

# A fist with a rose

**in it.** Socialists may well win in Spain's next elections. Young Felipe Gonzalez will then become prime minister.

IN 1962, WHEN AMERICANS WERE sitting in for civil rights and holding demonstrations against nuclear testing, in Seville the son of a livestock handler for a local oligarch joined the youth group of the clandestine Spanish Socialist Workers party. By the mid-'60s, he had become a labor lawyer and head of the southern section of the party, which had been revitalized to fight the Franco regime. He was arrested for political and syndical activity ten times before he was 30. In 1974, the party held a congress in the Paris suburb of Suresnes and elected "Isidoro" first secretary.

By June of last year, "Isidoro's" face was known all over Spain, and not any more by his party name. His picture was on the front pages of newspapers and magazines in his country and throughout Europe. The *Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol* (PSOE), which had been legalized only four months before, had won an astonishing 28.5 percent of the vote in the national elections, more than any other party, and everyone from right-wing politicians to analysts in the American embassy were predicting that 35-year-old Felipe Gonzalez, the PSOE's national leader, might well head the government in a handful of years.

The national office of the PSOE is in an unimpressive building in a nondescript part of Madrid that has neither the charm of the historic quarter nor the opulence of the new northern section to recommend it. A party banner is hung on the windows overlooking the street, but upstairs there is no name plate on the door.

I rang the bell, was asked to identify myself through an intercom and pushed the door when it buzzed open. A man in his sixties seated at the reception desk motioned me to a straight-backed chair. Other people came in to fill the small room. Some passed into offices; half a dozen stood about waiting. Most were young, in their thirties. I picked up a Socialist Youth magazine; it was a special issue on female sexuality.

The Socialist party has been forged by the '60s generation, and it is not just politics but social attitudes they seek to change. Many of the leaders spent exile years in France or elsewhere in Europe. They have been influenced by the move-

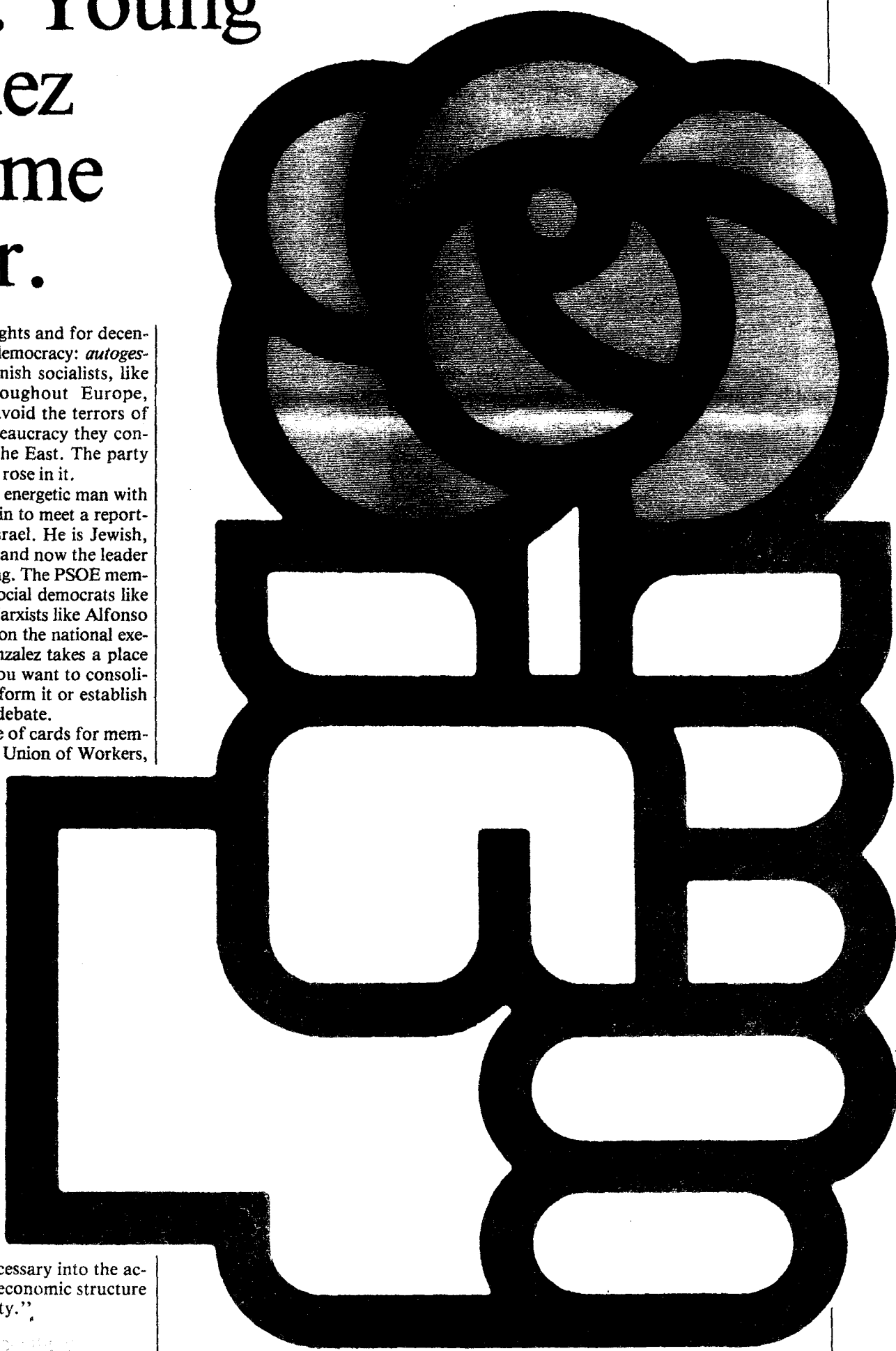
ments for women's rights and for decentralization and local democracy: *autogestion*, it is called. Spanish socialists, like their comrades throughout Europe, want desperately to avoid the terrors of the authoritarian bureaucracy they condemn in Russia and the East. The party symbol is a fist with a rose in it.

Enrique Mugica, an energetic man with curly black hair came in to meet a reporter doing a story on Israel. He is Jewish, a former Communist and now the leader of the party's right wing. The PSOE membership ranges from social democrats like Mugica to left-wing Marxists like Alfonso Guerra, and both are on the national executive committee. Gonzalez takes a place in the middle. "Do you want to consolidate capitalism and reform it or establish socialism?" goes the debate.

On the desk is a pile of cards for membership in the General Union of Workers, the UGT. Every PSOE adherent must belong. This is, after all, a Marxist party founded in the interests of the working class. At its first above-ground congress in Spain since the Civil War, December, 1976, the PSOE declared its objective to be "a society without the division of classes, the consequent extinction of the state, and the change of the government into an administration of that which will exist in a transitory stage of the construction of socialism." It warned, "Until that final objective is reached, decisive interventions will be necessary into the acquired rights and the economic structure of the bourgeois society."

The PSOE press secretary Helga Soto emerged from a narrow corridor. She was wearing jeans and a harried look. I would be taken to see Felipe Gonzalez, she said, but she apologized to the reporter for the

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AN INTERVIEW  
BY LUCY KOMISAR



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Christian Science Monitor who had been standing next to me. The unlucky man had been waiting over a year for this interview, but Gonzalez had time for just one.

A party worker drove me to the other side of the city to an apartment house near the Prado Museum a few blocks from the Cortes, the Spanish parliament. Another unmarked door led to a handful of rooms that are used by the party's parliamentary leadership. At the end of the hall was a bare room with only a table and two chairs. Gonzalez sat there working on a speech he would give to the Cortes in the afternoon.

He put down a pen, got up to shake my hand and sat back as I took out a recorder. There was no small talk. His time is rationed jealously by aides. Still, he was extremely polite, cooperative and easy to talk to. He is also physically striking. His thick, dark hair falls in waves to set off a face that is movie-star handsome.

Two weeks before, I had seen Gonzales at a press conference held after a political bureau meeting of the Socialist International in Madrid. He shared the speakers table with Willy Brandt who is the International's president and head of the German Social Democratic party; Olaf Palme, the former Social Democratic prime minister of Sweden; and Robert Pontillon, a leader of the right wing of the French Socialist party. The Spanish Socialists fit easily into that ideological milieu. For the moment, they propose reform rather than revolution.

Right now, explained Gonzalez, "we want to democratize the economic system without leaving the framework of the market economy, but without accepting its mystification." That means giving workers control over certain sectors of the economy. "We don't intend to go to a program of nationalization as a philosophy of the party, nor do we want a statization of the economy," said Gonzalez.

The PSOE is close to the French on that question. It would take over public services, key sectors such as energy, steel and banking, set up a government pharmaceuticals industry to bring down prices and organize agricultural cooperatives. "The socialist society that we want will have to be self-managing," said the party's last congress resolution, "because nationalization and planning do not necessarily lead to socialism." In the final stage, there would be large state-run industries, enterprises run locally by workers and smaller-sized private concerns.

The Socialists want to use government credit and authority to direct investment and give workers a role in fixing the conditions of their work. "It has been a jungle, in some ways like a banana republic," said Gonzalez. "There were no controls over the multinationals. We accept investment in Spain that creates jobs as something positive, but we are going to control and direct it."

#### The Moncloa Pact.

At this time, however, Gonzalez deals with issues of a different sort. The ruling Union of the Democratic Center (UCD) was a minority party forged out of a coalition of Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and Liberals, including some ex-Franquistas. It got 34 percent of the vote, but apportionment favored the rural areas where it is strongest, and it ended up with 166 deputies in the Cortes.

The PSOE has 126 deputies, including eight members of the Popular Socialist party that split from the PSOE in 1972, ran a separate election campaign and returned this year. The Communists have 20, the rightist Popular Alliance 16 and the regional Basque and Catalan parties 21.

UCD Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez must play coalition politics. When I saw Gonzalez, he was negotiating over the rules of the new parliament, the draft national constitution and an emergency political and economic program.

Last year the economy was in a mess. Productivity was falling, money was emptying out of the stock exchange and fleeing the country, the 30 percent inflation rate was the highest in Europe, unemployment was at 10 percent, and some parts of Spain were near economic paralysis.

Nobody except the far right wanted to create the conditions for the army to "save" the country. Suarez, who had little choice, invited the leaders of the parliamentary parties to the Moncloa Palace on the outskirts of Madrid to work out a pact.

The PSOE traded support for holding the lid on wage increases to get major political and economic concessions. Suarez would take the blame if the agreement failed, but he would have to share the credit for its success.

"The first objective was to dismantle the residue of *franquismo* that continues encrusted in the public administration and the economic apparatus," Gonzalez explained. That meant taking parliamentary control over public spending, putting worker representatives on consumer and price commissions, extending unemployment insurance and establishing fiscal reforms to counter the dominance of the big banks.

In return, the PSOE agreed to hold

On one astonishing occasion, I saw Communist chief Santiago Carillo deliver a speech on elementary Marxism to 2,000 members of the Madrid establishment who filled the main ballroom and three meeting rooms set up with closed-circuit TV for the overflow in the luxurious Euro-building Hotel. They had come carrying white engraved cards to the invitation-only event. Carillo was introduced by the head of the far-right *Alianza Popular*, and people joked that it was the night of the Communist leader's coming out in society.

I spent a Sunday afternoon at a Madrid movie theater where some 600 local Socialist party members met to kick off a campaign to legalize contraception and abortion. Men and women in the audience applauded with fervor as speakers pledged to combat the oppression of women.

#### The church a stumbling block.

"The parties of the left are beginning to admit that they are 'machista,'" Gonzalez told me. "One must overcome that

tended to win next time and govern alone. The UCD man, Liberal Garrigues-Walker, a government minister, said his party was not looking for junior partners either. It was only the small groups that approved the idea.

The future of the left in Spain depends on whether or not the PSOE can get a majority or establish a coalition with regional nationalists and social democrats, or whether it must depend on coalitions with the Communists, as in France, or on the decisions of labor movements controlled by the Communists, as in Portugal.

The PSOE does not want to revive the popular front that won in 1936. Gonzalez does not accept Carillo's predictions about the end of the 1920 split when the Communists left socialist parties to form the Third International. "Maybe in the year 2500 or 3000 it will end," he said half seriously. "Indeed, the Communists in southern Europe are moving into the terrain of the Socialists, trying to win the credibility of the Socialists camp. We don't know where that will lead," Gonzalez said.

There is not an important programmatic divergence between Communists and Socialists in Spain. "Indeed, among the short-term programs, one could even call the PSOE a little more radical in the noble sense of the world," Gonzalez declared. "The fundamental differences are in the idea of society." He does not accept that the Communists are democrats. "They get offended when you say this to them," he said. One difference, he pointed out, is "Whether one believes in democracy not as a means to obtain a particular end, but as a means that is an end in itself." The PSOE is more committed to workers' self-management, here called "autogestion."

#### Union elections.

Gonzalez said he sees "no foreseeable or possible conditions" for a coalition between the PSOE and the Communists, then hedged: "It depends on whether or not the PSOE is established as an alternative of power in itself." Prime Minister Suarez is trying to walk a tight-rope between preventing the Socialists from becoming powerful enough to challenge him alone without pushing them into the arms of the Communists. The first crucial contest was the series of union elections that started in January.

During my visit I saw walls and subways plastered with posters urging workers to attend meetings of the Socialist General Union of Workers (UGT), the Communist Workers Commissions (CCOO), and smaller organizations of Christian socialists, Marxist-Leninists, autonomists and anarchists. Every worker in an enterprise of six or more had the right to vote for delegates. The stakes were who would organize the working class. The elections had "a political value of enormous consequence," declared Gonzalez. Both the Communists and the government, he said, looked to UGT losses to weaken the PSOE as an alternative of power.

Many leaders of the Workers Commission were well known as activists in the anti-Franco opposition. However, the UGT had the more popular Socialist label. The CCOO therefore wanted to run "open list" elections in which people would vote for individuals. The UGT wanted closed slates. The government set closed lists for enterprises of over 250, and in the end the result was too close to give dominance to either group: about 38 percent for the CCOO and 30 percent for the UGT.

The CCOO started from a stronger internal position, and it is unclear whether the UGT will pick up more support as it gets better organized. Much may depend on parallel political developments. The Communist party is likely to use its relatively greater influence in labor to bolster its weakness in the Cortes. The Communists, backed by a strong trade union movement, would organize worker discontent (as in Portugal) in the face of the kinds of wage curbs and austerity measures that a Socialist government might see as necessary.

Gonzalez said that workers will not carry the burden alone, and the Moncloa Pact called for expansion of social pro-



Felipe Gonzales does not want to share power with anyone, including Communists.

He doesn't believe that the Communists have really accepted democracy as an end in itself.

wage demands to 22 percent as long as prices did not rise above that level. "For the first time in many years, it will not be the workers who have to bear the burden alone," said Gonzalez. Half the increases would be in the form of \$600 or \$700 for all workers, rather than a straight percentage rise that would award the greatest benefits to the wealthy.

In a country where people pay less than 2 percent of their income in direct taxes and where corporations easily evade government levies, the pact promised to establish income and corporate taxes to pay for job creation, education, housing, health services and pensions. "We would enormously like to reach the achievements of the Swedes," declared Gonzalez.

#### Enjoying new civil liberties.

The Moncloa Pact appears to be working. In April, the parties took six months stock of the results and in parliamentary debate confirmed their adherence to the agreement. Inflation is down to 12-15 percent, and the trade deficit has been cut by more than half since 1976.

The government is designing the first genuine income tax since the Spanish Republic. Franco had collected withholding taxes from workers' paychecks, but the middle class and wealthy avoided the burden. The new levy would maintain the level of taxes on workers but would take sums up to 39 percent from the rest of the population.

The Moncloa agreement also called for freedom of the press and association, the right to strike, secrecy of communications and the right to "intimacy." There are occasional lapses, but for the most part Spaniards are enjoying their new civil liberties with a passion. Newspapers, magazines and paperbacks overflow the bookshelves in a political smorgasbord. Wall posters invite people to union meetings, lectures and ecumenical leftist fiestas. I saw a movie, *Caudillo*, a documentary of the Civil War, that set the republican audience cheering and sighing. I passed a theater in Barcelona that was showing a play by Fernando Arrabal, author of such ferociously anti-Franco works as *And They Put Handcuffs on the Flowers*.

contradiction and take into account the importance of women in transforming society." His own wife, an English teacher, belongs to the Madrid Women's Liberation Front. The party won Prime Minister Suarez's agreement to legalize contraception and decriminalize adultery and both steps have been accomplished.

Abortion will be a more difficult matter. "It is one thing to change attitudes and another to change the power of the church," said Gonzalez. Still, he noted, "The church has a great capacity for sniffing out the future and producing the changes that allow it to survive." In the last years of Franco, some sectors of the church fought the dictatorship, and "the country is now more relativist, more modern and thus less religious in the dogmatic sense," he said.

The draft of the constitution approved by the more powerful Congress of Deputies (the other house is the Senate) says, "No religious confession will have state character," but notes that the government will "keep in mind the religious beliefs of Spanish society" and maintain relations with the Catholic church and other religious groups. The PSOE fought to end the Concordat with the church and establish a laical state.

Now, the issue is how much control over education the church will maintain. That is being debated by the Senate. The Socialists want to reduce the amount of subsidy to church education and pay the funds to support public schools.

#### Against front with Communists.

There may be sharp disagreements in Spanish society, but there is great willingness to meet face to face to talk them over. I attended a forum at the elegant Castellana Hotel where upwards of 1,000 people turned out to hear representatives of every parliamentary party debate the Communists' proposal for a government of "concentration," their version of the Italians' "historic compromise," which says the Communists (and everyone else) should be invited into the government.

Enrique Mugica was there to inform everyone that the PSOE was not interested in concentrations or coalitions. It in-





grams. However, the Portuguese Socialists, who must adhere to International Monetary Fund demands on the one side and face the opposition of Communist-led labor unions on the other, know how difficult such a high-wire balancing act can be.

#### Waiting for democracy

For all the Socialists look to the future, there are some ties to the past: they are resigned to accept. I was in the Plaza Mayor one night, that historic center of old Madrid with a green-bronze statue of King Don Felipe III. On the cobblestones not far away a dozen or more students were chanting a rhyme that challenged the King's heirs: "*Espana, manana, sera republicana*." Tomorrow Spain will be republican. That was, after all, what the Civil War was all about, wasn't it?

"I don't think the republican alternative is a very important question at the moment," declared Gonzalez. "At this historical time, the monarchy plays a role that reduces the tensions a republic would produce." Even the Communists have agreed to keeping the monarchy. However, the king's acts will have to be countersigned by the Prime Minister. He will name the Prime Minister subject to the approval of the president of the Congress of Deputies. The constitutional referendum is expected to be held in October. The next crucial context will be the municipal elections. Suarez has promised to hold them within three months after the constitution is approved. However, the major political decision seems to have been made: how to organize Spanish politics, around coalitions or in contests be-

tween two strong parties. "Naturally," said Gonzalez, "if the Socialist party was left in a situation of the French type, within four or five years we would carry out a French type of politics." The thought of a Socialist-Communist alliance scared the center, and in the beginning of this year, Suarez agreed with Gonzalez on a system of proportional representation that favors the larger parties—the UCD and the PSOE—and would cut the influence of the Communists and the far right.

#### A left-center coalition

Local government is still controlled by holdovers from the Franco regime, and the municipals will determine who runs Spain at the grassroots. That base will be the political engine that powers the parties' national campaigns. If the PSOE wins the municipals, Gonzalez said, it will prepare to take power in the national elections next year.

The combined vote for the left last year was 1.5 million more than for the center and right. The PSOE won in every major city, while the UCD took the rural votes. What are the variables that could shift enough ballots to make Felipe Gonzalez prime minister of Spain?

First, the PSOE will be much better organized for the municipal and general elections than in June of 1977. "We had to fight every day to get a place for a meeting or against the Franco apparatus that remained intact," said PSOE International Secretary Luis Yannes who won in rural Bajadoz. He cited "maneuvering" by local *caciques* and irregularities that included voting places without Socialist ballots.

Having already amalgamated the Popular Socialists, Gonzales is looking toward his right now in the hopes of putting together a left-center coalition. "The components would include the Basque Nationalist party, the Catalan Democrats and—if Suarez fails he will probably fail because his team falls to pieces—part of that team, the Social Democrats."

(The UCD is also having troubles on its right, with adherents objecting to the government's cooperation with the PSOE, its stand on economic issues and its inability to stem terrorism.)

On the other side, the UCD has a nation-wide structure in the 51 provinces with governors, mayors and councilors named by the government, and money, press and functionaries in an official apparatus. The church also will throw its support to defenders of the ecclesiastical state and the ban on abortion. A few years are not enough to wipe out the influence of rural political chiefs or conservative attitudes. Finally, corporate powers of the kind that back Carrigues-Walker, a man with ties to the multinationals, are not anxious to install Marxists as heads of government.

There does not appear to be much concern about a *coup* by the right. *Alianza Popular* polled only 8 percent of the national vote, business leaders want a democratic Spain so they can join the Common Market, and Gonzalez maintained that the army can be modernized and reformed on the European model. One Socialist suggested that Spanish officers could be kept busy and amused on NATO

maneuvers, but the official PSOE position is to stay out of the Atlantic military alliance altogether.

There are some uncertainties. Now that the UCD is not simply a coalition but a unified party, how will the social democrats vote? Will the Workers Commissions' victories give the Communists a base for more electoral power?

The Communists have had trouble lately stirred by a best-selling autobiographical novel by ex-Communist Jorge Semp-run who wrote the screenplays for *La Guerre Est Finie* and *Z*. He accuses party chief Carillo and others of involvement in Stalinist purges including the betrayal of a leading Communist to the Franco police. Anti-Carillo statements have been circulating in the party, and the Communist lawyers association dissolved after criticizing the party's unrepresentative character and lack of internal democracy in executive decisions.

The Spanish Socialists have a long memory of Communist history and also a sense of their own. A picture of PSOE founder Pablo Iglesias is framed on the office wall, and souvenir ashtrays commemorate the first party newspaper published in 1886. Next year is the Socialists' 100th anniversary. They'd like to celebrate with Felipe Gonzalez as prime minister.

Lucy Komisar is the author of books on welfare and feminism and has written on politics and social issues for many publications. She was in Spain for nearly a month to do research on this story and others for the *Washington Star* and *Newsday*. She recently became a reporter for *The (Bergen) Record in Hackensack, N.J.* She lives in New York City.

## EDITORIAL

We would like to add our voice to the praises cascading upon President Carter for the Camp David agreements. We would like to join in the euphoria over a major breakthrough toward peace among the nations of the Middle East. We regret that we can do neither.

Short of some Providential design unknown to us, and as much as we wish it were otherwise, our reason cannot bring us to see how the agreements constitute a framework for peace in the Middle East. In the cold light of day, the actual terms of the agreements compel the conclusion that they are a framework for continuing the conflict, and for deeper U.S. involvement in that conflict.

The agreements provide neither for security and recognized boundaries for Israel and its neighboring states, nor for the just claims of the Palestinian people. In his address before the joint session of Congress Sept. 18, Carter said the agreements "resolve" all these issues. They don't.

A "peace" erected upon grave injustice—in this case the denial of Palestinian nationhood—is no less the seedbed of more national hatred, and more war, than the "Carthaginian peace" that followed World War I. France and the rest of the world got no enduring security from the Versailles "peace" framework. Israel will get no enduring security in relation to its Arab neighbors, and there will be no lasting peace for the Middle East or the world, from the Camp David agreements.

The accords accomplished two things. They codified the Egyptian and Israeli intent to enter a separate peace between themselves. They codified conditions for continuing conflict over the West Bank and Gaza (ignoring the Golan heights altogether). But that is far from accomplishing a framework for comprehensive peace. And without this, the separate Egyptian-Israeli arrangements may yield up a *treaty* but not a durable peace between even them.

The Camp David agreements accomplished one other thing: A step in implementing the U.S. government's purpose of containing revolution in the Middle

## Camp David accords: Framework for strife

**The agreements are a plan for colonial rule, not for Palestinian self-government.**

East through an alignment of conservative states tied economically, strategically and diplomatically to the U.S.: a latter-day revival of the old Baghdad Pact. But this step forward may well be quickly followed by more than two backward. The backpedaling has already begun, before the letters auxiliary to the agreements can be exchanged, no less written.

The preface to the accord known as the Middle East Framework designates UN Security Council Resolution 242 (Nov. 22, 1967) as the "basis for a peaceful settlement." But, although the Peace Treaty Framework provides for the freedom of navigation through the area's international waterways (as stipulated in 242), the terms of the Middle East Framework do not provide for Israeli military withdrawal from the occupied areas in the West Bank and Gaza. And Begin has emphasized this in speeches and statements since he left Camp David.

The preface calls for "secure and recognized boundaries" but in leaving sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza undefined, the terms of the accord provide for no such boundaries. The preface states that "for peace to endure, it must involve all those who have been most deeply affected by the conflict." But the terms exclude the PLO, one of the parties "most deeply affected," from a negotiating role, as well as in effect from whatever elections may take place.

The terms of the Middle East Framework provide for Palestinian self-government in words but not in substance. They

limit participation in elections exclusively to present "inhabitants" of the West Bank and Gaza. But over two-thirds of the 3.5 million Palestinians live outside those two areas. The terms provide for "free elections." But those elections will take place in Gaza and the West Bank with the present Israeli military governments in place. Not the Palestinians, but Israel and Egypt (and Jordan if King Hussein accepts the invitation), will define and enforce the election rules and the powers of the elected governments.

That is not a plan for free elections or for genuine self-government. Indeed, the terms state that the "security concerns of the parties" will be balanced against "the principle of self-government." That means the exclusion of the PLO from the "self-governing" process, as Israel's, Jordan's and Egypt's "security concerns" dictate keeping the PLO out of power in the West Bank and Gaza.

There is no time limit for completion of establishment of the election process—only after which the Israeli military government would be withdrawn and the five-year transitional period would begin. The "five years" could stretch out indefinitely. Should the transitional period get underway, real power in the West Bank and Gaza will reside not with the inhabitants' elected governments, but with a military-police-political commission composed of Egyptians, Israelis, Jordanians and delegates from the elected governments.

This commission will decide upon re-

admission of displaced persons. It will also have plenary powers: "to prevent disruption and disorder," and to deal with all "other matters of common concern"—that is, anything and everything.

Whatever decision is arrived at after the five years by Egypt, Israel, and Jordan, as to the final status of the West Bank and Gaza, will not be submitted to the vote of the "inhabitants," but to the vote of the elected government officials—who themselves will not have been freely elected.

This is a plan for a conflict-ridden tripartite colonial dominion (with close U.S. involvement), not for Palestinian self-government.

As pointed out elsewhere in these pages (see Yoav Peled's story, page 3), the Camp David agreements will tend to intensify conflict by offering the PLO no route to peaceful diplomacy, but on the contrary forcing it into armed struggle as its *only* resort. And the agreements weaken Israeli security, not only by leaving boundaries undefined, but also by opening the way to Egyptian and Jordanian armed forces in the Sinai, Gaza, and the West Bank. It would appear that Begin's Greater Israel objective takes precedence over security considerations *per se*.

The Camp David agreements are not the guarantee of peace they were hoped to be. But neither do their defects need to be accepted fatalistically as the inevitable augury of more war. The strong desire of Israelis and Arabs for peace, like that elsewhere in the world, leaves an opening for people, if not their governments, to move diplomacy toward a genuine Middle East settlement based upon mutual recognition and friendship between a Palestinian state and Israel.

That would make it possible for Arabs and Israelis alike to put behind them national animosities and turn to the work of securing to themselves and their posterity just and democratic societies.

It would also make "this area...a model for coexistence and cooperation among nations," the objective declared but not honored by the Camp David agreements.

