Part III
Falange Idealised

7 1939–59

Whilst the *Falange* as a whole undoubtedly supported the nationalist cause in July 1936 and became, thereafter, an integral part of the Franco regime, it cannot be considered – even within the conglomerate Party formed in April 1937 – as a monolithic bloc. It is necessary to differentiate between two types of Falangists. On the one hand, there were those who lent themselves wholeheartedly and uprotestingly to collaboration with the regime, and whose contribution to its establishment and development has been examined in preceding chapters. On the other, there were those also participated in the regime, but with a view to making their collaboration the means to 'steering' it from within along strictly Falangist lines, for they considered themselves the direct heirs of Primo de Rivera. As such, they believed, it was their duty to keep the flame of 'pure' falangism alive.

Although the purists never entirely gave up hope of being able to influence the course of the regime's development by legitimate means, it was clear that they would have numerous obstacles to contend with, not the least of which was the opposition of some of their own Falangist comrades. The influence of other political currents within FET y de las JONS also conditioned the Falangist radicals' chances of success, as did the changing international situation, especially after 1945. Finally, Franco's ultimate power and the lack of mass support from within and outside Falangist circles meant that, like the 'unshakably faithful' comrades, the *Falange* purists were unlikely to have any existence other than that permitted by, and within the confines of, the Franco regime.

The separation, for purposes of analysis, of an 'opposition' *Falange*, should not, however, be taken to imply that the 'opposition' Falangists had nothing to do with the 'regime' Falangists. They shared common social, political and historical origins, they espoused the same ideology, their responsibility for the outcome of the Civil War was the same, and there was no difference of class interests between them. Moreover, both were prepared, albeit with different motives, to participate in the establishment and running of the Franco regime. Nevertheless, the history of *Falange Española* in the Franco regime would be incomplete without an examination of the 'non-conformist' sector of the party.

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to the creation of a 'single party' in April 1937 was minimal, it was shortly after this that the first signs were given that *Falange* might not be as unconditionally behind Franco as it appeared to be. Between 1937 and 1938, an 'Old Shirt' Falangist who was highly esteemed by his comrades for his humanitarian qualities, Patricio González de Canales, attempted to form a group entitled *Falange Autónoma* (Autonomous *Falange*).[2] The group went no further than the latent discontent, or discomfort, of a few isolated individuals, as was only to be expected with the war still going on, and with the imprisoned Hedilla as an example to would-be rebels. Nevertheless, González de Canales remained one of the most persistent conspirators of the period, participating in numerous attempts to form clandestine, radical Falangist groups throughout the duration of the regime.

At the same time, though apparently without any connection with *Falange Autónoma*, a clandestine organisation which called itself *Falange Española Auténtica* (FEA) (Authentic Spanish *Falange*) circulated leaflets in which it protested against the Unification of political parties, and urged 'true' Falangists to re-establish the pre-1937 *Falange*. When discussing this episode, however, the word 'organisation', with reference to the source of the leaflets, must be used with care, for it is not certain that these were the work of an organised group, nor that they were produced by Falangists. Those who believed that the leaflets were not of Falangist origin were of the opinion that they formed part of a plan to destabilise the political situation in the Nationalist zone, and that this plan was devised and run from the Republican zone by the Socialist leader, Indalecio Prieto.[3] Certainly, Prieto had talked with *Falange* leader Raimundo Fernández Cuesta in Valencia prior to the latter's release from imprisonment. On that occasion, Prieto gave Fernández Cuesta the personal papers left in Alicante prison by José Antonio Primo de Rivera and, according to Ramón Serrano Suñer, encouraged Fernández Cuesta to join the FEA on his return to the Nationalist zone.[4] Prieto's own account of his connections with Primo de Rivera and Fernández Cuesta, however, give no indication that such was his intention although it is possible that, realising an important political advantage had been lost by the execution of Primo de Rivera, he believed the error could be repaired by returning Fernández Cuesta to the Nationalist camp. Fernández Cuesta himself, wary and laconic about this, as about most matters on which he was questioned by this writer, would not divulge the content of his conversation with Indalecio Prieto, and stated that the FEA was no more than 'a few isolated Falangists who did not agree with the Unification'.[5]

Other Falangists, however, did believe in the existence of the FEA and that the author of the leaflets was Vicente Cadenas Vicent. Cadenas was head of *Falange's* Press and Propaganda office in San Sebastian in 1937, and had fled to Italy, via France, at the time of the Unification, in order to avoid being implicated in the trials held against Hedilla and his supporters.[6] Cadenas himself denies responsibility for either the organisation or the pamphlets.[7] Yet it is worthy of note that the two Falangists most frequently associated with the FEA, Fernández Cuesta and Cadenas, were living in the same house close to the time of the Unification, for Fernández Cuesta stayed for some time in Cadenas' house in France following the former's departure from Valencia, *en route* for nationalist Spain.[8]

None of these people was involved, however, when the FEA reappeared as a motive for mutual mistrust and suspicion among Franco's followers, in 1939. In that year, three Falangists, Narciso Perales, Eduardo Ezquer y Gabaldón, and Tito Meléndez, were arrested on the charge of forming the organisational triumvirate of the FEA, with the intention of conspiring to assassinate or overthrow Franco.[9] Perales states that he had nothing to do with the group, although it is difficult to accept his assertion that he did not even know Meléndez, since the latter had been one of Hedilla's close collaborators prior to April 1937.

As far as Eduardo Ezquer was concerned, this was one more in a long series of accusations. He was well known in Falangist circles for his activities at the head of the *Falange* in the province of Badajoz in the party's foundational years. He had a penchant for parading well-disciplined detachments of uniformed Falangists round the province and proudly states, with reference to the period immediately prior to the Civil War, that he and his 'boys' had already 'managed, with noble behaviour ('de una manera hidalga'), in open and gentlemanly struggle, to reduce the Marxist groups which predominated in the province'.[10] As a result of his 'gentlemanly' habits, he was expelled from the province by the Civil Governor of Badajoz at the end of 1935. Shortly after the 1937 Unification, he was arrested and accused of 'rebellion against the *Generalísimo* and collaboration with the reds', and spent the next few months in the prisons of Cádiz, Puerto de Santa María, Gerona and Burgos.[11] As in the case of Manuel Hedilla, it would have been politically prejudicial to execute Ezquer, but his disobedience could be punished and his resistence worn down by imprisonment and police surveillence.

At about the time when the FEA arrests were made, in November 1939, a clandestine *Junta Política* was formed in Madrid. It was the

leader, Cipriano Mera, and acted as his representative in the Alliance[21] After a single meeting, the group was reported to the police and, officially, no more meetings could be held. Nevertheless, the Falangists continued to meet, without anarchist participation, into the early 1950s, and managed to establish small groups in some provinces. For a time, Dionisio Ridruejo collaborated in their efforts to promote national syndicalism through extra-official channles.[22]

The attempt to create the 'Syndical Alliance' was born from the awareness that, contrary to what official propaganda might state, the Franco regime did not protect the interests of the lower-middle and working classes and that, consequently, those classes constituted a potential mass following for a group whose ambitions had, equally, been less than totally satisified by the Franco regime. Clearly, support for a group which advocated 'national syndicalist revolution' was not going to come from the capitalist oligarchy which, in 1936, had encharged the military with precisely the suppression of what it saw as the threat of revolution. Nor could it be expected from those members of the party who had been coopted by the regime. Hence the attempt to appeal to the working classes and hence the use of a trade union, rather than an immediately political, strategy. In addition, it was hoped that the renewal of contact with the CNT would smooth the way to gaining the confidence of the working classes. However, this was not the moment for trade union activities on the margins of the official organisation, and repression was inevitable.

Even if it had not been liquidated from above, it is highly doubtful whether the *Alianza Sindicalista* would ever have made any headway among its putative clientèle. On the one hand, in spite of the Civil War and the subsequent repression, loyalties to the old Left wing organisations were still strong. On the other, for all they might appear with names which did not mention *Falange* specifically, people knew the origins of the men involved and could not dissociate them from their Movement correligionaries, then engaged in bringing the working masses to 'order' from official positions. In any case, even though the 'Alliance' Falangists claimed they were not the same as the 'collaborationist' Falangists, they could not deny that they had taken sides against the traditional working class organisations during the Civil War. Even with the anarchist 'seal of approval', that was too bitter a pill to swallow.

It was significant that the *Alianza Sindicalista* was founded at the end of the Second World War, when it was clear that fascist ideologies in Europe had, for the moment at least, been defeated. The Falangist

opposition felt either that Franco could be replaced without 'someone worse' (Hitler, for example) taking his place, or that they would have more room for manoeuvre if Franco were obliged by the external situation to leave, or to be politically more flexible. Thus, whilst one end of the Falangist spectrum prepared to 'resist to the end', but hung a portrait of Prince Juan Carlos in its meeting room, the other prepared, not to resist, but to attack, and sought to reach agreement with the anarchists.

The political short-sightedness of both extremes prevented them from seeing two important factors. Firstly, that the Allied Powers were unwilling to alter the status quo in Spain. Secondly, that the autarchic economic policy adopted by the regime from 1939 onwards had not yet, in 1945, led to the latter's debilitation but, rather, to its consolidation, through the enriching of the capitalist classes whose economic and political support were essential to it.

The international blockade imposed by the Allies justified the kind of survival economic policies and practices which, together with black market dealings and the manipulation of State economic controls, facilitated the accumulation of capital in the hands of those classes which had felt their position and interests threatened by the policies of the Second Republic. The support they consequently pledged to the regime strengthened it and assured its continuance, thereby providing, in turn, the grounds for the continuation of the anti-Francoist blockade.

This situation changed with the onset of the 'Cold War' in the mid 1940s and the adoption of communism, rather than fascism, as the enemy of world democracy. Hence the reluctance of the Western Powers to take steps which might provoke the fall of 'strong government' in Spain and a return to Republicanism or, what would, of course, be worse, to a communist regime.[23] Those Falangist groups not totally identified with the Franco regime failed to understand this real international situation and even, in their most optimistic moments, shared the hopes of the Alphonsine Monarchists and the Left-wing opposition that external intervention would be the cue for the removal of Franco as Head of State.[24]

By the end of the 1940s, the activity of the Falangist opposition had been reduced to a minimum, in a national and international context completely unfavourable to it. In the decade of the 1950s, a series of internal and external developments reduced it practically to nothing. By 1948, the 'alternative' *Falange* had 'entered a period of paralysis',[25] from which it was not to begin to recover until the end of the decade.

Perhaps with the wisdom of hindsight, Falangist apologists attribute the conversion of the Falangist opposition into 'a latent, rather than a *de facto*, force',[26] to a mixture of the repression carried out by the forces of law and order and a notable improvement in the standard of living of the middle and working classes. Not only was it still impossible to attempt any kind of proselytism on anything grander than an individual and personal scale, but also people were beginning to think that, thanks to Franco, life was getting better. The end of autarchy and the re-insertion of Spain into the international capitalist system, culminating in the Hispano-American Agreements signed in 1953, opened the way to the development of a fully-fledged consumer society, in which people were more concerned with emerging from a subsistence-level existence than with political criticism.

In truth, however, and the radical Falangists must surely have known it, this was only part of the explanation. The problem was not that people were not interested in politics. Of course they were. The first strikes in the history of the regime were staged in 1947 and prohibited Left-wing parties increased their actvities and following considerably in the 1950s – so much so that the end of the decade witnessed a particularly ferocious purge against them.[27] The fundamental problem was the lack of credibility of the Falangist 'opposition'. A secondary problem was the incapacity of essentially middle-class people, of university education and environment, to make contact in the working class circles where they were attempting to gain support:

> Although we (members of the Falangist opposition in 1955–56) were of lower middle class origin, our status as University students immersed us in a University world and that was the world we knew best and in which we moved with greatest facility. It was difficult for us to enter the working class world, firstly because of the logical rejection – which was not ideological, but class-based – on the part of the workers themselves. They said, "This is a *señorito*". Secondly, it was an unknown world for us, in which we could not work effectively.[28]

As a consequence of this failure to make any progress in the 'unknown world' of the working class, and in an anxious effort to recruit a new following not identified with the Franco regime, it was in University circles that the 'opposition' *Falange* carried out most of its activity and registered most of its success, limited though it was, in the decade of the 1950s. Thus, Falangist students played an active part in

the attempt to revitalise Spanish Universities and were closely involved in the agitation which, with increasing frequency and intensity, shook the campuses in those years. With the Falangist opposition seeming to be rejuvenated by university groups espousing the national syndicalist ideology, militants of long standing like Perales and Gonzáles de Canales felt optimistic again. In fact, their initial enthusiasm was short-lived, for the 'new opposition' quickly became disillusioned when it realised that effective opposition, that is, opposition which would propose, and might achieve, the replacement of the Franco regime by a totally different system, simply was not possible with FET y de las JONS as the starting point. 'It was', says an ex-Falangist, 'as if we had come up against a wall which it was impossible to jump over from the standpoint of the *Falange*.'[29]

The revolutionary impulses of the Falangist students were invariably repressed by pro-Francoist sectors of the Movement or stymied by Party leaders, as was demonstrated on such occasions as the visit, in 1954, of HM Queen Elizabeth II to Gibraltar. In protest against this visit, the SEU organised a demonstration outside the British Embassy in Madrid. The demonstration was perfectly in line with the regime's 'Gibraltar is Spanish' policy, and the fact that 'the Ministry of the Interior had encouraged the students' protest'.[30] Yet it was broken up by the police and the Spanish Foreign Minister sent apologies to the British Ambassador.[31] The students, confused and irritated by this contradictory situation, staged a second demonstration, this time in front of the *Dirección General de Seguridad*. It was also dispersed by force. Behind the scenes, too, there were unplanned repercussions. A group of people who had official posts in the Movement youth organisation and the SEU, and who were 'trying to take seriously the idea of the *Falange*', protested against what they considered to be the 'indecent attitude of the Ministry of the Interior towards the students', and were consequently dismissed from their posts.[32]

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the Falangist response to the students' protest was that it was frequently the older members of the self-styled 'non-regime' groups which vetoed, or failed to support, the initiatives of the younger members.[33] As a result of the lack of support from their own comrades, and of growing awareness of the contradiction between 'opposition' and '*Falange*', many Falangist students withdrew from Falangist groups and either joined clandestine Left-wing parties or remained on the margins of political activity. As in the case of the *Falange's* connection with the anarchists, there is a curious ambiguity in the attitude of opposition Falangists towards

these erstwhile comrades. On the one hand, they are inordinately proud that the *Falange* was 'the quarry which provided many militants for socialist parties',[34] and, on the other, resolutely opposed to the ideology of those parties.

The *Sindicato Español Universitario* (SEU) had held the official monopoly of student representation since the 1940s, when the Vice-secretary General of the Party, Pedro Gamero del Castillo, prepared the legislation which institutionalised this situation. As Falangist David Jato had predicted at the time of that legislation, the Students' Union had atrophied under the dead weight of a bureaucratic structure which had reduced the student role to a minimum and its efficacy to vanishing point.[35] By 1954, and as a result of the resumption of relations with the Western democratic world, a certain cultural 'defrosting' was beginning to accompany the improvements of a socio-economic nature in Spanish life. The war was not forgotten, but post-war generations were reaching adult age, and their parents, understandably, preferred to look forward to consumer comforts enjoyed in 'Franco's peace', rather than backwards to times of war and privation. They were assisted by a regime which now needed, on the one hand, to stimulate a population capable not only of producing but also of purchasing and, on the other, to erase and de-politicise the collective memory of the war.

In the accompanying atmosphere of relative openness, cultural and political life began to return to the hitherto dead body of the Spanish Universities. A small group of people began to work towards the development of a democratic student organisation,

> taking advantage of the birth of an opposition cultural movement. . . . Books by Gabriel Celaya and Blas de Otero were being published; it was the time of "Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall"; and the cinema clubs offered films which had been prohibited until then.[36]

In 1954, as series of cultural seminars, entitled 'Encuentros entre la poesía y la Universidad' ('Encounters between Poetry and the University'), were organised in the premises of the SEU in Madrid, in which contemporary poets were invited to present their work and then to discuss it with the students. The discussions, says one of the principal organisers of the seminars, were always highly politicised and, though ingenuous, consequently alarmed the Establishment.[37]

This attempt to break the acritical monotony of Spanish university and cultural life was enthusiastically received by all who participated

and, the following year, it was decided to broaden the scope of the attempt, with a 'Congress of Young University Writers'. The idea had the approval and active collaboration of the Rector of Madrid University, Pedro Laín Entralgo, and was jointly organised by students of democratic political inclination and members of a "progressive" sector of the SEU. The Minister of Education, Joaquin Ruiz Jiménez, and Laín Entralgo believed that a process of reform from within was possible and proposed to further that end from their official positions. The opposition of the Minister of the Interior, Blas Pérez, of the Party Vice-secretary, Romojaro, and of the most reactionary sectors of the *Falange*, proved stronger, however, than the enthusiasm and idealism of the democrats. The Congress, planned for November 1955, was prohibited.

In spite of the antipathy they clearly aroused, the intellectuals engaged in the effort to democratise and open up the University to a diversity of political and cultural influences and ideas, began to think about the organisation of a congress of students at national level. The manifesto announcing the National Congress of Students was drawn up in secret and read for the first time in *Tiempo Nuevo*, a cultural circle created under the auspices of the General Secretariat of the Movement and which had come to be the venue of students and intellectuals dissatisfied with the regime.[38] The document was then circulated in the Universities and thousands of signatures were collected in support of its call for an end to the monopoly of the SEU as the students' representative. Some days later, the Faculty of Law, considered to be the nerve-centre of anti-SEU operations, was invaded by a band of Falangists belonging to the extreme Right-wing organisation, *Guardia de Franco*, who set about the students with sticks and clubs. The premises of the SEU were attacked in reprisal.

Against this background of unrest and violence, the antagonism between SEUists and reformers came to a head in February 1956, in the clash which almost caused the death of Falangist Miguel Alvarez and which provoked the Cabinet reshuffle which removed Ruiz Jiménez from the Ministry of Education and Fernández Cuesta and Romojaro from the Party Secretariat.[39]

For the 'opposition' *Falange*, the events of the period between 1954 and 1956, throughout which the syndicalist sector remained noticeably passive, certainly showed that there were greater possibilities of mass support and effective mobilisation in the Universities than elsewhere. They also showed, however, that anything less than total opposition would be too weak to withstand both the repression exercised by the

regime and the scepticism of those whose support the dissatisfied Falangists sought. February 1956 called the bluff of the half-measures that certain members of the *Frente de Juventudes* and the SEU had adopted in the somewhat naïve hope of securing the approval of both the regime and its opponents:

> Obviously, in those years, we were convinced that, because of the atmosphere of Spanish society, it was not possible to introduce Pablo Inglesias, to rescue Besteiro, or to say that there were positive elements in Marxism. Obviously, no one puts his finger into a red-hot crucible; but it was necessary to be cooling it down. So we began with what appeared to be the easiest aspect: cultural values. In the magazines we published, such as *Juventud*, *La Hora*, or *Alcalá*, we tried to rescue those values. Until the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Gibraltar, the students were totally in favour of the régime and they had confidence in us. A student congress was held, which we had organised . . . Franco attended the closing session in the University, and the students applauded and acclaimed him tremendously. Then came the contradiction of official encouragement to protest against the visit to Gibraltar, and finding themselves up against the police when they arrived at the British Embassy. That turned the students against us. From then onwards, all that had been gained was lost.[40]

On the basis of the victory registered over the forces of reform, the regime *Falange* prepared to reassert its presence and authority through the project for the institutionalisation of the regime and the Movement, which began to be discussed in the National Council in that same year, 1956. Although that 'victory' was illusory, the main part of Falangist effort was concentrated on its consolidation, and the rebel Falangists could not hope for anything other than hostility from their politically more ambitious comrades. This was especially true in the latter years of the decade, when apparently less authoritarian sectors of the Movement were also anxious to consolidate and improve their positions.

With the entry into the Government, in February 1957, of a group closely associated with the *Opus Dei*, and generally considered to be apolitical (ie. not identified with any particular party) 'technocrats',[41] opposition began to arise within the *Falange* at points which appeared to have little to do with the *Falange* of the FEA or the *Alianza Sindicalista*. Thus, for example, in the ranks of the extreme Right-wing *Guardia de Franco*, clandestine nuclei began to be formed in 1958,

with the professed objective of reviving the ideological line followed by the JONS of Ramiro Ledesma and Manuel Hedilla. This was a strange attitude indeed to be adopted by a group which, two years ealier, had devoted itself to the physical repression of those who questioned the system ruled by the man responsible for the trial and imprisonment of Hedilla. A year later, in 1959, the leader of the *Guardia de Franco*, Luis González Vicén, was elected President of another new opposition current, the *Círculos Doctrinales 'José Antonio'* ('José Antonio' Doctrinal Circles).

When, in the sixties, these nascent opposition currents grew to form distinct and separate groups, it was not because their basic beliefs and interests made them incompatible, but because questions of emphasis and personal animosity made unity impossible. The situation in 1934–35, with the dual protagonism of Ledesma Ramos and Primo de Rivera, each with his own following, must have been very similar. In 1935, however, the historic role of the *Falange* was yet to be fulfilled and internal power struggles therefore had some meaning with respect to possible future developments. By 1960, *Falange's* instrumental usefulness had reached, and passed, its maximum and internal developments were consequently of considerably less significance than twenty-five years earlier.

The Falangist groups which began to arise in the wake of the approval, in 1958, of the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, had two main objectives. Firstly, they aimed to show that although the institutional framework and the historical context at the end of the 1950s were very different to those extant at the time of *Falange's* creation in 1933, Falangism was, nevertheless, applicable to the contemporary situation. Secondly, they wished to demonstrate that the 'real' *Falange*, represented by themselves, had been betrayed by the 'false' *Falange*, represented by those who had collaborated with the regime. The fact that many 'real' Falangists had once been collaborators was explained as the 'evolution' of their position, though the question of how this was compatible with their professed unaltered and uninterrupted fidelity to the 'true' doctrine was never raised. Such groups proliferated in the 1960s, particularly after 1964, with the initiation of a period of relative liberalisation, captained by Manuel Fraga Iribarne, from the Ministry of Information and Tourism.

Nevertheless, the Falangist 'opposition' remained opposition within the system it had participated in establishing, never clarifying the question of whether it was the game or only the rules it wanted to change. For a Falangist to shout 'Franco, you are a traitor!' when the

lights went out at the high point in a religious ceremony in the basilica of El Escorial, attended by all the Movement, Government, military and Church dignitaries, undoubtedly required a good deal of courage.[42] It was, however, the courage of the child who sticks out his tongue when the parental back is turned. The rebellious offspring was duly chastised, but the familar links remained. It was a gut-reaction which had little to do with critical analysis of the regime and its foundations, including the *Falange* itself. It had even less to do with deciding that either, or both, must be removed by force if they could not be persuaded to bow out gracefully of their own accord. For all the rumoured plots to kill Franco which have been attributed to the *Falange*,[43] not one was ever put into practice. Indeed, it was not until 1973 that a Left-wing group carried out the key assassination of Admiral Carrero Blanco which finally opened the way to political change that went further than simply rearranging the same elements in a different pattern. Finally, the Falangist opposition was an opposition which always came within the category of the 'tolerated opposition'.

This is not to deny that it suffered its share of persecution. It could hardly have expected to be credible at all if it had not and, as in the 1930s, it used such persecution to support the argument that it was not the ally of the regime. However, as some former Falangists now admit, they consciously took advantage of the degree of tolerance extended to the Falangist opposition to form their groups, particularly in the Universities.[44] In many cases, parental affiliations or connections with other, non-university Falangist organisations were sufficient to liberate young Falangists caught participating in opposition activities from anything worse than a severe reprimand in police headquarters. In other cases, a beating was administered as the punishment for 'playing at little reds'.[45] The propagandistic utility of such treatment increased as the possibility of Franco's demise grew, in so far as it could be used as part of the strategy employed by the *Falange* to maintain that it had nothing to do with the regime.

In 1960, a group of Falangists decided to revive a discussion group which had orginally been founded by José Primo de Rivera in the 1930s, the 'Happy Whale' (*'la Ballena Alegre'*). It met, as it had done thirty years earlier, in the basement of the Café 'Lyón', in Madrid. As well as the name and the venue, the essentially Falangist initiative and character of the group was maintained. Nevertheless, it was the policy of the *'Ballena'* group that anyone could attend and participate, irrespective of ideology or political affiliation. The *'Ballena'* discussion group, which was 'not an organised activity, just a weekly meeting',[46]

represented an attempt at Falangist reconstruction after the paralysis of the preceding decade. The main protagonists of the effort were already veteran members of the Falangist opposition, such as Narciso Perales, Ceferino Maestu, and Patricio González de Canales. In addition, they were now joined by a number of younger Falangists from the organisational and administrative levels of the *Frente de Juventudes*. For about a year, the group met to discuss different aspects of the problem of revitalising the *Falange*. Its meetings were brought to an abrupt halt, however, on orders from the Ministry of the Interior after a fight broke out, apparently provoked deliberately by ultra Right-winger Mariano Sánchez Covisa, during one of the meetings. The police intervened and the group was subsequently banned.[47]

There were two further attempts to find an outlet for the 'alternative' *Falange*, which arose in part from the options discussed and the contacts made in the '*Ballena Alegre*'. Firstly, the magazine *Sindicalismo* in its first version, edited by Maestu and Perales.[48] Secondly, a series of meetings held with workers in the industrial district of Villaverde (Madrid), also organised principally by Maestu and Perales. At the first of these meetings, recalls Perales, there were seven people, of whom five were policemen. At the last – for they were prohibited after a short time – there were some 350 workers.[49] The magazine *Sindicalismo* was first published, in theory, on a monthly basis but, in practice, when the censor had left enough text to make up one issue, in 1964. 'Logically', says Maestu,

> it had to have a Falangist focus, otherwise it would have been absolutely impossible. But there were lots of other things in it that weren't strictly Falangist but reflected rather, a time at which a group of us were moving towards critical positions and ideological concepts of a different type.[50]

Maestu was, in effect, already a member of a non-Falangist trade union organisation, the *Unión de Trabajadores Sindicalistas* (Syndicalist Workers' Union) and was soon afterwards involved with the clandestine *Comisiones Obreras* (Workers' Commisions). *Sindicalismo* eventually suffered the same fate as most previous attempts at Falangist opposition:

> Fraga, who was then Minister of Information and Tourism, finally prohibited its publication indefinitely. He called me personally and

told me that he would no longer authorise the publication of the magazine because he was tired of it causing him problems in Cabinet meetings, especially with Camilo Alonso Vega, who was then Minister of the Interior.[51]

At a time when the working class opposition spearheaded by clandestine Left-wing groups was becoming more frequent and organised, the group around Perales and Maestu was trying to take advantage of a general tendency towards the politicisation of labour conflicts, to promote their particular brand of trade unionism. According to their tenets, the class struggle would be done away with via the dismantling of the capitalist economic system and the integration of all members of society into an organically-arranged system of production and participation.[52] Whilst they maintained that the *Falange* had never been in power, it was not clear from their discourse how power was to be achieved in the future as the necessary pre-condition for the revolutionary measures they proposed, such as the expropriation of the large landowners or the nationalisation of the banks. Equally unclear was how the nationalist element in the Falangist ideology could be compatible with the irreversible insertion of Spain into an international system, in which Spain's position was that of Euro-American colony. Finally, the Falangist argument that Man is first and foremost a product of his spiritual, not his material, state and environment, was difficult to accept for classes which had a traditional belief in the opposite and a life-experience which seemed to corroborate that belief. In short, it was as difficult in the 1960s as it had been in the 1940s to find support among classes who were not convinced that a Falangist by any other name was not still a Falangist and, as such, represented classes and interests diametrically opposed to their own.

Notes

1. See above, pp. 44–5.
2. Romero Cuesta, A., *Objetivo: matar a Franco* (Madrid: Ediciones 99, Madrid 1976), p. 69; Falangist Javier Morillas, interviewed in Madrid, 22 Jan. 1977. Cf. Ridruejo, D., in *Cuadernos para el diálogo* (Madrid, Apr. 1966).
3. Cf. Southworth, H., *Antifalange*, p. 216. Falangists and others show a certain obsession with linking Primo de Rivera and Prieto; see for example: Gibello, A., *Apuntes para una biografía polémica*, pp. 208–12, 335–8; Rojas, C., *Prieto y José Antonio. Socialismo y Falange ante la tragedia civil* (Barcelona: Editorial Dirosa, 1977) *passim*; Zugazagoitia, J., *Guerra y vicisitudes de los españoles* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1977) pp. 23, 103, 176, 264. In personal conversation with this writer, Ernesto Giménez Caballero expressed the opinion that the ideal leader for the *Falange* was not Primo de Rivera, nor Hedilla, but Indalecio Prieto (interview, Madrid, 11 July 1978).
4. Serrano Suñer, R., *Entre Hendaya y Gibraltar*, p. 75, and *Memorias*, p. 178. On the contact maintained between Fernández Cuesta and Republican Ministers, see also Zugazagoitia, op. cit., pp. 254, 411.
5. Raimundo Fernández Cuesta, interview, 15 July 1977. His account of his contact with Prieto is considerably more detailed in *Testimonio*, p. 107–12. Cf. Prieto, I. *Palabras al viento* (Mexico: Ediciones Minerva, 1942) pp. 234–6.
6. Juan Aparicio López, interview, 24 June 1977; Ridruejo, D., *Casi unas memorias*, p. 99.
7. Vicente Cadenas Vincent, interview in Madrid, 25 Jan. 1978.
8. Ibid., and Fernández Cuesta, interview, 15 July 1977.
9. Narciso Perales, interview, 31 Dec. 1976; Alcazar de Velasco, A., interview, 15 Feb. 1977, and *Los 7 días de Salamanca*, pp. 173, 181.
10. For Ezquer's activities at the head of the Extremadura *Falange*, see: Ximénez de Sandoval, F. op. cit., pp. 185, 366; *Arriba* (18 Apr. 1935; 2 May 1935); *FE* (19 Apr. 1934); *Actualidad Española* (8 May 1969); Crozier, B. *Franco* (London, 1967).
11. Eduardo Ezquer y Gabaldón, interview in Madrid, 28 Feb. 1977. The accusation of 'collaboration with the reds' seems highly unlikely in view of Ezquer's persecution of the Socialists before the war.
12. Former member of General Primo de Rivera's *Unión Patriótica* and of the *Unión Militar Española*, Rodríguez Tarduchy was a member of *Falange* from November 1933 onwards. He was a frequent contributor to *Arriba* in the 1940s, on military and political affairs. His articles never contained any reference to Franco.
13. Author of the first book of Falangist doctrine, *¡Arriba España!*, published in Aug. 1935. Pérez de Cabo was tried by Court Martial and shot in 1942 (see above, note 41, p. 92).
14. Romero Cuesta, A., op. cit., p. 77, taken from the personal notes of Gonzáles de Canales; Narciso Perales, interview, 31 Dec. 1976.
15. Ibid.
16. Eduardo Ezquer y Gabaldón, in *Actualidad Española* (8 May 1969) and interview with the present writer, 28 Feb. 1977. I am grateful to novelist and historian Luis Romero for the information regarding the Valencia power station.
17. Ezquer, E. interview, 28 Feb. 1977, Perales, N. interview, 31 Dec. 1976.
18. Raimundo Fernández Cuesta maintains that 'clandestine' was hardly an applicable term, since the General Secretariat of the Movement and the Police were fully aware of the existence of the Falangist 'opposition' (interview, 15 July 1977).
19. For the relation between Falangism and anarchism see, eg.: Ramiro