

## SPAIN

### "El Caudillo"

Francisco Franco y Bahamundo, known as "El Caudillo" (Leader), governed Spain for thirty-nine years based on the "emergency" war powers granted him by the Nationalist "Junta" in 1936. His first decade in power was marked by repressive military tribunals, political purges, economic hardships, and a brutal civil war. Over seven hundred thousand Spaniards died, many by firing squad or some other form of execution. Recovering from all this destruction would have been tough enough, but it was exacerbated by the loss of railway rolling stock, a general breakdown in communications, a shortage of skilled labor, a series of bad crop years, limited foreign exchange, and the restriction of imports imposed by WWII and its aftermath.

Franco's "dealings" with Hitler and his miserable human rights record led the United Nations to impose diplomatic sanctions on his government after WWII that amplified the effect of misguided Falangist economic policies like rigid price controls and industrial development sheltered from normal free-market pressures. National income in post-war Spain fell to levels not seen since 1900. Industrial production and agricultural output stagnated. Consumer buying power crashed. Near famine was common and black-marketeering rampant. Grinding poverty forced a migration of peasant "camposinos" and their families to miserable shantytowns on the outskirts of Spain's cities. Fears of renewed conflict led to brutal repression and a controlled and censored press. Discontent and sullen rage festered, but could take no organized form. The wounds of the recent war were still fresh. For the victors and their supporters there was power and privilege, for the vanquished, the prison cell or the "wall"!

### España Resucita (Spain Revived)

Franco walked a delicate tightrope during these years, skillfully playing off one pressure group against another. Many of Franco's fellow generals were monarchists and hostile to his political power base (the Falange), so there were regular demands for a restoration of the monarchy. To this end, the opposition, now in exile, presented Don Juan (Alfonso XIII's heir) as an acceptable alternative to Franco. There was even a revival of guerrilla activity by the communists between 1944 and 1948, that was met with savage repression. In 1945, Franco even issued the "The Fuero de los Españoles", which guaranteed personal freedoms in return for domestic peace, in an effort to establish his democratic credentials both at home and abroad. Nobody was buying it!

But, he also had reasons to be confident. With the onset of the Cold War, the United States would come to see Spain as a valuable ally against the Soviet Union. France and Britain could declare their support for the democratic opposition, but would not intervene directly for fear of renewed civil war. In 1953, an agreement with the United States gave Franco considerable financial aid in return for the establishment of four US bases on Spanish territory. In 1955, at American insistence, Spain was admitted to the United Nations. A Falange attempt to create a one-party state was defeated in 1956. Franco's position was becoming practically unassailable.

Opposition never completely died. It now primarily took the form of student unrest, strikes, and unsuccessful efforts by the "Partido Comunista de España" (PCE) to challenge the regime in the late 1950s. In the 1960s, the economic hallmarks of Franco's rule; nationalism, protectionism, and state intervention, were abandoned in favor of a reluctant acceptance of a free-market economy and the opening of Spain to international trade and much-needed foreign capital. This policy was justified by high economic growth between 1962 and 1966, with particular increases in tourism and foreign investment. There was also a dramatic drop in the percentage of the population actively engaged in agriculture. Spain was rapidly becoming a modern industrialized nation. Technocratic forces were fiercely resisted by the Falange as being a surrender of its social policies to "neo-capitalism". All hopes for limited political liberalization were blocked by conservative elements. The one reformist victory in this period was the "Press Law" of 1966, which gave Spanish news media greater freedom and influence.

While prosperity brought a novel degree of social mobility in the 1960s and satisfied an enlarged middle class, labor activism revived as well. Workers' Commissions (Comisiones Obreras) were set up to negotiate wage claims. There were serious strikes. Though individual clergymen often actively supported these strikes, the church itself generally supported the regime. But it was becoming increasingly aware of the long-term dangers of alliance with an armed and ruthless dictatorship.

The old problem of ethnic nationalism and demands for autonomy continued to simmer throughout the sixties and seventies. In the Basque provinces (Euzkadi), nationalists could count on the support of a sympathetic clergy and an ancient cultural identity. Basque nationalists developed a particularly vicious terrorist wing, the "Euzkadi Ta Azkatsuna" or "Basque Homeland and Liberty" (ETA). This organization, with links to many other terrorist groups, committed acts that became the standard for atrocities worldwide. In the northeast, the "Assembly of Catalonia" in 1971 united the opposition around Barcelona with a demand for a restoration of the "Autonomy Statute" of 1932.

Given Franco's failing health, the problem of establishing a peaceful succession became a primary source of political concern, leading to the "Organic Law" of 1969 that finally gave Spain a constitution. In it, Franco recognized Juan Carlos (Don Juan's heir) as his successor, king of all the Spanish people, and head of the Spanish State. In June 1973, Franco's health forced him to surrender the premiership to Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco. Carrero Blanco's premiership was not successful. The ETA assassinated him before the year was out!

Next, came Carlos Arias Navarro, former minister of the interior. His government saw a fierce struggle between reformists, led by Manuel Fraga and the new foreign minister, José María de Areilza. This government was distinguished by its repression of the ETA in the Basque Provinces and the execution of five ETA terrorists in September 1975, in defiance of international protest.

### His Majesty, Juan Carlos

The death of Franco on November 20th, 1975 and the accession of Juan Carlos as king, began a new era in Spanish history.

The Spanish had somehow accomplished a peaceful transition to democracy by means of the legal instruments and political maneuverings of one of the twentieth century's most ruthless and cold-blooded murderers. Franco's strategies had made it possible to avoid the perils of the "democratic rupture" advocated by the opposition. Arias Navarro, incapable of supporting the democratic policies advocated by the king, was replaced in July 1976 by Adolfo Suárez González, a former Francoist minister. Suárez persuaded the Francoist right in the "Cortes" (parliament) to pass the "Law for Political Reform" in November, which allowed for the first election in Spain's long history by universal suffrage. Spain had become a constitutional monarchy. Church and state were separated. Provision was made to extend full regional autonomy to Euzkadi and Catalonia. In April 1977, even the PCE was legalized, against the wishes of the armed forces.

The seemingly unstoppable march toward full democracy was interrupted on February 23rd, 1981 by an attempted military coup. A junta held the government and its deputies hostage for eighteen hours, but failed to break King Juan Carlos' resolute support for the democratic constitution. In an act unprecedented in Spanish history, Spanish troops simply refused to obey their officers and remained loyal to the constitutional monarch! Spain's credentials as a true Western democracy had finally been established.

The election in October of 1981 brought in a new government that made its main concern the battle against inflation and the modernization of industry. This brought it into conflict with the unions, many of which were controlled by the PCE. There were violent strikes against the closing of economically non-viable steel plants and shipyards. The left was further alienated by the government's decision to accept full membership in NATO,

stating this was necessary if Spain was to play a role in international politics. To justify this radical departure from Spain's traditional neutralism, membership in NATO was submitted to a referendum and made dependent on a partial withdrawal of US forces stationed in Spain under previous agreements. Spain was also required to make its contribution to collective defense outside the integrated NATO military command.

The government next capitalized on law-and-order issues, like terrorism, street crime, and a serious drug problem. It was accused of using its centrist majority as a "steamroller" to force through major reforms in university and secondary education, abandonment of socialist policies to fight inflation, and support for a capitalist free-market economy. All parties, with the exception of the Left, supported the government's decision to offer logistical support for the 1991 Persian Gulf War. However, massive demonstrations against the war revealed widespread neutralist sentiments.

#### Revolutionary Military Changes

Until 1982, the army was organized into nine regional operational commands and its forces divided into two basic types: the "Immediate Intervention Forces" (FII) and the "Territorial Operational Defense Forces" (FOD). The FII consisted of three divisions and ten independent brigades. Its mission was twofold: to defend the national frontiers and fulfill Spain's military commitments abroad. The FOD consisted of two mountain divisions and fourteen independent brigades. Its missions were to maintain security in the regional commands and to provide support for the "Guardia Civil" and local police in operations against terrorists and saboteurs.

However, most of the FII were poorly positioned to defend Spain from invasion. Many units were stationed near major cities, primarily for the convenience of officers holding part-time jobs, although the official argument was that these locations would allow quick response to threats of civil unrest. The FOD, on the other hand, had become a sort of gentleman's club, providing employment for officers from socially prominent families and giving local property owners a sense of security from attack by Spain's perennially leftist labor movement and Marxist youth groups.

In a gradual process, the existing organization was abolished. The nine original "regional" commands were reduced to six: Central Command, Southern Command (including North Africa), Levante Command, Eastern Pyrenees Command, Northwestern Command, and Western Pyrenees Command. The brigade was now the fundamental tactical unit and the total number of these was reduced from twenty-four to fifteen. Eleven formed the basis of five traditional divisions, three were to be independent, and one went into general reserve.

Of the divisions, the best equipped was the 1st (Brunete) Division, with an armored brigade located in Madrid and two mechanized brigades stationed near Badajoz on the Portuguese border. The 2nd (Guzman el Bueno) Motorized Division, which had acquired a third brigade in the reorganization, was deployed in the south, where its capability for rapid maneuver could be exploited. The 3rd (Maestrazgo) Mechanized Division was placed under the "Levante Command" and consisted of two brigades. The 4th (Urgel) and 5th (Navarra) Mountain Divisions, consisting of two mountain brigades each, remained in the Pyrenees to the north. Two of the four independent brigades were armored cavalry, one was airborne, and one a paratroop brigade (in general reserve).

Numerous other changes were introduced as well. Those artillery units not included in the major combat organizations were organized into a field artillery command of brigade size. There was now a single "Gibraltar" coastal artillery command to replace two former coastal artillery regiments. An anti-aircraft artillery command was also created, and expected to benefit from a significant modernization of the country's SAM inventory.

The personnel strength of the army, was trimmed from 280,000 to 240,000 as part of an ongoing program to reduce the army to 195,000 by 1991. Beyond the Spanish mainland, about 19,000 troops were stationed in Ceuta and Melilla. In addition to the Spanish Foreign Legion, these included four regiments of African "Regulares". 5,800 troops were assigned to the Balearic Islands, and 10,000 to the Canary Islands.

#### **FOREIGN WEAPONS**

120mm Brandt Mortar, AMX/Mistral, AMX/Roland, "Mistral" SAM, VAB - FR; Leopard-2 - GE; 105mm M56 - IT; 20mm Oerlikon - SW; Scorpion, "Milan" ATGM - UK; All other foreign weapons - US

#### **TABLES OF ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT**

##### **DIVISION "BRUNETE": 1996+**

**Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 70, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 30%**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Mechanized Company:     | 3xTL3 Infantry(B)/M113, 1xBMR-600/Milan, 1x120mm M106 Mortar(2)  |
| Tank Company:           | 4xM-60A3 or Leopard-2  |
| Anti-Tank Company:      | 3xBMR-VEC/TOWII  |
| Recon Squadron:         | 4xVEC-25[R], 1x120mm M106 SP Mortar(2)   |
| Engineer Company:       | 3xTL3 Engineer/M113A1  |
| Mechanized Battalion:   | 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/M-577, 3xMechanized Company, 1xTracked Milan  |
| Armored Battalion:      | 1xTank (HQ), 3xTank Company  |
| Engineer Battalion:     | 3xEngineer Company   |
| Cavalry Regiment:       | 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/M577, 1xTank Company[R], 1xMechanized Company[R],<br>3xRecon Squadron, 1xEngineer Company, 1xToyota Truck/Milan |
| Field Artillery Group:  | 3xM109A2(4)  |
| Heavy Artillery Group:  | 2xM110A2(4)  |
| Anti-Aircraft Regiment: | 3xAMX/Roland or 3xAMX/Mistral  |
| Mechanized Brigade:     | 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/M-577, 2xMechanized Battalion, 1xArmored Battalion, 1xField Artillery Group                                    |
| Armored Brigade:        | 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/M-577, 2xArmored Battalion, 1xMechanized Battalion, 1xField Artillery Group                                    |
| Artillery Regiment:     | 2xHeavy Artillery Group  |
| 1st Division:           | 1xArmored Brigade, 2xMechanized Brigade, 1xArtillery Regiment, Engineer Battalion, 1xCavalry Regiment,<br>1xAnti-Aircraft Regiment   |

Notes: 1) Armored Battalion HQ tanks must be of the same type as those in the battalion's component companies.  
2) The "Tracked Milan" is a vehicle similar to the British FV432/Milan.

**Please Note**

I have found Division "Brunete" described in various English and Spanish language sources as having two brigades and three brigades, as a Mechanized Division and an Armored Division, as having from one to four Armored Battalions, from two to six Mechanized Infantry Battalions, and so forth. The above TO&E, therefore, represents an estimate as to its actual structure at the time you read this. The most reliable data appears to be available at the official Spanish Army website (Ejercito de Tierra) and is readily available for those of us who read Spanish. The "NORTE" Project (Spain's current reorganization program) is ongoing at this time and all data included here must be considered provisional.

**PARATROOP BRIGADE: 1991+**

**Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 70, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 35%**

Para-Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A)/Truck, 1xTL3 Infantry Support/Truck, 1x81mm M86 Mortar(1)/Truck  
Support Company: 1x20mm "Oerlikon"/Truck, 1x120mm Brandt Mortar(2)/Truck, 1xLandrover/Milan,  
1x TL3 Infantry(S)/Toyota Pickup  
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer  
Anti-Tank Company: 3xLandrover/Milan

Para-Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/Truck, 3xMarine Infantry Company, 1xSupport Company  
Artillery Battalion: 2x105mm M56 Howitzer(3)/Truck

Paratroop Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 3xPara-Infantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 2xEngineer Company, 1xAnti-Tank Company

Notes: 1) The Parachute Brigade is known by the acronym "BRIPAC".  
2) The Spanish Air-Transportable Brigade has a similar organization to the BRIPAC.  
3) The Type(S) Infantry in the Support Company are Special Forces "Pathfinders".  
4) Anti-Aircraft Guns may be replaced by Mistral SAMs in 1995.

**MARINE BRIGADE: 1995+**

**Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 70, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 30%**

Marine Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A), 1xTL3 Infantry Support  
Support Company: 1x81mm M86 Mortar(4)/Truck, 1x106mm M40 RcR/Landrover  
Marine Commando Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(S)  
Amtrak Company: 4xLVTP-7  
Transport Company: 4xBMR-600 or 4xM113A1  
Tank Company: 3xM60A3  
Light Tank Company: 3x"Scorpion"  
Anti-Tank Company: 3xLandrover/TOWII

Marine Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/Truck, 3xMarine Infantry Company, 1xSupport Company  
Marine Commando Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/Truck, 3xMarine Commando Company, 1xCombat Diver Company  
Artillery Battalion: 2x105mm M56 Howitzer(3)/Truck, 1x155mm M109A2(3)

Marine Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 2xMarine Battalion, 1xCommando Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 1xAmtrak Company, 1xTransport Company, 1xTank Company, 1xLight Tank Company, 1xAnti-Tank Company

Notes: 1) Each Marine Infantry stand may contain an attached "Dragon" ATGM team (MP).  
2) One stand in each Marine Company may contain an attached "Mistral" SAM team (MP).  
3) "Combat Diver" companies consist of 3xTL3 Infantry(S) trained in underwater recon and demolition work.  
4) All "Trucks" are Toyota/Nissan Pickups.

**MIXED SPANISH/MOROCCAN MECHANIZED BRIGADE: 1995+**

**Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 70, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 30%**

Spanish Mechanized Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(B)/BMR-600, 1xBMR-600/81mm Mortar(1)  
Support Company: 1xBMR-600/120mm Mortar(2), 1xLandrover/Milan, 1xBMR-625/20mm[R]  
Moroccan Motorized Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(C)/VAB, 1xVAB-20mm[R], 81mm M61L Mortar(1)/Toyota Pickup Truck  
Recon Company: 4xAMX-10RC[R]  
Light Recon Squadron: 3xVEC-25mm[R]  
Recon Squadron: 1xTL3 Infantry(R)/BMR-600, 3xVEC-25mm[R]  
Tank Company: 4xLeopard-2

Spanish Mechanized Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/BMR-600, 3xMechanized Company, 1xSupport Company  
Moroccan Motorized Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(C) HQ/VAB, 3xMotorized Company, 1xRecon Company, 1xTL3 Engineers/VAB,  
1x120mm Brandt Mortar(2)/VAB  
Recon Group: 1xTL3 Infantry(R) HQ, 2xRecon Squadron  
Armored Regiment: 1xLeopard-2 (HQ), 3xTank Company

Mixed Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 1xSpanish Mechanized Battalion, 1xMoroccan Motorized Battalion,

Notes: 1) The above TO&E represents that of the "Mixed" Brigades of the Melilla and Ceuta garrisons and the Spanish contribution to the "KFOR" force in Kosovo, minus the Armored Regiment.

### **TACTICAL NOTES**

The main reason Spain was included in these pages lies in long-standing Spanish guarantees of support for the Moroccan government, especially in the contested Western Sahara. The "Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia, el Hamra, and Río de Oro" (Polisario) have been conducting sporadic combat operations there since 1975, in an effort to oust the Moroccans. The area is quiescent at the moment. Financial and military support for the Polisario from Algeria and Libya has dried up in recent years. But, in the present atmosphere of religious fundamentalism, widespread anti-Western rhetoric, and military uncertainty, anything is possible.

Morocco's king, Muhammad VI, has been cooperative toward the West and an enlightened ruler. This has made him many enemies among fundamentalist Muslims, who would shed few tears at his downfall. Spain and Morocco have enjoyed good relations, and profitable trade for many years and Spanish forces are sure to come to Muhammad VI's aid in a crisis. A Spanish expeditionary force could land with little fanfare at Ceuta or Melilla, with the announced purpose of protecting the lives and property of the many Spanish citizens there. Morocco is the only country in Africa with ports on both the Mediterranean and Atlantic. The US would certainly lend all the support it could to maintain stability in what it perceives as a strategically important and politically moderate Muslim nation.

A combined Spanish force of paratroops, marines, and "Legionarios", backed up by the "Mixed" brigades of the Mellila and Ceuta garrisons would probably be joined by troops from the US "Fleet Marine Force" (FMF) and possibly US airborne and/or Airmobile forces for operations against Polisario, Algerian, and/or Moroccan insurgent forces.

### **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

In the 1980's, in talks with NATO officials, Spanish defense planners put forth a theory that a "Strategic Axis" runs from the Balearic Islands, through the Strait of Gibraltar, and out to the Canaries. In particular, they emphasized Spain's strategic position facing the Mediterranean and Atlantic. They stressed the importance of the "Straits" area to military lines of supply and international commerce between these two maritime zones. Efforts to establish a "contingency" command under Spanish control in this area have met with little success so far, since the region shows few signs of military instability. The Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania) pose little threat to Europe. So little, in fact, that a former Spanish Defense Minister, maintained the position "we have no enemies" as the underlying rationale for Spanish defense policy.

But, in the event of war in the Maghreb, Spain would have to defend of the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, which are garrisoned in peacetime by "mixed" brigades supported by two regiments of the Spanish Foreign Legion. To strengthen this force, Leopard-2 tanks were sent to the 3rd Cavalry Regiment (Montesa) and 10th Cavalry Regiment (Alcantara), which form part of these garrisons. Introducing such advanced tanks to the African continent for the first time gives Spain a major technological advantage over local forces.

In the last decade, Spain's participation in international peacekeeping efforts demonstrate that the Spanish will not act independently in any confrontation, other than self-defense. Spain will not send its troops abroad without the backing of NATO and the UN, especially without the support of NATO intelligence services and AWACS aircraft. The new Spanish "rapid action force" (FAR), consisting of a brigade of paratroops, one of air-transported infantry, and one of legionnaires will provide excellent reinforcement options for operations in Africa, and Spain's reorganized mechanized and armored cavalry forces should provide decisive combat power for just about any offensive, or defensive, need.

Spanish peacekeeping efforts in recent years include the dispatch of Seven Spanish Army officers to monitor the Cuban withdrawal from Angola in 1991. An observer group in Central America, crucial to stabilizing the region and demobilizing the Contras, was commanded by Spanish General Agustin Quesada Gomez and ultimately included forty-nine Spanish officers. These missions were popular with both the Spanish populace and Spanish servicemen.

In September 1998, Spain refused a UN request to contribute troops to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), citing high financial costs and overstretched resources. But, in the year 2000, Spain had one infantry battalion and supporting units, totaling fourteen hundred personnel, deployed in Bosnia, six observers in Croatia, and an observer in Macedonia. A Spanish battlegroup was also involved in operations in Kosovo in support of KFOR that year.

### New Vehicles

Until 1975, Spain procured all major weapons from foreign sources (mostly the US). Since then, Spanish defense firms have undertaken major upgrade and modification projects. The "Conventional Forces Europe" (CFE) Treaty gave Spain three hundred ten M-60A3s and a hundred M113s between 1992 and 1994. The M-60s constituted a vast improvement on Spain's existing M-47s and M-48s. They were pressed into immediate service. Between 1998 and 2003 Spain has acquired one hundred eight Leopard-2A4s from Germany. The army has also taken delivery of significant quantities of BMR-600 armored personnel carriers and VEC scout vehicles that have been re-engined and upgraded by "Santa Barbara Blindados" (SBB) to extend their operational lives. The upgraded BMRs have been redesignated as BMR-2s and the VECs as VEC-2s.

In September 1999, the Spanish Ministry of Defense acquired Italian IV22 "Centauro" wheeled, armored recon vehicles and a training, spares and support package. These have been used to equip an armored cavalry regiment of the Spanish Army's "Fuerza de Accion Rapida" (FAR). The Centauro is armed with a 105mm high-pressure gun with fourteen ready-to-fire rounds and twenty-six rounds in the rear compartment. The vehicle has a crew of four and four additional troops can be carried in this compartment if the ammunition racks are removed.

### New Artillery

The "Conventional Forces Europe" (CFE) Treaty mentioned above also gave Spain twenty-four 203mm M110A1 SP guns, but these represent only a small part of Spain's artillery modernization program. In addition, many of Spain's 155mm M-109 SP guns have been upgraded to M109A5 standards. There was also a general reinforcement of the artillery in the 1990s, including an increase in battery size from six to eight tubes. New equipment was put in service generally and existing equipment modernized. In the field artillery, ninety-six 105mm Light Guns were purchased from "Royal Ordnance" in the UK and six 155mm APU SBT-1 towed howitzers were ordered from "SBB" in December 1999. These represent the first of at least one hundred of these guns ordered. The 155 APU SBT-1 was developed by "Santa Barbara" as a private venture, the first prototypes of which were built with no government funding.

### New Helicopters

Boeing Aircraft won a contract in January 2000 to upgrade five Boeing 414-176 International "Chinook" helicopters to CH-47D standards

for the Spanish Army, in addition to the twelve CH-47Ds it already operates. These were delivered in 2002. The choice of the Spanish Army's replacement attack helicopter is being driven by conflicting diplomatic and military objectives. Officials believe the Franco-German "Tigre" reigns as the notional political favorite, but the air force is anxious to acquire the AH-64 "Apache" to replace its obsolete BO-105s. Neither the German nor French variant of the Tigre correspond to their specifications, which more closely resemble those of the Apache.

#### "Euzkadi Ta Azkatsuna"

On January 21st, 2000 Basque terrorists (the ETA) ended a fourteen-month cease-fire by blowing up two cars in Madrid, killing an army lieutenant colonel. Rumors of new terror campaigns spread rapidly. However, usually well informed sources have recently said that ETA's political wing, "Herri Batasuna" (Popular Unity) is now seriously considering breaking publicly with the armed ETA. Herri Batasuna's leaders would like to increase their political influence in the Basque country and cultivate a respectable image as social democrats. Since the ETA truce, they have enjoyed a good deal of electoral success, especially around the Basque stronghold of San Sebastian. They are, therefore, loathe to give up this political momentum. Action by armed separatists is becoming an embarrassment to the Herri Batasuna leadership, but they are under a lot of pressure from the movement's radical youth wing and the families of imprisoned ETA militants.

#### Recent Action in the "War on Terror"

On January 17th, 2003, Spanish Police arrested sixteen suspected al-Qaida terrorists. US officials said the men may have links to those responsible for bringing the poison "ricin" into the UK. Spanish authorities said those arrested were connected to recent terrorist activity in Britain and France, but stopped short of tying them to the ricin arrests. Interior Minister Angel Acebes said "The network we've just dismantled had connections to the Islamic terrorists detained recently in France and the United Kingdom."

US counter-terrorism officials, speaking in Washington on condition of anonymity, said those arrested in Britain may have been planing to put ricin, an easy-to-make biological weapon, in food at a British military base. The official said one of those arrested worked in the food services department of that base, which was not identified. Traces of ricin were detected in a suspect's apartment. The arrests marked a significant break in efforts to avert al-Qaida attacks in Europe. Spanish authorities said those arrested had explosives, chemicals, and false passports in their possession. They are believed to have planned attacks on several unspecified targets.

Spanish Prime Minister Azner said, "Those arrested were preparing to commit attacks with explosives and chemical materials." There were no immediate details on specific targets. US officials would not rule out a large, multi-country terrorist attack using chemical or biological weapons, but said it is too soon to say with any certainty. One hundred fifty police using sniffer dogs took part in the pre-dawn raids on twelve apartments in Barcelona and other cities in Catalonia.

Mohamed Atta, one of the September 11th suicide pilots, traveled in Catalonia and is believed to have met with other al-Qaida members there months before that date. Four terrorist suspects arrested in France in December had traveled to Spain and had extensive contacts with some of those arrested on Friday. French police say they were planning bomb or gas attacks in France and Russia. British police have carried out a series of arrests this month since the deadly poison ricin was found in a London apartment on January 5th. British police declined comment on links between the suspects picked up on the 17th and those arrested earlier in Britain.

In Italy, news reports said police found a map detailing central London earlier this week when they arrested five Moroccans in a building with two pounds of explosives. Police also confiscated containers with chemical components, timing and remote control devices of the type used in bombs, various documents, and forged passports.

With these arrests, Spain now has thirty-five suspected Islamic terrorists in custody, though several may be released soon on bail. Those detained on the 17th were mostly Algerian citizens and members of the Muslim extremist "Salafist Group for Call and Combat". This group is known to maintain contact with similar groups in Chechnya and Algeria. The group appears to function in two branches. One is based in Barcelona and led by an Algerian named Mohamad Tahraoui, and the other works out of Banolas in neighboring Gerona province, directed by Bard Eddin Ferdji, also an Algerian.

Throughout the 1990's relations between Spain, the UK, and the US had been growing stronger and more cordial year by year. The centrist government of Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar had shown itself to be not only cooperative, but actually eager to join western efforts to curtail terrorist activities worldwide. Therefore, despite considerable financial difficulties and vocal leftist domestic opposition, when the US called for allies to help remove the Saddam Government and liberate Iraq, the Spanish responded with admirable courage, making what was, for them, a major military effort.

On 8 April 2003, three vessels of the Royal Spanish navy arrived in the Persian Gulf. There they unloaded nine hundred personnel as part of the US-led coalition engaged in "Operation Iraqi Freedom". Next day the Amphibious Landing Ship *SPS Galicia* offloaded a forty-bed hospital and fifty-three medical personnel, an NBC "Decon" team, and a Construction Battalion. The *Galicia* also offloaded twenty tons of humanitarian aid, nearly 30,000 Muslim rations, eight tons of "safe" drinking water, 10,000 blankets, 30 large tents, and a water desalinization plant.

The Spanish fared rather well, and their soldiers earned the respect of those American and British troops serving alongside them. Casualties had been fairly light (seven had been killed in a single tragic incident), and the US had been sure to underwrite much of the financial hardship involved. Then, on Thursday, 4 March 2004, several bombs planted in a crowded Madrid railway station went off, killing 200 and injuring another 1,500 innocent citizens.

The Spanish Left could smell the blood in the water. Aznar's regime was blamed for "inviting the attention" of Al Qa'ida by allying Spain with the US. Despite sincere British and American declarations of support and solidarity, the damage had been done. The timing had been nearly perfect. General elections were only four days away! The Left was swept into power on the promise of an immediate pullout from Iraq. There were no apologies, no statements of regret, and no hand wringing. 30 June 2004 was set as the date for completion of the withdrawal, which went of as planned.

#### **2002 SPANISH ARSENAL**

Vehicles: 108xLeopard-2A4, 244xM60A3, & 150xAMX-30 (reserve) Tanks, 340xBMR-VEC, 22x"Centauro" B1 Recon Vehicles, 100+"Pizzaro", 687xBMR-600, 1,213 M-113 (including 192xM-106 SP Mortars)

Anti-Tank: 89mm M-69 Rocket Launchers, 654x106 mm M-40AI RcR, 28xHOT, 442xMILAN, & 200xTOW ATGW

Artillery: 284x105mm M26 & 170 M56 Howitzers (Stored), 36x105mm L-118 Light Guns, 48x105mm M108 SP howitzers, 84x155mm M-114 Howitzers, 96x155mm M109A1/A2 SP Howitzers, 24x203mm M115 Towed & 12xM110A2 SP Howitzers, 500x60mm, 1,200x 81mm, & 410x120mm Mortars (including 200+SP), & 12x140mm "Teruel" MRLs

Anti-Aircraft: 329x20mm, 92x35mm (twin), 240x40mm "Bofors" L/70 Guns, 24xI-HAWK, 18x"Roland", 13xSkyguard/Aspide, & 182xMistral SAMs

Combat Aircraft: 70xEF-18, 24xFA-18, 62xMirage-F1, 14xRF-4C, 7xP-3 "Orion"  
Helicopters: 58xUH1B/H, 17xOH-58A, 70xBO-105, 6xAB-212, 5xCH-47C, 34xAS.332B "Super Puma", 15x532UL "Cougar"  
Small Arms: 9mm Llama, 9 mm Astra A80, 9 mm Star 30M, & 9 mm HETK P9S Pistols, 9mm Star Z-45, Star Z-70B, & HETK  
MP5 Submachineguns, 5.56 mm CETME L-LC, HK33E, 7.62 mm CETME-C, CETME-LV, & Model AW Rifles,  
5.56 mm Ameli, 7.62 mm FN MAG, MG1-A3, MG 42/59, & 0.50 cal Browning M2HB Machineguns, 40mm SB-40  
Grenade Launchers

- Notes:
- 1) Two hundred nineteen Leopard-2A5 MBTs & sixteen Leopard-2ER ARVs are on order. Deliveries to be complete in 2008.
  - 2) The first one hundred forty-four "Pizzaro" AIFVs were delivered in 2001 out of a total of 366 ordered.
  - 3) All M109s will be converted to A5s at the rate of twelve per year.
  - 4) The H&K G-36E has been selected as the new standard-issue assault rifle.
  - 5) The 155mm/52 APU SBT towed howitzer is being procured for use as coastal artillery.
  - 6) An additional batch of ten BV-206S ATVs are on order out of a total requirement of fifty.
  - 7) Spain has a firm commitment to purchase eighty-seven "Eurofighters". Twenty are on order at present.

#### **POINTS OF CONTACT**

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