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## Spain

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# Storm clouds gather over Reagan visit

by Katherine Kanter

Will President Reagan's May 6-8 visit to Spain firm up that country's membership in the Western Alliance and draw it into cooperation with the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, or will Russian agents-of-influence succeed in turning NATO's newest member into a *de facto* member of the Warsaw Pact, like Andreas Papandreou's Greece? That is what friends of the United States in Spain are asking as the President arrives, in the midst of an explosion of Communist-backed anti-Americanism in the country.

On April 17, Socialist Prime Minister Felipe González was forced to announce that a popular referendum would "most likely" be held in March 1986, on whether or not Spain should remain in NATO. His Socialist Party (PSOE) had promised to hold such a referendum after it came to power in October 1982. But since the election of the Socialists was contingent upon certain arrangements with the United States and with the Spanish military establishment, the referendum never took place. Should it be held now, the Spanish population, inundated with propaganda from the Communist Party, the extraparliamentary Left, and the German Greens, would beyond any doubt vote to withdraw from the Alliance.

In December 1984, the PSOE voted in favor of remaining in NATO. But Soviet blackmail is intensifying, and González's announcement shows what pressure he is now under from the Communists and Left Socialists.

González has staked his political fate on keeping Spain with the West, and will campaign hard for this in the coming months. In an interview with U.S. journalists at the end of April, he said that he hoped that President Reagan's visit would help him to accomplish this task. The timing of Reagan's visit is "very delicate," he said. It could "be interpreted by some as an element of pressure on the outcome of the referendum. But it could also have a backfire effect," meaning that an unsuccessful visit could reinforce anti-NATO feeling.

### An anti-American rampage

The Communist mobilization underway in Spain has no precedent since the immediate pre-Civil War period. The cities of Granada and Santander declared Reagan *persona non grata*; 300 public figures took out full-page ads against Reagan. Posters have appeared in all the major Spanish cities

signed by the above agencies, by the Communist Party split-off Movimiento Comunista, a front for the ETA Basque terrorists, and, more telling, by the anarcho-syndicalist Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo, *agents provocateurs* who normally surface only in time of war, far from their habitual Barcelonese haunts.

These posters portray the U.S. President in various monstrous poses, with one eye of a snake, or as a cowboy riding nuclear missiles to the destruction of the world. The captions refer to him as "worse than the Nazis . . . a warmonger," captions which have been amplified in all speeches made by Communist and Left Socialist leaders. In the words of former Communist Party chief Santiago Carrillo, "Reagan is a spotted beast, an undesirable, whose very visit is a provocation." The extra-parliamentary left and the various ecologist and "human rights" groupings are mobilized for "unified action against Reagan's presence."

One might say, "hark, hark, the dogs do bark," and imagine that the Spanish government need pay no need. But every day Russia comes closer to pulling off a cold coup against NATO. Foreign Minister Fernando Moran, offspring of the Libyan-backed Partido Socialista Popular, declared on April 27 that should the United States not desire to negotiate the withdrawal of its 12,000 troops from Spanish soil, "we shall renounce the Hispano-American Friendship and Defense Cooperation Treaty." Moran also stated that the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is "a mere idea."

Lest anyone mistakenly believe this was just another of that unfortunate minister's notorious sorties, the Spanish President spoke in virtually the same terms on April 29, before the North American press corps. Whereupon *EIR* consulted the official spokesman for the Presidency, and was told that indeed, "Should the North American presence be withdrawn, there would be far less risk of terrorist attacks like that at Torrejón de Ardoz two weeks ago where 18 died."

On April 30, Vice-President Alfonso Guerra suddenly announced that he would be out of the country—in Hungary—during the period of Reagan's visit. "I do not care whether Reagan's trip to Spain is canceled, as I shall be away," he proclaimed. On May 1, the PSOE-controlled Board of the Parliament refused outright to answer a parliamentary question on whether or not the government would participate in the SDI, and whether the government felt bound by the negative attitude of the Union of Socialist Parties of the European Community toward these laser defense systems.

The United States enjoys the use in Spain of the largest airfield in Europe, at Torrejón, and of a submarine base at Rota near Cadiz. Their loss would not be tolerable to the military balance in North Africa and the Atlantic. The U.S.S.R. and Cuba have together something over 60,000 seamen, purportedly aboard merchant vessels in the Canary Islands, who participate regularly in vast naval maneuvers. Unless the United States realizes that this is not a time for "business as usual" in Spain, the NATO alliance is in for a very rough ride.

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