrese and Girón were nonetheless very shrewdly conceived, amounting to genuine masterstrokes of political calculation that would have the effect of further dividing the Falangist leaders internally and greatly augmenting Franco's dominance over the FET. The new Falangist leaders would be in a position to work directly with the Caudillo as his immediate government subordinates, rather than having to proceed in large measure through Serrano Súñer, as had most of their predecessors. The new working relationships would consequently subordinate Falangism more personally and directly to Franco than ever before.

This would also mark the beginning of the decline of the political influence of Serrano Súñer. He was immediately aware that, despite the new appointments of Falangists, the outcome of the crisis was not at all the "compact government" of Falangists under a more powerful government-dominating Serrano that many of them had hoped for in recent months. Nonetheless, Serrano still hoped and at first assumed that he would maintain the same preeminence over the FET while Arrese was its secretary general as during the earlier administrations of Fernández Cuesta, Muñoz

Grandes, and Gamero del Castillo. Only a few months would be necessary to demonstrate that this was not to be. On the basis of his personal relationship with and direct subordination to Franco, Arrese would quickly prove much more adroit than his predecessors in gaining more direct control over the FET. Years later Serrano would ruefully observe: "The important thing about these developments was that I had ceased to be the mediator between the Chief of State and the authentic leaders of the Falange. . . . From that moment the FET y de las JONS was above all the party of Franco. After the crisis of May 1941 the Falangists who had fought by my side lost faith in our political enterprise."[154] This final sentence generalizes overmuch: all that would not become fully clear until after the following government crisis of September 1942. Yet the new conditions were being initiated in May 1941.

Exactly how these changes would work out was by no means predetermined, and would depend not merely on the evolution of domestic affairs in Spain but also to a significant extent on the fortunes of Germany's military effort. The combined results of these two sets of circumstances during the following year would not merely begin to bring the FET more completely under control than ever before, but also chart the very beginning of a slow but progressive process of defascistization within the Spanish state. The years 1939–1941 marked the apogee—limited though that was—of the FET. From that time forward its subordination would steadily increase, though all this would not become fully clear for another year or more.

Eleven

The First Phase of a Long Defascistization, 1941–1945

The FET had been designed as a hybrid fascist-type state party, combining the Falange with the Carlists and to some extent with other rightist forces. For at least four years after the unification, the camisas viejas had expected to predominate, brushing aside Carlists and others. They had designed the crisis of May 1941 to force this issue, and although the terms of the settlement did not in any way give them a clear-cut victory, the appointment of activist camisas viejas to the position of secretary general and two new ministries gratified them as an apparent step in the right direction.

This was not really the case. Franco had resolved the crisis on terms that proved more satisfactory to himself and his personal authority than the situation that existed during 1939–1941. It would soon become clear that the influence of Serrano Súñer and his Falangist colleagues, as well as of activist camisas viejas in general, was waning rather than waxing.

Though it could not have been known in 1941, Franco had also appointed Serrano Súñer's eventual replacement in the person of an aspiring naval officer, Capt. Luis Carrero Blanco. One of Franco's most pressing needs had been to find another military man to replace Galarza as undersecretary to his presidency of the government. In selecting Carrero Blanco for this post, he chose the man who would become his own political alter ego for more than three decades, soon to become his most influential and trusted counselor, playing a more decisive role than Serrano in the direction and evolution of the Franquist system.

Luis Carrero Blanco was a career naval officer who prior to the Civil War had been a professor in the Naval War College in Madrid. He managed to escape the bloody purge that killed 40 percent of the naval officer corps in the Republican zone, thanks to his lack of previous political involvement and the fact that he had no active command. The slaughter of naval officers by the revolutionaries only hardened his extreme right-

wing convictions. He gained asylum in the Mexican embassy and then fled to the Nationalist zone, where during the last phases of the war he commanded first a destroyer and then a submarine. He was later made chief of operations for the Naval General Staff.

Politically, Carrero Blanco was at first a discovery of Serrano Súñer and Gamero del Castillo, who had searched for reliable and interested military men to add to the National Council of the FET. There Carrero had come to the attention of Franco, who had had some marginal contact with him before the Civil War.[1] In November 1940 Carrero had prepared a report on the naval aspects of entry into the war, which accepted as obvious ("claro está") that any entry would be on the side of the Axis, but warned that it should be delayed, from the naval point of view, until the Axis had first taken Suez, crippling British power in the Mediterranean.[2] Carrero Blanco had some ability as a writer, and his principal work, *España en el mar,* was published by the Editora Nacional at the beginning of 1941. It was devoted to the importance of naval power in Spain's past and future and expressed the author's personal convictions, which were ultra-Catholic as well as strongly anti-Semitic.[3]

Ironically, as the crisis began to develop in May, Franco first offered the undersecretary position to Lorente, the current undersecretary of the interior, who sought to resign that position in solidarity with Serrano and the Falangists. Though he had been a Serrano appointee, Franco had been pleased with his work as de facto head of the Ministry of the Interior during the winter of 1940–41. When Lorente immediately rejected the offer, Franco did not hesitate long in making what would prove to be the much surer appointment of Carrero Blanco. In this beetle-browed, devoutly Catholic and conservative naval officer, Franco would find an ideal, devoted, and almost sycophantic executive assistant and adviser, more suitable for his purposes than his brother-in-law and someone with whom he could be more comfortable. Carrero was genuinely self-effacing and thus the very opposite of the lofty and arrogant Serrano. While aspiring to become the Caudillo's dominant "privado" in a personal sense, he had no desire ever to hold the limelight directly. His own ideas were closer to Franco's than Serrano's thinking was. Whereas the latter was more of a modernist and a Europeanizing fascist, Carrero was more conservative, more military-oriented, and semimonarchist in his convictions. The notion that subsequently developed to the effect that Carrero had no ideas of his own was exaggerated, but Carrero quickly became attuned to Franco's wishes and was extremely discreet in proffering advice. Differences of principle between the two turned out to be surprisingly few, and Carrero became the nearest thing to an alter ego that Franco would ever have. As this relationship began to develop during 1941–1942, Serrano Súñer would become more and more expendable—indeed, counterproductive. Carrero was also pro-Axis in foreign policy, but he lacked any ideological fascist commitment and so could be somewhat more detached. As executive and administrative secretary, he set much of Franco's agenda, filtering a large part of the information and advice that he received.

Carrero's first major memorandum to Franco on the principles and structure of his state was a lengthy missive dated 25 August 1941.[4] It started from the premise that sound policy must have a basis and a goal, residing in "an absolute truth," and the latter can only have been enunciated by God. Carrero thus began at the opposite pole from fascist activism-relativism (though one that might have been congenial to the more nuanced thinking of José Antonio Primo de Rivera), and went on to observe that "if we analyze history, it is necessary to realize, without any fear of succumbing to the sin of national vanity, that there has never been any nation whose trajectory has been so clearly marked in this sense as Spain."

He pointed out that while the regime had to base political activity on a new unitary party, the FET had become too inclusive and eclectic. Party policy "tended toward the ingenuous" and had admitted "a great mass of semi-Reds, or clear-cut Reds though not of significant political personality, of Masons, of the amoral, and simply of opportunists." "To our absolutely real misfortune, one reaches the conclusion that the Party has grown without direction, that, in a word, it has slipped through our hands. . . . It is certain that Your Excellency did not desire this." It had reached the point where "the Party, which could have been the solution, has complicated problems even more," for

> it has constituted a duplicate state organization, maintaining a marked parallelism and a troublesome doubling of function and dependency in certain positions. Facing a Council of Ministers there is a Junta Política; facing a provincial governor there is a provincial chief, often combined in the same person, but answering at one and the same time to both the minister of the interior and the minister-secretary of the party; facing the police, there is an information service of the party; the syndicates have to answer both to the minister of industry and commerce and to the National Delegation of Syndicates; facing state welfare, the Delegation of Social Welfare; abroad, delegations in a certain way bearing a diplomatic function of the party, and, finally even the militia wants to be a copy of the army.

Therefore "the state organism requires a profound reform." "A divorce exists between the Army and Party, and disunity and disagreement within the latter; a divorce from the Party, equally, of good Spaniards that remain

outside it, either because they do not want to join or are not allowed." "In a totalitarian regime, like the present one, there can be only one political doctrine . . . , but this partido único, which is no longer any single one of its components, has no definite policy at all."

Carrero concluded that "the organic scheme of a totalitarian state" was based on five components:

a) A Caudillo
b) A Party
c) An administrative organism functioning with maximum simplicity, dynamic, active, and coordinated, with a minimal number of functionaries
d) A National Plan
e) A People who obeys

The FET must therefore be unified under a clear "doctrine or credo" announced by Franco. It must become a dedicated elite, preferably led by "200 men" of "Catholic ideas," "sound moral constitution," and full loyalty to the Caudillo. A streamlined and efficient state must be created, dedicated to a National Plan that would develop strong armed forces, a productive economy, justice, and sound education. Fascism was not mentioned, for Carrero's obvious goal was a Catholic and semitraditional authoritarianism designed to achieve strength, prosperity, and national pedagogy. This outline pointed toward the future of the Francoist state, mutatis mutandis, beyond the fascist era.

DISCIPLINING THE FET

In fact, the instrument for the fuller unification and subordination of the FET was already at hand in José Luis de Arrese, whose appointment as secretary general would soon prove to be one of Franco's masterstrokes, one of the most useful appointments he ever made. Between 1941 and 1943, Arrese would largely complete the task of bureaucratizing and domesticating the Falange that Serrano had never been able to complete.

This was not, however, clear during the late spring and summer of 1941, for Arrese's power over the FET apparatus was at first carefully circumscribed. The initial arrangement seems to have been that Arrese was to handle appointments and administration within the FET organization itself, while Serrano Súñer would continue to deal with ideology and general policy as president of the Junta Política. This arrangement suited Franco, who in the first weeks was not entirely sure how much he could trust Arrese. The new secretary general found, however, that, in practice,

this arrangement gave Serrano the power to initiate and review all significant policy decisions, leaving Arrese with no more than the bureaucratic paperwork formerly handled by Gamero del Castillo. Arrese soon complained to Franco, who indicated initial surprise, saying that he thought that the new secretary general had agreed to this modus operandi. Franco then took the second step of deciding to place fuller confidence in Arrese and gave him full control over party appointments and activities, reducing Serrano's sphere to ideology and doctrine.[5]

This relationship developed because an understanding was quickly reached between Franco and Arrese that the latter's task was to render the party more completely obedient to the Generalissimo himself. As Manuel Valdés has put it, "It can be stated that Arrese set for himself, as his main task, to unite the political framework of the party with Generalissimo Franco, both directly and indirectly, and to guarantee that the latter's Jefatura Nacional was not merely nominal but could be effectively exercised."[6] While maintaining a purely verbal radicalism that was pleasing to the old guard, Arrese did all he could to expedite the buying off and domestication of the core Falangists.

A very few had to be directly removed, beginning with the national delegate of syndicates, who had returned from Berlin during the gestation of the crisis. For several months Salvador Merino had been a marked man for certain military and rightist enemies, and the initiative in hunting for his head had been taken by the elderly Andrés Saliquet, captain general of Valladolid. Saliquet was an unconditional franquista and one of the small group who had originally elected Franco to the jefatura única. He was thoroughly outraged by Merino's revolutionary fascism and demagogic ambitions. Probably with the assistance of the military courts, he was able to present evidence that Merino had been a Mason in the early years of the Republic, and Masons, just as much as leftist revolutionaries, had been targeted as principal enemies of the new regime.

The swan song of Salvador Merino was sung at the Second Syndical Congress, which convened in Madrid in June 1941. Unaware that the end was at hand, Merino's rhetoric was at its radical best, grandiloquent and completely inaccurate:

> The decision is very near for the integration under the discipline of the Movement of all the official and semiofficial entities that have had an established mission of channeling or directing the country's commercial or economic activity, dissolving all the inefficient groups. . . . You all know what I am talking about. The days of the chambers of commerce and industry and agriculture, and similar entities, are numbered.[7]

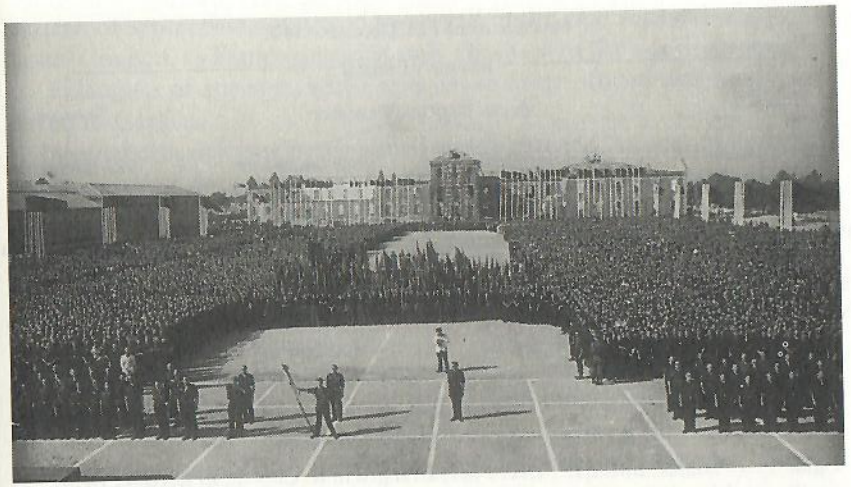
Soon afterward, on 7 July, a still-unsuspecting Salvador Merino was married and departed on his honeymoon. Not long after his return, he was relieved of his post and sent into internal exile in the Balearics,[8] and thus one of the most demagogic Falangists, as well as one of the most radically pro-Nazi, suddenly vanished from public life. In October he was officially expelled from the FET, along with a lesser figure named Alvarez Sotomayor,[9] who in July had publicly called for "all power to the Falange."

On 13 September the new undersecretary of labor, Manuel Valdés Larrañaga, was named national delegate of syndicates. Valdés had been a personal friend of José Antonio and was a core camisa vieja leader who, after spending the war in a Republican prison, had become a thorough accommodationist.[10] During the next four months he carried out an extensive purge of Sindicatos leaders down to the provincial level, declaring that he was facing a rebellion from Merino's appointees. He has also claimed that Salvador Merino had run up a debt of more than fifty million pesetas within the Syndical Organization, which Valdés managed to rectify through financial reforms and the establishment of "syndical dues," to be paid by employers on all workers.[11]

What is incontestable is that the syndical system became increasingly docile and conservative, a process completed after Valdés was replaced in 1942 by the Navarrese Sanz Orrio. Over a period of a year or two, all the distinctively radical syndical leaders and administrators were dismissed, their places sometimes taken by right-wing figures from employer associations.

The reduction of the syndical system during 1941 and 1942 to a safely controlled bureaucracy removed the most important single source of tension within the system—save for the FET itself—and may be compared in its effects to the "Sbloccamento" of the original Italian Fascist national syndicalism under Edmondo Rossoni in 1928. Mussolini's action has been seen correctly as a further step of the Italian regime toward the right. This was even more true of the purge of the syndical leadership in Spain, though it is doubtful that Falangist national syndicalism ever had the radical impetus of its Italian Fascist counterpart.

In a maneuver similar to the appointment of Valdés and Sanz Orrio to the Syndical Organization, Arrese found docile appointees with camisa vieja credentials for major posts in the FET apparatus, beginning with José Luna Meléndez to replace Gamero as vice secretary. The new leadership in the party and Sindicatos was further complemented by the work of José Antonio Girón as the regime's first regular minister of labor. Like Arrese, Girón could be rhetorically demagogic, but he was equally bureaucratic and loyal to Franco, devoting himself to the development of



Falangist mass assembly

practical labor benefits and welfare supplements to the extent that the meager economy permitted.[12]

None of the new appointees, however, was more symptomatic than Gabriel Arias Salgado, named in September 1941 to the newly created Vice Secretariat of Popular Education within the FET. (This replaced the old Undersecretariat of Press and Propaganda, which had been part of the Ministry of the Interior rather than the party.) This was the second most important FET post after the secretary generalship, for it simultaneously controlled state censorship, press, and propaganda. Arias Salgado, a relative of Franco's first cousin and military aide Salgado Araujo, was of uncertain Falangist identity but very much an ultra-right-wing Catholic from the hard core of Catholic Action and the Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas (ACNP), who had once studied to become a Jesuit. His career had been patronized by Franco, and he was appointed to Popular Education by Arrese to help undermine Serrano Súñer's allies and reinforce a policy even more attuned to Catholic norms. Though Arias was strongly pro-Axis, the main thrust of his long-term censorship of Spanish cultural life would be more specifically the propagation of right-wing Catholicism. Arias came to enjoy virtual ministerial status and would soon be dealing directly with Franco; indeed, after World War II his position would be elevated to cabinet rank. Arias Salgado came to represent the quintessence of what has been called the "fascismo frailuno" of the Spanish regime, for his personal orientation was more that of Catholic Integrism than fascism.[13]

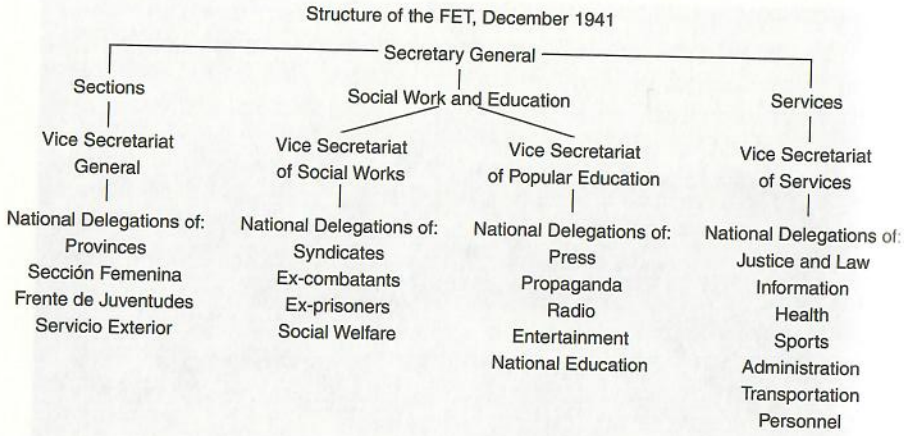


Figure 11.1. Source: *BMFET*, 1 Dec. 1941, arranged in R. Chueca, *El fascismo en los comienzos del regimen de Franco* (Madrid, 1983), 229.

Under Arrese the FET reached its highest membership, with more than 900,000 registered in the various categories of affiliation. In November 1941 the secretary general announced the beginning of the second and last purge in the party's history, designed to eliminate crypto-leftists, former Masons, those guilty of "immoral" activity or simply activity "incompatible" with the party.[14] For this purpose a new Purge Inspectorate was created under a colonel from the Military Juridical Corps, and during the next five years nearly six thousand were expelled from the FET.[15] This was not a very large number, yet it helped to bring the party closer to heel. Cheerleading became an even more important function under Arrese than before, and during 1942 a series of major marches and mass meetings were held in various parts of the country. Restiveness and conspiracy among radical Falangists would not come to a complete end until after the close of World War II, but the appointment of Arrese and his companions marked a major step in the final domestication of the party.

Some elements of party structure were also realigned (figure 11.1). On 28 November 1941, the echelon of twelve National Services parallel to the state that had been created in 1938 was abolished, as recommended in Carrero's memorandum. It was replaced by four vice secretariats: that of the Movement (the party apparatus), Social Works (including the Syndical Organization and Ex-combatants), Popular Education (for press and propaganda), and Services (a miscellaneous grouping, including other aspects of communications and health and recreation groups). For the first time, however, the post of provincial chief of the FET was made synonymous with that of provincial governor in the state structure. The pattern of syncretism continued to prevail in the next renewal of the National Council, as Franco awarded only about 40 of the 106 seats to genuine Falangists of any sort, while 20 went to army officers and only half a dozen to Carlists.

Internal security was meanwhile being tightened, as economic conditions remained desperate and the "Estraperlo" or black market thrived. Serious black market offenses had been officially subject to the death penalty for more than a year, and in March 1941 a number of "crimes of treason" were given the same penalty under the jurisdiction of military courts. In November two black marketeers were executed in Alicante, one of them the camisa vieja José Pérez de Cabo, author of the first pre–Civil War attempt at a book on Falangist doctrine.[16] He had been involved in the anti-Franco conspiracy of the clandestine junta política (see chapter 10), and friends later defended his honor by claiming that the deals for which he was prosecuted and condemned had been designed to finance the Falangist plot.[17]

The disastrous economic conditions, the continuing conflicts within the new system, and the widespread corruption all combined to weaken the regime itself and led more than a few army generals to conclude that it might be necessary not merely to eliminate Serrano Súñer but also to replace Franco himself. On 15 January 1941, only two weeks before his own death, the exiled Alfonso XIII had abdicated on behalf of his third son and official heir, Don Juan (soon to be known as the conde de Barcelona). He was the main candidate of potentially dissident generals to succeed Franco, yet the military found it impossible to agree among themselves. By October Aranda was using the completely inflated term "junta of generals" to describe these murmurings to British representatives, fundamentally distorting the situation.[18] A few of the monarchist generals were Anglophile or at least neutralist, but throughout 1941 and perhaps even the first months of 1942, the prevailing orientation was to seek a potential restoration within some sort of framework of cooperation with Germany. Various monarchist representatives were inevitably involved in a double game, some talking to British officials about a restoration aimed toward neutrality, though initially maintaining good relations with Germany.[19]

Anti-Serrano, pro-monarchist pressure by the military began to mount as early as August and September 1941, as the German invasion of the Soviet Union first threatened to stall. There is some evidence that Serrano made another offer to resign, which was rejected by Franco, though the latter now moved to strengthen his relations with the Pretender in a personal letter that stressed that the monarchy would eventually become the "coronation" of the regime.[20]

As rapid conquest of the Soviet Union came to seem less certain, Serrano began to wish that he had some of the approximately six thousand Falangist enthusiasts in the Blue Division back in Spain for political support. On the occasion of the renewal in Berlin of Spain's membership in the Anti-Comintern Pact on 29 November, he personally asked Hitler for the selective transfer of certain Falangists back to Madrid, to be replaced by new volunteers. Hitler did not refuse, but tense combat conditions did not make this practicable for some time. Meanwhile, several monarchist generals made contact with Muñoz Grandes, the division's commander, for the opposite purpose, asking him to lobby the German leadership to support a monarchist restoration in Spain.[21]

Entry of the United States into the war in December 1941 made the outlook more complex and uncertain. Franco used the occasion of a state visit to Catalonia in January 1942 both to appear slightly more conciliatory and to refer to a monarchist restoration at some undetermined time in the future, when proper conditions had been prepared; at the same time, he lavishly praised the political role of the FET. Serrano Súñer was growing increasingly discouraged by the weakness and internal divisions of the FET and had begun to despair that the Franco regime would develop along the lines he sought. He began to consider the possibility of resigning in order to become ambassador to Rome (the city that politically had become his second home) and also began to develop more personal contact with Don Juan.[22]

Serrano's new rival Arrese tacked according to the same winds, indicating to German officials that a monarchist restoration should be the ultimate goal in Spain, but that it could be adequately prepared only through Franco and the Falange.[23] On 10 March FET leaders in the Basque Country even ended one public ceremony with the cry "¡Viva Cristo Rey!" (Long Live Christ the King—a Carlist-Integrist slogan), to which the public allegedly responded "¡Viva el Rey!" (Long Live the King).[24] Even the "Falangist general" Yagüe now admitted that only the monarchy could guarantee Spain's political future and sought to encourage a meeting between Don Juan and German government figures.[25]

Franco himself dispatched a letter to the Pretender in mid-May 1942, explaining that only the Caudillo would be able to introduce the "revolutionary, totalitarian Monarchy" (allegedly in the tradition of the Reyes Católicos) that Spain required, but that Don Juan should in the meantime identify himself fully with the FET and wait for the Generalissimo to complete his task.[26] At this point plans were being completed for a visit to Berlin by Gen. Juan Vigón, Yagüe's replacement as minister of the air force. Since Vigón was a moderate monarchist, some of the pro-monarchist generals hoped that this occasion might be used to clarify the German attitude toward a restoration. Though Vigón had always been loyal to him, this was a risk that Franco did not care to take, and the trip was abruptly canceled on 4 June.[27] There followed a trip by Serrano to Rome on 14 June—his last major initiative as foreign minister—to gain support in Italy, where he suggested to Mussolini and Ciano that they show more interest in Don Juan to offset the influence of Germany.

Hitler and Ribbentrop nonetheless maintained their reluctance to be overly involved in Spanish affairs, despite the active German propaganda and intelligence networks in the peninsula. The German dictator had become increasingly disgusted with his Spanish counterpart, whom he considered incapable of leading a Nazi-type revolution in Spain. In his after-dinner conversation with subordinates on 19 February, he lamented that the Communist menace had forced him to intervene in Spain, where "the clergy ought to have been exterminated" in the best interests of the country. Later, on 5 June, he declared himself stupefied by Franco's religious obscurantism, adding: "I am following the evolution of Spain with the greatest skepticism, and have already made the decision that, though I may eventually visit any other European country, I shall never go to Spain." "Conflict between the Church and Franco's regime was inevitable, and so possibly was a new revolution." Informed a few minutes later that only a few Falangist leaders had been permitted to wear blue shirts during the last Corpus Christi procession in Barcelona, he added: "Something like that clearly shows that the Spanish state is headed toward disaster. . . . If a new civil war breaks out, I wouldn't be surprised to see the Falangists having to make common cause with the Reds to free themselves from the clerical-monarchist trash."[28] There would obviously be no German encouragement for Don Juan, even though Hitler was beginning to think that Franco was only slightly better.

The Führer did not pay enough attention to Spain to realize that the FET's current secretary general in fact maneuvered adroitly and relatively comfortably with the varied currents of the regime, and was personally at least as Catholic as Franco. Whereas Serrano had become a lightning rod, Arrese tried to act more like a conduit, discreetly identifying the FET or sectors thereof with diverse options, while trying to avoid the formation of opposition elements.

Despite the secretary general's relative success, a clandestine dissident "Falange Auténtica" (FA) distributed leaflets in the spring of 1942. The FA declared that it stood for the authentic national syndicalist revolution, which would only be effectively carried out with German support for a Falangist government that would bring Spain into the war on the side of the Axis. Though this sounded like a new outburst of fascist radicalism, it was more likely a "tolerated" Falangist opposition group, partly manip-

ulated by Arrese and others to frustrate the monarchists. The rumors that alleged the involvement of Girón, Miguel Primo de Rivera, and Valdés Larrañaga in the FA were most implausible. Arrese was apparently able to monitor the situation, and only later, on 2 November, was the imputed leader of the FA, the architect Juan Muñoz Mates, finally arrested in San Sebastián.[29]

The core members of the FA were supposedly radical veterans of the Blue Division, mustered out for medical reasons and now back in Spain. More serious was the fact that the division's commander, Muñoz Grandes, seemed to share the opinion that a more radical government needed to be established in Madrid with German help to bring Spain into the war. Franco therefore relieved Muñoz Grandes of command in mid-May, innocently blaming the decision on the hostility of Serrano and the anti-Falangist army minister, Varela. At Hitler's insistence, he nervously agreed to let Muñoz Grandes remain a little longer.

During the after-dinner conversation at his headquarters on 7 July, the Führer observed:

> One must take care not to place the regime of Franco on a level with National Socialism or Fascism. Todt, who employs many of the so-called Spanish "Reds" in his factories, tells me repeatedly that these Reds are not Reds in our sense of the word. They see themselves as revolutionaries in their own way and have greatly distinguished themselves as able and industrious workers. The best thing we can do is get as many of them as we can, beginning with the forty thousand that we already have in our camps, and keep them as a reserve in case of the outbreak of a second civil war. Together with the survivors of the old Falange, they would be the force at our disposal most worthy of confidence.[30]

Field Marshal Keitel, one of Hitler's chief sycophants, added that before the Hendaye conference he had been warned that he would be disappointed by Franco's physical appearance, that "he was not a hero, but an insignificant little fellow." Hitler concluded:

> Whether there exists a Spanish general with the intelligence to succeed is something that only time will tell. But in any case, we have to promote as much as we can the popularity of General Muñoz Grandes, who is an energetic man and, as such, seems the most adequate to dominate the situation. I am delighted that the intrigues of Serrano Súñer to withdraw this general from command of the Blue Division were frustrated at the last moment, because the Blue Division, at the right time, could play a decisive role when the time comes to overthrow this regime controlled by priests.[31]

Hitler apparently planned to give Muñoz Grandes a prominent place in the anticipated conquest of Leningrad during the summer of 1942, thus endowing him with the prestige to play a more prominent role in Spanish affairs. At a subsequent meeting with Hitler on 12 July, Muñoz Grandes was allegedly captivated by the Führer's charm, readily agreeing that Spain needed a totally pro-German government. He is said to have declared that after the next victory on the eastern front, his ambition was to return to Spain and become president of government under a somewhat weakened Franco, eliminating Serrano Súñer altogether. Just how far Muñoz Grandes was prepared to go, and whether he really told Hitler any more than what the latter wanted to hear while directing his animus against Serrano and Varela rather than Franco, is not clear, but what Franco knew of this situation was enough to give the Generalissimo pause. There seemed all the more reason for alarm in Madrid when only a few days later the German military attaché visited Muñoz Grande's friend and sometime associate Yagüe at the latter's provincial home.[32]

Though the military situation of the Tripartite Powers seemed in some respects more favorable by July 1942 than at the beginning of the year, Franco was becoming increasingly cautious. His last outspokenly pro-Axis speech had taken place in February, and his speech on 17 July, the anniversary of the Nationalist rebellion, was so cautiously worded that it even pleased the American ambassador.[33] Returning Falangist veterans of the Blue Division were isolated as much as possible from positions of influence. At the same time, Arrese maintained regular contact with Thomsen, the Nazi Party leader in Spain, and with Gardemann, the counselor of the German embassy, giving them to understand that he and the FET were strongly in the German camp and that Serrano's elimination would be required for an even closer relationship between Madrid and Berlin.

Rivalry between the military and the Falangists remained intense. Strong pressure from senior military commanders in January led Falangist spokesmen to become more circumspect. Arrese strove to moderate this conflict, issuing public statements concerning the need for unity between the party and the armed forces. Nonetheless, the return of mild weather in March and April produced a series of incidents between young Falangist militants and monarchists and Carlists, and between Falangists and army officers.

Arrese complained to Franco on 25 March that two Falangists had been arrested by the military when attempting to carry out an assignment that he had given them. Arrese rather grandiloquently offered his resignation—which was not accepted—so that he could testify on their behalf before a military court, or even in order to "take their place in prison."[34]

He was also feeling frustrated because the growth in membership had not added to the strength or solidity of the FET. A report of the Dirección General de Seguridad on 7 April calculated that only 10 percent of the party members in Vigo were "sincere militants."[35] A subsequent report one month later described the sabotaging of certain FET activities in La Coruña, ascribing part of this to "Reds" but another part of it to partisans of the disgraced Salvador Merino, who were "fairly numerous" there.[36] Yet another report from Vizcaya declared, "The F. E. T. y de las J. O. N. S. in effect does not exist in this province. It has thousands of affiliates who do no more than pay their dues, since this is all that is required of them."[37]

Despite the weakness and internal division of the party, radicals within the FET remained sporadically aggressive, convinced that the historical and international situation favored them. Thus the spring and summer of 1942 registered continuing public altercations between radical young Falangists on the one hand and the military, Carlists, and juanista monarchists on the other. A scandal developed in March involving the key Falangist diplomat Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval, who was chief of cabinet for Serrano in foreign affairs, director of Falange Exterior, supervisor of foreign news coverage by the Spanish press, and the principal biographer of José Antonio Primo de Rivera. After being involved in a fistfight with monarchists who took umbrage at his negative remarks about Calvo Sotelo in the biography, he was reported by the Italian chargé to have engaged two Falangist gunmen to assault the principal monarchist in this altercation. The latter nonetheless mastered one Falangist assailant and turned him over to the police. In the following month, the highly pro-German Gen. Espinosa de los Monteros (recently ambassador in Berlin) was named captain general of Burgos and immediately made a public denunciation of Serrano Súñer. Both Espinosa and Ximénez de Sandoval were dismissed from their posts, but the latter was also charged with homosexuality and expelled from the diplomatic corps—a decided blow to Serrano. According to a common version, the exposé had been carefully orchestrated by Arrese.

Even within the Italian government, doubt began to develop as to the stability of the Spanish regime, and for the first time Ciano showed interest in courting the monarchist pretender, inviting Don Juan to a special hunting party in Albania during April.[38] As public insults from and incidents with Falangists increased, the commanders of the Madrid military garrison even issued instructions in mid-April that officers carry sidearms when off duty. The minister of the army, Varela, then had a serious talk with Franco, not as minister but as the political representative of the armed forces, insisting that the present uncertain balance could not continue. Either the FET should become the genuine amalgam of Falangists, Carlists, and others that had been announced in 1937, which would require relative defascistization and awarding half the positions in the party to Carlists and other non-Falangists, or it should simply be dissolved. "The governing of the country with the Falange is disastrous, with checas and private police, kidnappings . . . etc., by Falangists with no control from the state; it is shameful," Varela insisted. "The millions carried off by the party are considered out of control by honest people." He added that the minister of labor, Girón, went about accompanied by "a floozie from a house of ill repute."[39] He outlined two different schemes of cabinet reorganization, either of which would drastically downgrade Falangist influence. When the need for a new effort to achieve unity between Falangists and the military was introduced at a cabinet meeting on 4 May, the discussion broke down into violent verbal recriminations between the two sides.[40]

Carrero Blanco analyzed the situation in a memorandum to Franco dated 12 May and entitled "Notes about the Political Situation." The principal problem was, he said, the FET itself. Even its own leaders were strongly dissatisfied with the present state of the party, but "among the Falangists there is a wide variety of opinions, and they do not agree within themselves, with a blind struggle going on between groups formed around different leaders." Various cliques supported Arrese, Serrano, or Girón "without it being possible, however much honest effort one puts into it, to define what are the differences between various sectors." Thus the reality was that "the Party does not exist" as such, even though there was "a complex organism that absorbs a copious bureaucracy and that constitutes a duplicate of the state organization, which acts in a disordered manner and lacks either true doctrine or positive discipline." The FET included "more than a few undesirables of every kind, whose excesses and bad example set the tone for the group"; "far from attracting people, it repels them, acting rude and despotic toward everyone else."

> The authoritarian lexicon of its writings, the inappropriate *tuteo* to everyone, and a general air of hoodlumism that is not readily accepted by the innate dignity of Spaniards, and the fact that such behavior is practiced by individuals who do not through their ability, antecedents, or conduct inspire the least confidence, make the Party antipathetic, so that rather than attracting people it repels them, detracting from positive values, so that if it gains a member, it is only from someone looking for a job, a means of livelihood.[41]

For Carrero, the only solution was "to step back and repair the damage rapidly," with Franco intervening to take personal command of the Junta

Política, and reconstituting the party with new leaders drawn from the military and the Carlists. Thus it could achieve a genuinely Spanish nationalist ideology and build strength and unity. Franco, however, failed to respond directly, for so drastic a change seemed out of the question.

He did restate his position in a speech before the Sección Femenina at their national center in the Castillo de la Mota on 29 May, invoking the "totalitarian monarchy" of the Reyes Católicos as the inspiration of the regime. He denounced as the historic internal foes of the Reyes Católicos the selfish and sectarian aristocracy, a scarcely veiled allusion to his own critics among the monarchist elite. Lauding the "totalitarian" character of the fifteenth-century monarchy, he also applauded its "racist" and anti-Jewish policies, in terminology unusual for Franco.[42]

A new series of brawls then erupted between young Falangists and Carlist and monarchist youth in Madrid, Pamplona, Burgos, and Santiago de Compostela. Encouraged by Varela, Carlists showed increasing signs of dissidence. By July their leaders in Navarre and the Basque Country were said to be discussing the desirability of having their remaining representatives within the regime resign one at a time. At a Carlist parade in Bilbao on 18 July, cries of "Death to Franco!" were allegedly heard.[43] Street affrays between Falangists and their rivals also took place in other cities.[44]

Though Franco stubbornly denied the military hierarchy the satisfaction of eliminating Serrano Súñer, the foreign minister's influence was clearly on the wane. If Arrese had not yet been able to bring the Falange totally under control, he was increasingly successful in making the FET more pliable than Serrano and his predecessors ever had, and his continuingly loyal collaboration gave Franco a reliable support he had not possessed so far.[45] Serrano in turn grew increasingly exasperated. During his June trip to Rome he had complained bitterly of the constant maneuvering and petty conspiracies within the regime that Franco seemed to have little interest in eliminating.[46] Meanwhile, one of Serrano's closest friends and collaborators within the FET, the poet and activist Dionisio Ridruejo, had become severely disillusioned. He renounced all his positions in the party in August.[47]

Serrano mounted a counteroffensive, preparing new legislation to regain control of the censorship of foreign news, which he had lost to the Vice Secretariat of Popular Culture of the FET (under Arrese's ally Arias Salgado) after the expulsion of his key aide Ximénez de Sandoval. Such control was declared necessary for the proper conduct of foreign affairs, fully aligning the press with official policy, but it lacked the neutralist overtones that Serrano has alleged in his several memoirs.[48] This was demonstrated by the appearance in the Spanish press early in August of his

article "Spain and the World War," reprinted from a Nazi journal in Germany. It reaffirmed the Spanish government's solidarity with the Axis and against "democracy and communism," the two foes in the west and east. At that moment German and Japanese expansion was reaching its farthest points in the Soviet Union, North Africa, and the southwest Pacific, and Serrano seemed determined to justify his sobriquet of "minister of the Axis" while attempting to recoup lost prestige in Berlin.[49]

In Madrid, however, the voices of Carrero Blanco and Arrese gained Franco's ear with increasing frequency. Thus when Franco announced to the National Council on 18 July that a corporative Cortes would later be introduced (a proposal first advanced two years earlier by Serrano and a subcommittee of the Junta Política), he first charged Arrese with drafting the project, though it was later polished a bit by Serrano.[50]

These rivalries came to a head after a bloody incident in the outskirts of Bilbao that turned into the most notorious cause célèbre of the 1940s in Spain. Carlists were active in public ceremonies in Navarre and the Basque Country that honored their war dead and occasionally were accompanied by expressions of hostility against the FET and the present structure of the regime. Antagonism once more erupted at the annual memorial mass held on 16 August in the sanctuary of the Virgen de Begoña in memory of Requetés fallen in the Civil War. A handful of Falangists had positioned themselves just outside the sanctuary, and later alleged that they were taunted by Carlists, a few of whom even supposedly shouted, "Death to Franco!" However that may have been, the Falangists tossed two hand grenades into the crowd of Carlists emerging from the church. Only one exploded, and it may or may not have caused fatalities (Carlist sources claim there were ultimately two deaths); between 30 and 117, depending on the account, were injured.[51]

Gen. Varela happened to be inside the sanctuary at the time of the incident. He immediately seized on it as evidence of a Falangist attack on the military (possibly even an assassination attempt), sending telegrams in this vein to all district captains general of the army and protesting vehemently to Franco. He was seconded by the minister of the interior, Col. Galarza, who dispatched similar messages to provincial governors throughout Spain. Six Falangists arrested at Begoña were then prosecuted before military tribunals.

Franco was greatly displeased by the initiatives of Varela and Galarza, which he considered excessive, imprudent, and even potentially insubordinate. Yet Varela succeeded in mobilizing the sympathies of much of the military hierarchy, and despite some Falangist pressure (though not from the Arrese leadership), Franco hesitated to intervene in the military justice system, even though he deeply resented the tone of the Carlist ceremony

and the cries of "Long live the King!" that had accompanied it. Several of the Falangists under indictment were veterans of the Blue Division who sought a fully Falangist regime and entry into the war on the side of Germany. All six were convicted, two received the death penalty; one of these, Juan Domínguez (national sports inspector of the SEU and the person allegedly responsible for throwing the one grenade that exploded) was executed at the beginning of September.[52]

The principal divisions within the FET during the summer of 1942 were between the associates and followers of Arrese on the one hand and of Serrano Súñer on the other,[53] though there were various subfactions as well. A small constellation had also formed around the labor minister Girón; its interests in some respects paralleled those of the Arrese group but were far from identical with them. When the Begoña crisis developed, Serrano called a special meeting of the Junta Política to rally support, but this was stymied by the refusal of other factions to attend.[54]

Varela demanded of Franco direct political satisfaction against the Falange. According to one version,[55] their conversation became so hostile that Franco realized he would have to dismiss his army minister. He also decided to remove Galarza, whom he blamed for having run a slack ship and for having withheld information on the incident, as well as the FET's vice secretary general, José Luna, who had been sent to Bilbao to collect information but was also accused of involvement in the affair. No action, however, was taken against the principal FET leaders—Arrese and his chief colleagues (with the exception of the "serranista" Luna)—who had demonstrated complete obsequiousness to Franco and had disassociated themselves from the defense of the Falangists who were prosecuted and convicted.

When Franco communicated these personnel decisions to his undersecretary, Carrero Blanco (who had for some time been conniving with Arrese to eliminate Serrano), Carrero pointed out that firing two army ministers without also discharging someone on the other side could create serious complications. Serrano had done much more than Arrese to try to save Domínguez, and Carrero warned that if Serrano was allowed to remain in the government, the military and all other non- and anti-Falangists would say that Serrano and the FET had won a complete victory and that Franco was no longer in full control.[56] Franco seems to have required little convincing, for he had become increasingly impatient with his brother-in-law, who tended to contradict and criticize him more and more, and who had already suggested resigning.[57] Equally important, he now had trusted and reliable personnel in Carrero and Arrese to fill the roles earlier held by Serrano.

The cabinet reorganization carried out on 3 September 1942 sought to achieve a more fully pragmatic equilibrium than those of 1939 and 1941. The conservative and practical Gómez Jordana returned to Foreign Affairs, while Varela was replaced with General Carlos Asensio, one of the more capable figures in the military hierarchy, generally pro-German and much less hostile to the FET than Varela, a trusted and disciplined subordinate whom Franco nonetheless had to press vigorously to accept the appointment.[58] Galarza was replaced by Blas Pérez Gonzalez, a pre-war University of Barcelona law professor who was a neo-Falangist but also a member of the Military Juridical Corps. Pérez was an astute jurist and an administrator of unusual ability and self-control. He had already developed an outstanding career in the juridical and administrative system of the new regime[59] and was a friend of Girón. Within the FET, José Luna was replaced as vice secretary general, and during the next few weeks a number of the more radical remaining provincial chiefs (Almería, León, Valladolid, and Vizcaya) were also cashiered.

These changes proved quite effective, giving Franco the best combination of ministers he had enjoyed to this point. None of the major political contestants—the military, Falangists, mainline monarchists, or Carlists[60]—were fully satisfied, though the military gained rather more than the others. This by no means stilled military criticism of the FET,[61] but it ended the crisis and generally relaxed the state of domestic tension among supporters of the regime.

One of the most important consequences was the return of Gómez Jordana, who slowly but steadily altered Serrano's approach in foreign policy and soon began to steer Spanish policy toward something nearer neutrality than before, still friendly to the Axis but more genuinely prudent and increasingly more even-handed in foreign affairs.[62] This was not, however, Franco's primary intention in appointing him, and Jordana was well aware of that, so that the change in Spanish foreign policy occurred gradually, by degrees.

During the summer of 1942, German leaders had still toyed with the notion of sending Muñoz Grandes back to Spain to try to force Franco into entering the war, but this remained a very secondary consideration for Hitler, who was fixated on winning the decisive victory on the eastern front in a few months. At the very least, he had wanted to wait until the Blue Division participated in the final victorious offensive against Leningrad at the end of August, but the entire operation was preempted by a powerful Soviet offensive. Moreover, Muñoz Grandes also wanted major colonial compensation from Germany, though he required for this no more than "a word" from Hitler, and he assured the Germans that he had refused to respond to purported overtures from Don Juan. When the cabinet change of 3 September occurred in Madrid, Franco used the con-

tacts of Arrese and other FET leaders with German embassy officials to assure the latter that this would in no way result in a change of policy. The result was that Berlin tended to view the change as essentially favorable to its own interests, hitherto supposedly thwarted by the "Jesuitical" Serrano Súñer. On 5 September Muñoz Grandes reiterated his enthusiasm for a revolutionary fascist change in Madrid, but there is no real evidence that he would have been willing to try to lead this as a mere "quisling" of Hitler.[63]

On 26 September the embassy counselor Gardemann arrived in Berlin with word that Arrese, with the agreement of Franco, sought an invitation to visit Germany in order to tighten relations, since Arrese was said to recognize Hitler as "the leading opportunity for a new ordering of Europe."[64] Manuel Valdés Larrañaga, his closest collaborator in the FET leadership, had declared to Gardemann that Spain would enter the war as soon as Germany could provide adequate supplies, stressing that "when you arrive in Batum, we shall enter into action."[65]

Captain Hans Hoffmann, German liaison officer with the Blue Division, reported that Muñoz Grandes had announced that at the time of the recent cabinet change he had been offered the post of minister of a possible new ministry of food procurement, or, alternatively, the ambassadorship in Berlin, but had rejected them as lacking decisive importance. At any rate, rather than send Muñoz Grandes back to Madrid, Hitler agreed on 7 October to invite Arrese to Berlin. Three days later Hoffmann was sent to Spain to interview Yagüe, in provincial exile for more than two years. Yagüe declared that Franco had rejected his plan to use every opportunity—even including closer economic relations with Great Britain—to supply Spain in order to enter the war on Germany's side. Yagüe urged that Muñoz Grandes return immediately to Spain, where he might be able to oust Arrese and once more assume the secretary generalship of the FET. Together with the army minister, Asensio, he could then develop a more decisive pro-German orientation within the Spanish government, so that, once Germany had provided large-scale economic assistance, the three of them (Muñoz Grandes, Asensio, and Yagüe) could force Franco to enter the war. This was not, however, a convincing scenario for the Germans, who had become aware that Asensio was very hostile to the proposed Arrese visit, viewing it as a ploy by the latter to help restore the primacy of the FET. Moreover, both Yagüe and Asensio were convinced that it was very important to prepare for the restoration of the monarchy under Don Juan as the only viable long-range successor to Franco. Yagüe, in fact, claimed that he had written to urge the Pretender to work more closely with Germany to that end. On 5 November, however, Ribbentrop vetoed any German effort to foster the latter connection.[66]

General Agustín Muñoz Grandes as commander of the Blue Division