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*A European nation  
is struggling to be reborn.  
Some of the results are already evident.*

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# NEW DAY FOR CATALONIA

By DAVID H. ROSENTHAL

**F**OR CATALANS OF VIRTUALLY EVERY social class and political persuasion, the last year has been a time of euphoric reawakening. First came the Spanish parliamentary elections, in which the parties favoring Catalan autonomy triumphed in Catalonia with more than 90 percent of the vote. Then, on September 11, more than a million Catalans poured through the streets of Barcelona singing their national anthem, "*El cant dels segadors*" ("The Harvesters' Song"), and chanting "*Volem l'estatut!*" ("We want the statute of autonomy!"). As the marchers made their way up the tree-lined Passeig de Gràcia, a group including members of parliament and representatives of Josep Tarradellas, President of the Catalan government in exile (the *Generalitat*), was negotiating with Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez in Madrid.

The result of this political tidal wave was a royal decree reinstating the *Generalitat* and establishing Catalan and Castilian (normally known as "Spanish" in the United States) as the co-official languages of Catalonia. The new state of affairs was climaxed by Tarradellas's triumphant return to Barcelona on October 23. The next day he officially reopened the old *Generalitat* building in Barcelona's handsome Gothic Quarter. Standing before a crowd of his cheering countrymen, many of them waving the Catalan flag with its four red bars, Tarradellas announced that this time he was back for good. Though most of the details of autonomy remained to be worked out, it was evident the Catalans had taken a giant step toward self-government.

Such a step would, of course, be a major political event, not just for Catalonia and Spain but for the rest of the world. There are today seven million Catalan speakers and the area they inhabit is the largest industrial concentration on the

Mediterranean. Yet despite the significance of the region, it remains largely unknown to most Americans. Therefore, some background information will be useful.

**B**ASICALLY, CATALONIA IS DEFINED by its language. Spain has four major languages—Basque, Castilian, Galician, and Catalan, which is a Romance tongue similar to Occitan (a language also sometimes called "provençal" or *langue d'oc*). Catalan is spoken in the provinces of Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, Tarragona, the Balearic Islands, Alacant, Castelló, and Valencia. (Outside of Spain, it is the official tongue of Andorra and is spoken in a small strip of Southern France that includes Perpinyà [Perpignan] and Prades, and in the Sardinian town of l'Alguer.) The historical heartland of the Catalan nation is the "Principality"—that is, the four provinces of Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona. The second major Catalan-speaking area is "the Valencian Land": Alacant, Castelló, and Valencia. The third is the Balearic Islands: Majorca, Minorca, Iviza, and Formentera. Together, these areas form "the Catalan Lands."

This common language is one of the chief expressions of Catalonia's national identity. Some of Europe's most outstanding literature, both in medieval and Renaissance times and during the past century, was written in Catalan. Indeed, a case could be made for Catalonia as one of the most creative nations in twentieth-century Europe. Though its literature remains largely unknown in the United States, a list of some major Catalan painters, sculptors, and architects should suggest the force of such a claim: Antoni Gaudí, Picasso, Joan Miró, Juli Gonzàlez, Salvador Dalí, Antoni Tàpies, and Joan Ponç. These names in themselves evoke the volatile spirit of modern Catalan culture as a whole: playful but emotionally charged, deeply rooted in the land yet ardently experimental.

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Catalan culture, like the language itself, has always been far closer to that of Occitania (a region of southern France) and Northern Italy than to the interior of Spain. In addition, Catalan social structure differs dramatically from that of the rest of the Iberian peninsula. The most powerful single class in the old Catalan-Aragonese kingdom was its energetic mercantile bourgeoisie. Despite periods of weakness, this class has given a special character to subsequent Catalan history. Catalans are known within Spain—sometimes with scorn, sometimes with admiration—as an unusually hard-working people unhampered by aristocratic conventions. (This characteristic is a long-standing one. Statistics from the eighteenth century, for example, show that in the Bishopric of Burgos in Castile a full third of the heads of family were nobility and therefore forbidden to engage in trade or indus-

has reached a circulation of 70,000. There are Catalan radio stations and plans for a Catalan television channel. Though on the defensive for 38 of the last 40 years, Catalan, the language, and Catalanism, as a political movement, are anything but moribund.

**C**ATALANISM, WHICH IS CLOSELY TIED to left-wing politics and which today again seems on the verge of reaching some of its major goals, has its roots in the early nineteenth century. At that time the nation was more prosperous than it had been since the early Renaissance. Its special cultural identity, however, had been in decline since 1700, when Spain's new Bourbon monarchs, who had defeated the Catalans in the War of the Spanish Succession, eliminated the Catalan language from government affairs and publications and closed the University of Barcelona.

Between 1810 and 1830 Catalan industrial expansion, particularly that of its textile industry, accelerated—and with it began the social and political process that has brought Catalonia within reach of independence. Under the restored monarchy, the Spanish government was one of the most reactionary in Metternich's Europe. Its main supports were the Church and absentee landowners. Spain, as a whole, was desperately poor and ignorant, in the final stages of a centuries-long decay, and its government was unsympathetic toward both Catalonia's national traditions and its growing industries.

In 1833, Bonaventura Carles Aribau, a middle-class Catalan living in Madrid, published "To the Fatherland," a poem that is usually considered the starting point of modern Catalan literature. The work has no special literary merit, but it does mark the reawakening of interest among educated Catalans in their own language and literary tradition. From the 1830s on, and especially after the 1859 reestablishment of the *Jocs Florals* ("Floral Games")—public poetry contests in which prizes were awarded—the Catalan cultural revival quickened its pace. Catalonia was industrializing. Barcelona had burst its fifteenth-century walls and was pouring out into the surrounding countryside.

In the late 1800s, Barcelona's lower middle-class neighborhoods developed a network of civic and cultural associations that would have been unimaginable anywhere else in Spain. Perhaps the most famous of these were the choral societies, of which there were 57 by 1864. Their founder was Josep Anselm Clavé, a typical *menestral*. As Catalanism grew, enlightened *menestrals* like Clavé—a radical republican who was continually hounded by the police—came to make up the great majority of its supporters. Such people still dominate the atmosphere of certain older Barcelona neighborhoods—Gràcia, for example, with its tiny stores and workshops, its intricate network of small streets with names like Liberty and Fraternity. The proprietors of these shops are Barcelona's frustrated Jacobins, who, like the members of most other social classes in Catalonia, are frustrated because they haven't been able to play their "normal" role in a "normal" political situation. For most of the past 200 years, they have been at the mercy of an alien society: the medieval world of Castile.

The other group on the rise during the late 1800s was the industrial working class, composed of Catalans and of "immigrants" from other areas of Spain. This group, encouraged perhaps by Catalonia's special powerlessness, embraced anarchism as no other European working class has ever done.

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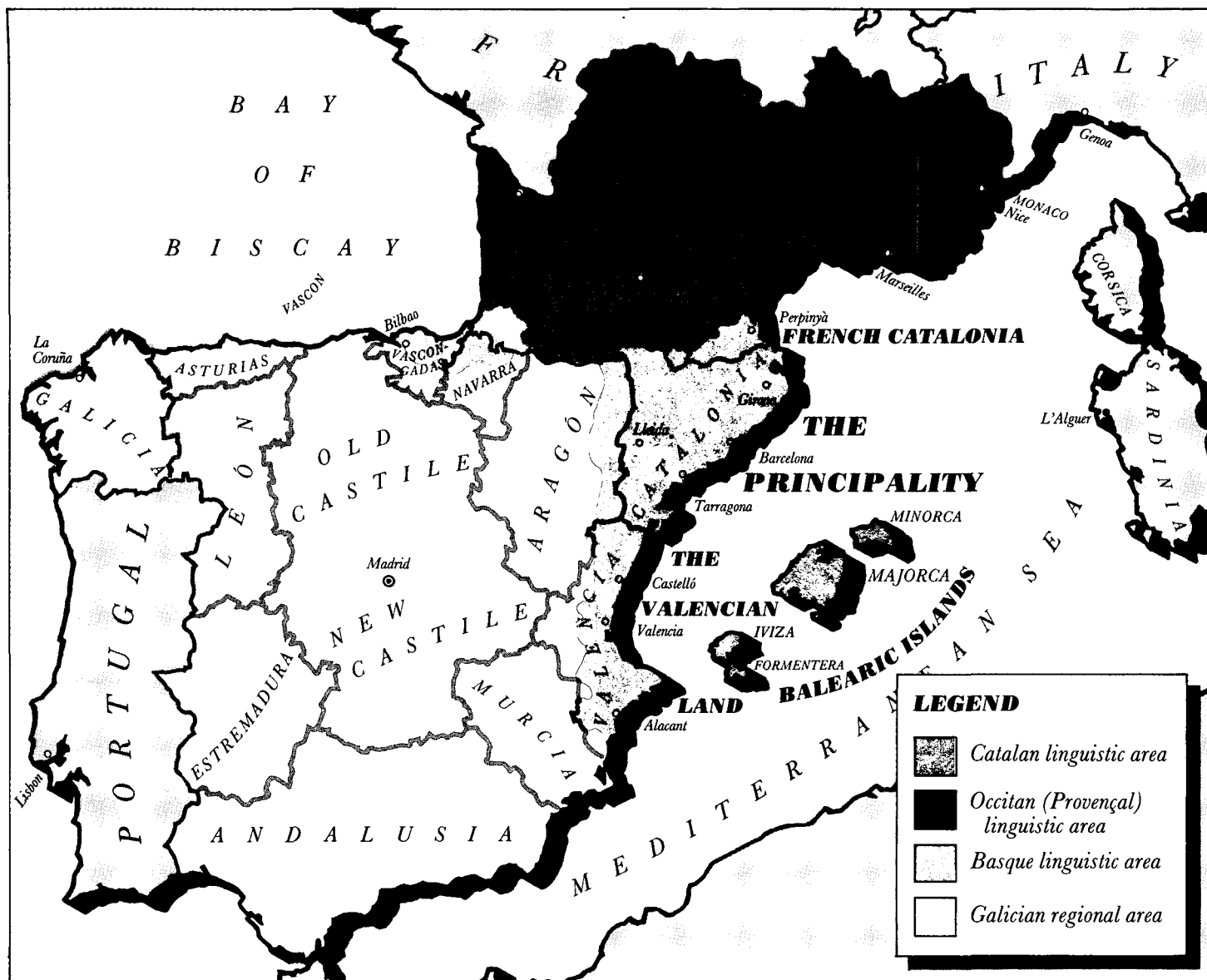
*On January 16, 1939,  
Franco's troops entered  
Barcelona. Shortly thereafter,  
all use of Catalan outside the  
home was declared a crime.*

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try; however, in the Principality only one percent of the heads of family were members of the nobility.) Apart from the bourgeoisie, Catalonia has had a prosperous and independent peasantry and a large number of artisans and small traders (called *menestrals*). These two groups—peasants and *menestrals*—are closely linked to each other through the traditional Catalan system of primogeniture, under which the firstborn sons of peasant families would help their younger brothers set themselves up in trade or some craft. The class of *menestrals* has probably contributed more than any other to the special flavor of modern Catalan culture and society. (A new class, the industrial proletariat, has also emerged as an important social force during the past century.)

In Castile, for example, one quickly notices the absence of these energizing groups. Instead one finds other classes—a parasitic aristocracy, landless agricultural laborers, a corrupt and backward clergy—that have never existed in modern Catalonia. The enlightened Catalan middle class and industrial bourgeoisie have no parallel elsewhere in Spain.

All these factors—language, culture, economic structure, and what we might vaguely call a "Mediterranean world view"—have played their part in making Catalonia one of the most highly developed and sharply defined of Europe's stateless nationalities. One particularly telling example is the fact that in 1975, four-fifths of all Spanish women on the birth control pill lived in Catalonia. In terms of "straight politics," the Valencian Land and the Principality both recently delivered clear majorities to the left. Catalan remains the language most commonly heard in the region's major cities. There are hundreds of thousands of Catalan books in print, including scientific texts, car repair manuals, and murder mysteries, along with a large number of translations of authors ranging from Homer to William Faulkner. *Today*, the first Catalan-language daily newspaper since the Civil War,



One way of viewing their anarchism is to see it as the result of their lack of faith in conventional politics among people who have never been able to control their own destiny. Another possible view is that anarchism arose at an exceptionally creative moment. The anarchists' interest in culture and education, their network of schools and lending libraries, their insistence on a revolution made by the people and not by a manipulative "vanguard," lend some truth to this theory.

Unfortunately, the full scope of the anarchists' activities has still not been completely investigated. Their feminism is one example. A magazine called *Free Women*, published during the 1930s, went unmentioned in the few books about Spanish women written before 1975. And yet it printed a kind of material and represented a kind of consciousness unique in Europe at that time. The following quotation, from an article by "Ilsa," will give an idea of its tone:

... it is inevitable that a woman's subconscious should see in these loved ones—parents, husband, children—enemies of her freedom. A woman must fight against prejudices and traditions, conquer them, and now inwardly free and in a new situation, really unite with her comrades of the opposite sex in their common struggle against the outside enemy, against servitude and oppression.

It is hard for a woman to determine exactly what her inner ties

are. In the first place, she must give up comfortable habits. Alone she must reach this decision and alone she must fight. Nothing but her own love of freedom can help her in this. No man—not even her anarchist comrade—can help her. On the contrary, there is so much masculine vanity hidden in him too that, without realizing it and with misunderstood love and friendship, he often works against women's liberation.

What is perhaps most striking about this quotation—even more than the modernity of the ideas expressed—is that it appeared in a magazine produced by and for a working class organization of 20,000 members.

**A**LL THESE CATALAN GROUPS—businessmen, artists, *menestrals*, and factory workers—lived an intense and heated existence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Catalonia was becoming a modern nation. The cultural and intellectual renaissance had outgrown its initial romantic-patriotic stage and was producing writers of international stature like Joan Maragall, Narcís Oller, and Àngel Guimerà. Other figures, including the architect Gaudí and, a bit later, Picasso and Miró, gained international recognition. Barcelona became a



center for the avant-garde.

Meanwhile, both the number and circulation of Catalan newspapers and magazines increased. Several important Catalanist political parties were founded, the largest of which was the *Lliga Catalanista* (Catalanist League). As a major political force, the *Lliga* was short-lived, a victim of the rebellions and bloody repressions of 1909 and 1918. Nonetheless, the *Lliga* did much to establish Catalanism as a viable political force. When the newborn Spanish Republic held a plebiscite on autonomy in 1931, Catalonia voted an overwhelming “yes” while at the same time sending only three members of the conservative *Lliga* to parliament.

From 1931 to 1939, Catalonia had its own chief executive and legislature, as well as bilingual legal and educational systems. There were over a thousand Catalan-language newspapers and magazines. Catalan schools were among the best in Europe, astonishingly humane and advanced if one considers what normally passes for education in Spain. A nostalgic recollection by Francisco Candel, the Castilian-speaking son of “immigrants” and now a senator from Catalonia, gives something of their flavor:

It was a European education. Sunny, ventilated classrooms, courtyards with gardens, boys and girls together, no parrotlike memorization. We learned while we played. We sang, we studied dance. The students weren’t lined up in rows. Instead of desks, we had large tables, like in a meeting, with vases of flowers. The school had all the most modern facilities: a library, first-aid, showers, an anatomy model, a skeleton, an air pump, a microscope, maps, large illustrative sheets . . . In the summer, they took us away for a month to camps . . .

The eight years of autonomy marked the fulfillment of a century of struggle and education. Unlike most of the rest of Spain, which veered from left to right in general elections, Catalonia remained solidly behind its government, led by Lluís Companys and the *Esquerra Catalana* (Catalan Left Front). Tragically, the full possibilities of an autonomous Catalonia were never realized. The period of time was too short—five years before the start of the Civil War. The war, of course, limited the government’s scope of action.

**O**N JANUARY 16, 1939, FRANCO’S TROOPS entered Barcelona. Shortly thereafter, all use of Catalan outside the home was declared a crime. Hundreds of thousands of books were burned. The Guardia Civil was quartered in school buildings. Offices were hung with signs reading “*No ladres, habla el idioma del Imperio.*” (“Don’t bark. Speak the language of the Empire.”) Even the *sardana*, Catalonia’s national dance, was outlawed. “Subversive” Republican textbooks were replaced by materials like the following:

*What is the land of Spain?* The land of Spain is the greater part of the Iberian peninsula, which God providentially placed at the center of the earth . . . *Why do you say Castilian will be the language of future civilization?* Castilian will be the language of future civilization because English and French, which could share this function with it, are languages so exhausted that they are on the road to complete dissolution.

Overnight, a whole world disappeared. Between 1939 and 1944, according to published sources, 192,000 people were executed. Ordinary citizens, trade unionists or party militants, vanished into concentration camps. Some returned years later. Others never came back.

It was an era of great poverty, of rationing and black-market millionaires, of constant struggle in all but the wealthiest families to find enough to eat. A climate of fear and exhaustion settled over all of Spain. In addition, Catalonia

and the Basque country were treated as conquered territories. Before 1939 they had been the only industrialized areas in Spain, and now they were punished for their support of the Republic. The government’s postwar economic policy is well described in this quotation from Falangist official Dionisio Ridruejo:

On an economic level, everything possible was done to benefit the rest of Spain through industrialization. But this also went in the opposite direction, acting against the guilty regions. These regions were given to understand that they were being punished by having their hitherto substantial development halted. I have heard of innumerable requests on the part of Catalan initiative and capital for the installation of new industries, always answered with the formula “authorized for outside Catalonia.”

Essentially, the postwar economic period lasted until 1960. Everything was in short supply, and the economy was stagnant. Then, in 1959, all this changed. Spain threw itself open to foreign capital, adopting Europe’s most liberal investment laws. Spanish workers, who had previously found it difficult to leave the country, were allowed to emigrate. They did so by the millions, and their remittances helped create a favorable balance of payments. Overt economic discrimination against Catalonia ended. A whole new set of policies, going by the name of the Economic Stabilization Plan, went into effect. The government that sponsored these policies was dominated by Opus Dei, a pragmatic, technical, religious order recognized by the Vatican in 1950. Opus Dei’s technocrats felt that economic growth was Spain’s best protection against social change, and for a while they seemed to be right.

Their plan, also known simply as the “Opus Dei Plan,” provided the takeoff point for the current Spanish economy. From 1959 until the 1973 economic crisis, Spanish industry grew rapidly. The Spanish GNP is now tenth highest in the world, and large sections of the country give the impression of being completely part of industrial Europe. In addition, a flood of tourists invaded Spain. For 15 years, an army of young people from Northern Europe and the United States have been tramping through the peninsula, leaving in their wake a generation of hip, potsmoking, politicized students. Spanish youth has never been as European as it is now.

In the Catalan Lands, the economic boom and change in attitudes have also meant a new resurgence of nationalism. One aspect of the Opus Dei Plan was the partial lifting of restrictions on Catalan-language publication. Starting in 1960, a torrent of books and magazines poured forth, though the daily press, film, and television were still forbidden territory. Painters like Tàpies and Ponç and poets like Salvador Espriu, Miquel Martí i Pol, and Vicent Andrés Estellés established themselves as major figures. Though generally unnoticed in the schools, these authors were able to publish their works and often to reach a mass audience through best-selling records by singers like Raimon and Maria del Mar Bonet. Their success provided a vital means of communication and helped Catalan culture to survive. Underground political activity also increased, and a Catalan Assembly was founded. It included virtually all the major political parties, from Christian Democrats to Maoists.

Another major change since 1960 is the development of the Balearics and the Valencian Land. Prior to the Civil War, these areas were provincial, semifeudal realms heavily dependent on Madrid. Tourism transformed the Balearics into one of Spain’s richest provinces, while shaking the islands out of their centuries-old stagnation and self-isolation, and the Valencian Land now has Spain’s

highest rate of industrial growth. In the wake of these changes, a Catalanist movement has emerged that has far wider support than in the 1930s. During Franco's lifetime this movement created a multi-party Assembly of the Valencian Land (similar to the Catalan Assembly), and caused an annual doubling of the number of Catalan language classes, radio shows, and theatrical productions in Valencia. One of the outstanding contemporary Catalan poets, Vicent Andrés Estellés, is a Valencian. So is Joan Fuster, who is often considered the finest Catalan essayist. The Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, which received the largest number of votes last June in Valencia, favors a statute of autonomy similar to the one recently decreed for the Principality.

**H**OW, THEN, DOES THE SITUATION currently stand? The new Spanish constitution, though still only in draft form, refers to Spain's various nationalities in two articles:

**Article 2:** The constitution recognizes and the Monarchy guarantees the right of Spain's different nationalities and regions to autonomy.

**Article 4:** Castilian is the official state language. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it.

Spain's other languages will also be official within those nations and regions that accept them as such in their respective autonomous regimes.

Spain recognizes in the richness of the State's various languages a cultural heritage that should be the object of special respect and protection.

All this, of course, is a far cry from Francoism. Nonetheless, the constitution leaves all the concrete details of autonomy open to negotiation. Although the entire matter is still in a highly fluid state, it appears that the Principality will be allowed some powers of taxation, a police force (though precisely how big and of what kind is not known), control over its school system, and some limited legislative powers. In addition, the Spanish Senate will be composed of representatives of Spain's autonomous areas. In other words, all of Spain, including Castile, will have regional governments with greater or lesser powers. As it stands now, autonomy can only be requested by an area's parliamentary delegation. The areas that have requested it so far are Andalusia, Aragón, Valencia, the Basque provinces (which have been negotiating with the central government for the past two months), and Galicia. The Balearics are on the point of requesting autonomy.

Of all these regions and nationalities, the one that has moved most quickly has been the Principality. President Tarradellas recently named seven cabinet ministers, and three of them (the ministers of labor, education, and health) were from the left. Within the Catalan political spectrum, Tarradellas himself falls somewhere between center and right. For this reason, Prime Minister Suárez chose to negotiate with Tarradellas's representatives as well as with the Catalan parliamentary delegation. The parliamentarians acquiesced because Tarradellas was the only single figure who could authoritatively speak for Catalonia. Old and in rather poor health, he can hardly continue for long as President. Nor is he genuinely well liked in Catalan political circles. His conservative political positions and his high-handed manner with his colleagues have alienated many of his influential countrymen. For example, Tarradellas recently expelled Josep Benet, a distinguished historian and member of the Spanish Senate, from the meet-

ings of the Catalan parliamentarians. Benet was readmitted shortly thereafter, but the incident is typical of Tarradellas's style as a leader.

What Suárez most hoped to avoid, through his discussions with Tarradellas, was the immediate formation of a leftist Catalan government. Nonetheless, it seems almost certain that such a government will exist within a year or two, both in the Principality and in Valencia. In the municipal elections scheduled for next spring, it appears that the Socialists and Communists will emerge with a clear combined majority in most Catalan cities. A similar result is expected when elections are held for the *Generalitat's* legislature. This projected left government is also one primary reason for the strength of Catalanism among "immigrants" who—apart from their desire for cultural integration—realize that Catalanism offers them the best immediate chance to live under socialism.

**A** FINAL FACTOR WORTH MENTIONING here is the recent resurgence of anarchism. During Franco's reign the anarchist trade union federation (the CNT) virtually disappeared. The illegal Workers' Commissions that sprang up during the 1960s and early 1970s were largely dominated by the Communists. In the last two years, however, the anarchists have made up for lost time. Their strength in the Catalan labor movement has grown from almost nothing to a position approximately equal to that of the Communists. One cause of this growth was the Communist Party's discouragement of strikes during the parliamentary election campaign. Many workers struck anyway, and found themselves obliged to call on the CNT for help. In addition to the proletariat, another major nucleus of anarchism in Catalonia is found among students and the young in general. Though anarchists refuse to participate in electoral politics, it is possible that they will come to function as a kind of pressure group. Since they view communism as an immediately realizable goal, they can be expected to push any leftist government to take serious steps in that direction.

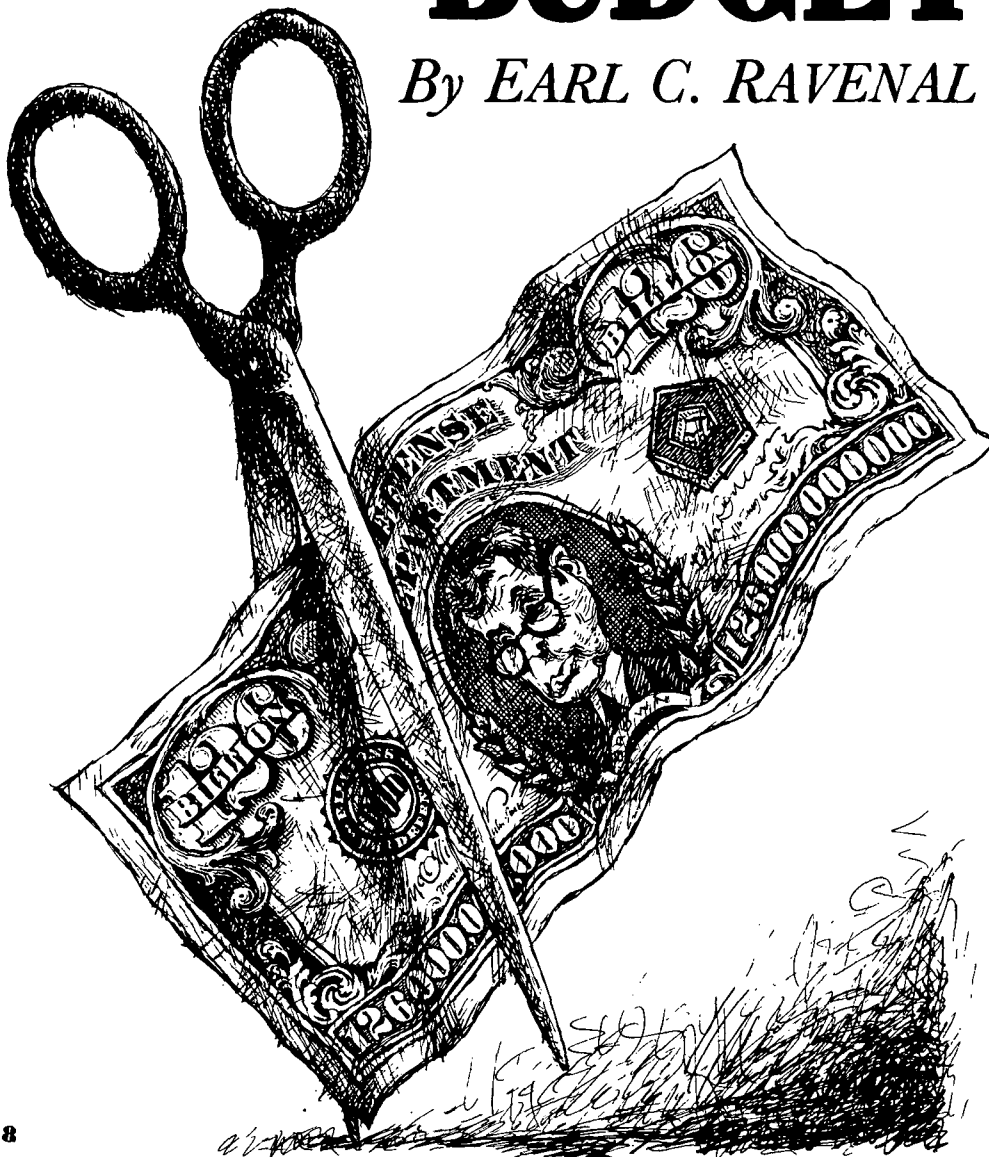
At this point, however, one can make no definite predictions. The problem of Catalans today—as during the 1930s—is that they are out of step with the conservative areas of Spain. Most Catalans feel they must move cautiously in order to consolidate their recent gains. For the time being, therefore, more "extreme" Catalanist groups like the PSAN (Socialist Party of National Liberation) have only limited support. What the PSAN advocates is the total independence and union of all the Catalan lands. It believes that Catalonia can never realize itself within a more conservative and backward Spain. If events prove the PSAN right, the independence movement can be expected to grow. For the moment, however, most Catalans are willing to wait and see what happens. Barring a rightist coup, Spain will certainly move towards an increasingly decentralized regime. Indeed, it must do so, for nowhere in Europe is attachment to the state so weak as in Spain. What many Catalans hope to see eventually is the inclusion of Spain within a United States of Europe composed of national units like Catalonia, Brittany, and Scotland, rather than centralized states. In the meantime they hope that their nation will again become—as it was during the 1930s—a model of progressive and imaginative government both for the Mediterranean area and for Western Europe as a whole.



*An unhypocritical  
proposal:*

# HOW TO CUT THE DEFENSE BUDGET

*By EARL C. RAVENAL*



**B**OTH HOUSES OF CON-  
gress are now digesting  
Secretary of Defense Harold  
Brown's "posture state-  
ment" for Fiscal Year 1979.  
In this document the Carter adminis-  
tration is requesting spending authority  
of \$126 billion for national defense, up  
from \$117 billion granted by Congress  
for FY 1978 (military assistance and  
atomic energy items from other de-  
partments' budgets would add another  
\$3 billion or so). If Congress accepts  
Harold Brown's budget, and its under-  
lying logic, it will have bought a long-  
term commitment to three percent an-  
nual real increases in defense spending.  
Thus if Harold Brown and the Carter  
administration have their way, by 1988  
the United States will be spending \$260  
billion a year on defense. And cumula-  
tively, in that decade we will have spent  
close to \$2 trillion (\$1855 billion, based  
on Harold Brown's own projections).

But no one seems to care much any-  
more. The debate this year over the  
defense budget has been stunted. Those  
who are pleased by the secretary's re-  
quest, like the *New York Times*, ooze ad-  
miration for his "cool" view of the mili-  
tary threat and his "refreshing and  
reassuring" presentation. On the other  
side, the conservatives, who usually get  
pretty exercised about "transfer pay-  
ments," don't seem to be registering  
much of a reaction to this greatest re-  
source transfer in history—except to  
say that it isn't enough. (It is a transfer  
in the two essential senses of the word  
from the productive to the unproduc-  
tive sectors of our economy, by taking  
dollars from the pockets of workers,  
farmers, and businessmen and almos-  
tically pouring them on the ground or  
into the sea, or dispatching them into  
thin air; and from the United States to  
the rest of the world, by incurring the  
high costs of defense preparations, mili-  
tary assistance, and periodic wars.)

There needs to be another side in this  
debate, one that will reexamine the  
basic premises upon which Brown's  
budget is based. It is not enough to  
nit-pick peripheral aspects of our na-  
tional strategy or our defense manage-  
ment. If you ask most critics how we  
can cut the defense budget, they an-  
swer: Stop supporting dictators around

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*EARL C. RAVENAL, a former Defense  
Department official, is a fellow of the Institute  
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and teaches at Johns Hopkins and Georgetown.  
His most recent book, Never Again: Learning  
from America's Foreign Policy Failures, will be  
published in June by Temple University Press.*

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