

Spain and the First World War : neutrality and crisis.

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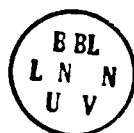
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SPAIN AND THE FIRST WORLD
WAR: NEUTRALITY AND CRISIS

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of London

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Abstract of thesis

The subject of this thesis is a study of Spain during the First World War. The Spanish case is analyzed as the regional version of the general crisis which engulfed the rest of Europe during these years. This crisis was produced by the ideological militancy and social struggle caused by four years of devastating international conflict. It heralded the arrival of mass politics which put an end to a previous era marked by hierarchical and clientelist politics.

This thesis examines how the maintenance of strict neutrality did not save the existing regime in Spain from the impact of the conflict raging in Europe. Spain did not enter the war but the war entered the country and, ironically, a conflict in which Spain did not take part was to alter its contemporary history.

The analysis explores the gradual disintegration of the foundations of the ruling system, the Liberal Monarchy restored in December 1874, during and as a consequence of the First World War. Considerable attention is paid to the impact and importance of the war in producing the decay of the Liberal Monarchy. This process is examined at two levels: the political polarization and subsequent division of the country which was provoked by the debate about belligerence or neutrality, and the social and economic transformations that Spain underwent as consequence of its privileged position as a supplier to both sides. The result was galloping inflation, widespread social discontent and

political turmoil. Under these pressures, the hegemonic system, based on electoral falsification, widespread patronage and mass apathy, collapsed and gave way to an inexorable process of growing working class and right-wing militancy which led to the military coup of 1923.

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PREFACE

The First World War constituted a turning point in modern European history. It was a devastating conflict which produced massive economic dislocation, social distress and discontent throughout the continent. Hitherto the existing governing elites had managed to cling to power through a variety of Liberal political systems which in fact disguised the monopoly of power enjoyed by the privileged propertied classes. After the First World War that would no longer be possible. It heralded the arrival of a new era, that of mass politics. Europeans would irretrievably move away from the world of 1914 as the dominant forms of hierarchical, clientelist and elitist politics broke down. The ruling orders were confronted with the unwelcome prospect of more genuine democracy and from 1917 with the fast-advancing threat of Socialism. It initiated a period of ideological militancy and political mobilization unknown in Europe since 1848.

Spain was not an exception. In fact, the Spanish case has to be regarded as the regional version of the general crisis which engulfed Europe during those years. The impact of the Great War inflicted a deadly blow on the Restoration Monarchy which had ruled the country since 1875. In vain, the Spanish governing classes struggled to keep the country away from the conflict. The official neutrality of the state did not save its political system. Spain did not enter the war, but the war entered Spain and its economic and political impact eroded the fragile

foundations of a political system which had so far been based on the passivity and subservience of the population.

A chronological order to the narrative has been adopted so as to facilitate a sense of evolution. The analysis traces developments from the outbreak of hostilities in Europe and the subsequent process of disintegration of the ruling political system in Spain throughout the years of the conflict. The first chapter is an introduction in which particular emphasis is placed on the fact that foreign problems played an important part in the growing loss of hegemony of the Restoration Monarchy. The second chapter examines the socio-economic impact and the ideological split of the country produced by the war. The third and fourth chapter have extraordinary importance. The period covered, December 1915-April 1917, has traditionally been ignored by most historians. Yet it constituted the crucial moment in which the crisis of the ruling system became a reality and could no longer be concealed. In the third chapter, the rebellion of key institutions--bourgeoisie, labour movement and army--is analyzed. In the fourth, the secret war fought in Spain between Allies and Central Empires and the process by which the country was close to abandoning neutrality are both thoroughly investigated. In the fifth chapter, the final crisis of the ruling system is fully explained. Its analysis is divided into three sections. Firstly, the insurrection of the military, the subsequent mobilization of all the progressive forces of the state and the break-up and discredit of the governing elites, are scrutinized. Secondly, the showdown in August 1917 between government and working class is

investigated. Finally, the destruction of the ruling political system is studied. The sixth chapter is an account of the failure of the governing elites to find a new stable political settlement. The bankruptcy and lack of credibility of the new political solutions in both the domestic and international fields are fully examined. The seventh and last chapter is an examination of the way in which the effects of the First World War destroyed the existing liberal system but failed to provide a valid alternative. Thus the following years would be marked by the throes of an ailing ruling order which although politically dead still managed to survive for almost five more years.

1.-The outbreak of the War:

Since 1875 Spain had been ruled by a constitutional monarchy. The architect of the new ruling order was the shrewd politician Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. His main objective was to reach a political settlement which could put an end to the years of civil strife, military pronunciamientos and general instability which had characterized the earlier part of the century. He was to be largely successful. The restoration of the Bourbon Monarchy in the person of Alfonso XII and the constitution of 1876 were his achievements. He devised a political system which seemed to be modern and democratic. For the next four decades two ruling monarchist or 'dynastic' parties, the Conservative headed by Cánovas himself, and the Liberal led by Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, alternated in power. The rotation in office of these two political groups was so systematic that the Canovite order was known as *Turno Pacífico* ('Peaceful Rotation').

In fact, the Restoration settlement was far from democratic. All the constitutional trappings actually served to conceal the monopoly in politics enjoyed by a governing elite. That political class was formed by the representatives of the ruling privileged landowning oligarchies of Castilian wheat growers and Andalusian wine and olive oil producers. As the years went by, the group also included large financial interests such as banks, state companies or big concerns like railways. Most dynastic politicians were linked with landowning interests or

formed part of the boards of directors of railways, banks or other large enterprises. Thus liberal democracy in Spain, as in most European countries at the time, was actually a sham and a way to disguise a blatant reality in which the privileged groups in society maintained their supremacy. In the Spanish case, it perpetuated a social infra-structure that permitted the co-existence of modern liberal institutions with a semi-feudal socio-economic order.

Yet Cánovas broke with a past marked by intolerance and *exclusivismo*. After 1876 both Liberals and Conservatives agreed upon a system of regulated rotation through which they shared the spoils of office, patronage and administrative graft. Neither dynastic formation was a modern political group seeking to win the vote with clear-cut and attractive programmes. On the contrary, there was hardly any difference between either dynastic party. They were artificial groups created from above. They did not even bother to campaign before polling day as the system was based on electoral falsification. During the Restoration period elections did not produce governments in Spain. It was the government which made the elections. The Minister of Interior (*'Ministro de la Gobernación'*) manipulated the results so that the government always obtained an overall majority. The ruling system avoided confrontation or competition and instead sought compromise and stability. The party in power at election time respected the strongholds of the dynastic opposition and even the most important seats of such enemies as the Republicans on the left and the Carlists on the right.

At the top of the Canovite edifice, the Crown played a crucial role. The Monarch was not only the Commander in Chief of the army but he also had the power to appoint and dismiss governments. He was the one who ensured the smooth functioning of the *Turno*. Any Prime Minister, to whom the King gave the decree of dissolution of parliament, knew that the new elections would inevitably give him an overall majority to rule comfortably. At the bottom, the *caciques* were the kingpin of the entire political structure. They were the local notables, the bigwigs and influential bosses of each locality. They could be landowners or their agents, officials, moneylenders, lawyers or even priests. It was they who delivered the expected majorities to the governments in Madrid. The *caciques* made universal suffrage, granted in 1890, inoperative. They ran their areas as personal fiefs. They had unlimited powers to settle local affairs, choose judges, appoint officials, undertake public works and even levy taxes in accordance with their will. No government would dare to move against them as its position in office depended on them. They filled the gap left by the lack of real political mobilization and took advantage of their key role as links between the central administration and the country. Hence the *caciques* could systematically violate the law with impunity and build a clientelist network based on patronage and self-interest. Their friends were rewarded and promoted and their enemies coerced, arrested and in some cases even murdered.(1)

The Canovite system worked relatively smoothly during the first two decades after 1876. Its continuity depended on mass

apathy and political demobilization which was facilitated by the nature of Spanish society in the last quarter of the XIXth century. Thus it benefited from the economic and cultural backwardness and the lack of national integration. High illiteracy, poor transport and communication systems and the slow process of urbanization favoured the development of the patron-client network in which *caciquismo* was rooted. It was obvious that as the country advanced economically, socially and culturally the Canovite status quo would run into increasing difficulties. Nevertheless, it is significant the extent to which foreign policy problems contributed to the erosion of the foundations of the *Turno Pacífico*. Three dates were to be crucial: 1898, 1909 and 1914.

Defeat in the war against the United States in 1898 and the subsequent loss of the remnants of the overseas Empire--Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines--thoroughly discredited the regime. The feeling of impotence and decline was such that a movement of criticism against the ruling system was born. The so-called *Regeneracionismo* found in the *caciquista* system the epitome of all that was wrong in the country. Its entrenchment was the proof that Spain was backward, undeveloped and divorced from progress. An elite of intellectuals known as the *Generación del 98* became the leading force denouncing the corruption of the dynastic elites. Simultaneously, the *Turno* parties began to lose ground in the most important cities. They could not ignore the fact that an increasing number of Republicans were elected in the larger towns. It was apparent that the urban population was

politically aware and elections could not be easily rigged there. The vote was still conducted in the old way but more repression and bribery was needed to get the desired results. Catalonia, the economically most advanced area, was the first to destroy the grip of the *caciques*. It had been worst hit by the loss of the lucrative Cuban markets for their textile goods. The Catalans called into question the nature of the Restoration system and created their own parties. In 1901 the newly established *Lliga Regionalista*, representative of the Catalan industrial bourgeoisie, obtained a sweeping victory. After 1905, Regionalists and Republicans were in control of Catalan politics. Furthermore, the two ruling parties were affected by internal problems. By the turn of the century, the two historical leaders, Cánovas and Sagasta, were dead. Not being based on ideological lines but on patronage, their parties were bound to be divided by factional squabbles. Additionally, the new King, Alfonso XIII, took advantage of the new situation to attempt a restoration of Royal prerogatives. He would further the disintegration of the *Turno* by often trying to implement the maxim 'divide and conquer'. After 1898, the dynastic leaders also abandoned their traditional caution in foreign policy. Hitherto the Restoration politicians had followed in international matters the so-called "*recogimiento*" or total isolation from the two hostile blocs which were being formed in Europe. After the defeat at the hands of the United States, Spain, without throwing in her lot with either of the two camps, initiated a timid approach towards France and Britain to guarantee the status quo in the Western Mediterranean. A treaty signed with France in 1900 gave

possession of Guinea and the Western Sahara to Spain. In a new treaty signed at Algeciras in 1906, confirmed one year later at Cartagena, France, Britain and Spain recognized their spheres of influence in the area and Spain was granted a strip of land in Northern Morocco. (2)

Without the possession of Tangier, the richest Moroccan port which became an international city, the occupation of a desert zone in Morocco inhabited by fierce and rebellious tribes caused problems to Spain right from the start. Imperialist adventures were very unpopular. Stories told by the many thousands of returned soldiers from the lost colonies of the appalling state of the medical and logistical services of the army increased the lack of enthusiasm for any new colonial enterprise and diminished the credibility of the system. Furthermore, the chronically burdened government budget could hardly afford to undertake new colonization projects. In 1909, the government was drawn into a minor war to defend Spanish mining concessions against continuous attacks by Moorish guerrillas. The call-up of reservists that summer, most of them married workers, was met by a General Strike against the Moroccan campaign. In Barcelona and other Catalan towns, the revolt got out of control. During the so-called "Tragic Week" of July 1909, barricades were erected and churches burnt down. The riots were finally suppressed with great violence. Over 175 people were shot and five more were executed later. The sequel to those events was the fall of the Conservative cabinet in October. Its Prime Minister, Antonio Maura, constituted one of the exceptional

dynastic leaders who had advocated a revolution from above. Realizing that in order to save the social order some political reforms were needed, Maura sought to replace the artificial *caciquista* mechanism with a modern programme with which to attract the Conservative and Catholic middle classes. His regenerationist experiment was halted by the events of 1909. Maura never forgave the role played by the Liberals. The latter, deeply upset by Maura's attempts to tamper with the ruling system, had fiercely opposed his administration and had taken advantage of the situation created by the Tragic Week to oust him from power. Maura refused to alternate with them in office. In January 1913 Maura demanded power on his terms and affirmed that the Conservatives under his leadership would never rotate with the Liberals. A few months later, the bulk of the Conservative party abandoned its leader and, led by the ex-minister and rich lawyer, Eduardo Dato, accepted the continuity of the *Turno* fiction. A minority formed mainly by young Conservatives followed the dismissed leader and created the *Maurista* movement. Maura was the first and last dynastic politician who would have a genuine mass following. The result would be the first serious split in one of the two dynastic parties.(3)

The outbreak of the First World War was to make impossible the continuity of the constitutional sham. The European conflict brought about enormous social and economic strains which by strengthening the hand of the national bourgeoisies and working classes against the traditional supremacy of the landowning oligarchies altered the relation of

forces in most countries. Food shortages, economic dislocation, social distress, scarcity and inflation produced the political awakening and ideological militancy of the masses. Under those pressures, the existing forms of hierarchical, clientelist and elitist politics broke down. The traditional governing elites found it impossible to put the clock back and return to the world of 1914.

Spain would not be an exception. In fact, the war initiated a crisis of authority of the ruling political system which can be regarded as the regional version of the general crisis which engulfed the rest of Europe during those years. Spain, if well spared from the human slaughter, experienced as much as the other European states the effects of the conflict. Her official neutrality could hardly hide the intensity of the debate between the supporters of the Central Empires and those of the Allies, nor could it check the increasing militancy and ideological awareness produced by the impact of the conflict on the daily lives of the Spaniards. Hence the Restoration system that so far had rested on the demobilization and passivity of the people entered a period of irretrievable crisis. The crisis of hegemony or authority of the ruling order was produced by the inability of the governing elites successfully to face the arrival of mass politics and their subsequent challenge to clientelism and patronage as a source of power. The First World War destroyed the foundations of the Canovite status quo. Ironically, a war in which Spain did not intervene was to influence decisively her contemporary history.(4) The dynastic

politicians were determined to keep Spain out of the conflict regardless of the price. They succeeded in doing so but it was beyond their power to prevent the conflict from entering Spain.

The very day that hostilities broke out in the continent, the Conservative cabinet declared the official neutrality of Spain. On 25 August Prime Minister Dato wrote to his former chief Maura noting that the lack of compromises with either side facilitated the official neutrality. Yet he also pointed out other very revealing facts:

"Our position is not to abandon that policy. We would depart from neutrality only if we were directly threatened by foreign aggression or by an ultimatum...Germany and Austria are delighted with our attitude as they believed us committed to the Entente. France and Britain cannot criticize us as our pacts with them are limited to Morocco. Moreover, we do not owe them anything since in the dreadful year of 1898 they did nothing for Spain...I do not fear that the Allies would push us to take sides with or against them...They must know that we lack material resources and adequate preparation for a modern war. Even if the country was ready to launch itself into a military adventure, our collaboration would have little consequence. Would we not render a better service to both sides by sticking to our neutrality so that one day we could raise a white flag and organize a peace conference in our nation which could put an end to the current conflict?. We have moral authority

for that and who knows if we shall be required to do so...". (5)

Thus among the main motives behind Spain's neutrality were the recognition of her political and diplomatic isolation as well as the economic weakness and military disorganization of the country. Furthermore, the dispute in Europe was not regarded as affecting Spanish interests, while there was always the hope that by maintaining an impartial position Spain could play the leading role in organizing a peace summit and therefore gain in the diplomatic field what could never be achieved on the battlefield.

The view that Spain could not effectively wage a modern war and therefore should not get involved in the conflict was shared by nearly everyone in the country in the summer of 1914. On 1 and 7 August, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist party and its trade union the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (U.G.T.) published a statement which set out their opposition to intervention in such a terrible conflict where workers would be the main victims. In an article in *La Veu de Catalunya*, Francesc Cambó, the leader of the Catalan *Lliga Regionalista*, also commented that a poor and badly armed country like Spain should stay out of the European war. Equally, Antonio Maura wrote to Dato that he was prepared to go to the Cortes in order to applaud the decision taken by the government. Maura pointed out that the war would inevitably have a deep impact on Spain and regretted that the fate of the country might well be

in the hands of foreign powers or depend on others' fortunes. Thus when on 30 October, 1914 the Cortes opened after the summer recess, the declaration of neutrality was warmly applauded by all the political parties. Dato firmly noted that Spain had not received the smallest provocation from any of the belligerent nations and desired to remain aloof from the horrors of the war. In the unlikely event of the country being provoked by an act of aggression, Dato promised that the government would hasten to appeal to parliament in order to defend the honour, the liberty and the independence of the nation.(6)

However, right from the start, there were dissenting voices in the country. On the one hand, there were the ultra right-wing Carlists who, led by Vázquez de Mella, wasted no time in disseminating their pro-German feelings. On the other hand, the Republican Radicals led by Alejandro Lerroux did not hide their support for the Allied cause and even began to campaign for open intervention in the conflict. There were rumours that it had been discussed in military circles whether Lerroux should be court martialled and shot. Lerroux's reputation was that of a demagogue and a troublemaker. Thus the British Ambassador, Arthur Hardinge, felt deeply embarrassed when in early November he received a note from the Madrid committee of the Radical party requesting him to forward to the British Prime Minister an assurance of their best wishes for the success of the Entente in the war. The British ambassador complied but not before informing the Spanish Foreign Minister, the Marquis of Lema, of the Radicals' message.(7)

The attitudes adopted by Carlists and Radicals were hardly a surprise to anyone. The real shock came with the publication on 19 August, 1914 of an article called "*Neutralidades que matan*". ('Fatal Neutralities') in *El Diario Universal*, mouthpiece of the leader of the Liberal party, the Count Romanones. It was said that it had been written by the Count himself, although authorship was claimed by Pérez Caballero, a former minister under the Liberal cabinet of Moret in 1907 and former Ambassador in Paris. Even if Romanones did not write it, his was the inspiration. The article constituted a clear appeal to Spain to cast in its lot with the Entente:

"...Geopolitical, economic and diplomatic imperatives impose collaboration with the Entente. Spain is surrounded by the Allies, the sea-lanes are controlled by them, the vast bulk of our trade is with France and Britain and theirs is the largest portion of foreign investment in our country. Moreover, Spain's economic life depends upon Britain's coal and American wheat...our collaboration with them would only represent the logical continuity of the international policies undertaken by different Spanish governments between 1900 and 1913...Neutrality unsupported by the neutral's own force is at the mercy of the first strong state which finds it necessary to violate it...The Balearic and the Canary Islands, the Galician coasts are undefended...If Germany wins, will she thank us for our neutrality?. No, she will try to rule the Mediterranean. She will not take French continental territory. She will

seize the African coast from Tripoli to Fernando Poo...We shall lose our hopes of expansion in Morocco. We shall lose our independence. We shall lose the Balearic Islands. Nor will German expansion in the economic and industrial domain compensate us for the ruin of the countries with whom our interests in those respects have been up to now identified. On the other hand, if the Allies triumph they will owe us no debt of gratitude and will remodel the map of Europe as they think fit...There are fatal neutralities!.(8)

The impact of the article was considerable. The leader of the Liberal party was publicly criticizing the policy adopted by the government at the outbreak of the war. Romanones' argument did not necessarily advocate entering the war but openly demanded that Spain should move closer towards the Allied camp. This was therefore patently at odds with the strict neutrality declared by Dato. Romanones had clearly damaged the position of the government and in the long-term this was to hurt his own image as future Prime Minister. Romanones himself claimed in his memoirs that at this stage the King shared his views. The Count argued that although his intention was not to push Spain into the conflict, his duty was to let the Allies know that Spain was prepared to adopt a neutrality favourable to them. Realizing that he was not in tune with the country, Romanones tried a new approach. In *El Imparcial* of 4 September, 1914 he insisted that neutrality did not imply isolation as that would be inconsistent with the economic interests and conditions of modern Europe. He also denied any personal responsibility for the article "Fatal

Neutralities" and recognized the impracticality of abandoning neutrality. Dato's formal declaration in the Cortes on 30 October of the Spanish position on the war was quickly endorsed by Romanones. The British Ambassador commented that neither Count Romanones nor any responsible man would now venture to support a departure from neutrality.(9)

By the autumn of 1914, if the general consensus among Spaniards was to remain away from the battlefields, hopes for a short war or for a peaceful solution in which Spain could play a decisive role faded away. The Socialist journalist Luis Araquistáin caught perfectly the changing mood of public opinion towards the war issue. According to Araquistáin, this could be divided into three phases: during the initial stage the conflict was followed as if it were a game and people even placed bets as on a horse race; a second and critical period began in 1915 when Spaniards started to take sides, the final and active phase was already evident by 1916 coinciding with a movement of agitation and mobilization around the neutrality question.(10)

2.-The Year 1915: The critical phase

By 1915, the conflict had definitely entered the peninsula. Politically and ideologically, many Spaniards began to take sides. Economically, the country was dramatically affected by the European dispute. The placid life of the *Turno* governments was reaching its end as the country saw its normal existence altered by forces unleashed by the war.

Most of the population, especially those in the countryside, regarded the ideological and political issues of the conflict with indifference. Their living standards would inevitably be hurt by the hardships and shortages brought about by the war but they did not understand the struggle of ideas and concepts behind the actual fighting. Yet for many social, cultural and political groups based in the cities, the European conflict became a question of obsessive concern. The war was almost immediately perceived as an ideological clash in which each of the warring factions came to symbolize certain transcendent ideas and values. The quarrel between the partisans of the Allies and of the Central Powers generated a violent debate around the issue of neutrality. Rather than merely reflecting contrasting opinions, it reflected a deep pre-existing spiritual division within the Spanish people which the war did not create but only exacerbated. It was such a bitter polemic that it had the moral quality of a civil war: " A civil war of words". It represented a verbal clash between the two Spains which was a portent of the real civil war that still lay a

generation in the future.(1) Passions reached such a pitch that families and friends were often divided and many cinemas refused to give news on the conflict in order to prevent fights.

The two dynastic parties generally kept to the formula of neutrality. Dato banned all public meetings relating to the international issue in an effort to avoid the divisions and arguments that finally pushed Italy into the war in May 1915. Realizing the poor quality of the Spanish army, the Conservative government decided to pursue comprehensive military reform and sent a military and naval commission, led respectively by Major Garrido and Captain Carranza, to Washington to purchase weapons and supplies. That operation would last until late 1917.(2)

As public opinion began to split, dynastic politicians would desperately cling to formal neutrality. However, some of them could not avoid being identified with one side or the other. Romanones and his friends in the Liberal party had clearly cast their lot in with the Western Powers. For political rather than ideological reasons, those Liberals who disputed Romanones' leadership and backed that of his rival, the Marquis of Alhucemas, tended to be regarded as *Germanophiles*. Even within the Conservative party, there existed divisions. The Minister of Interior and Eduardo Dato's right hand man, José Sánchez Guerra, and the Minister of War, General Ramón Echague, were considered to support the Central Powers. On the other hand, Dato and his Foreign Minister, the Marquis of Lema, were regarded as good friends of the Allied cause. As early as 7 August 1914, the

Spanish Ambassador in London, Merry del Val, had called at the Foreign Office and stated under instructions of his government that Spain was desirous of doing anything she could for the protection of British interests and subjects. A few days later a Spanish request to have a naval officer and one other Spanish officer follow the operations of the British army and navy, was promptly granted. In 1915, British diplomats judged the existing Spanish administration to be the best possible given the existing conditions, and by June the French Ambassador informed his British counterpart that insulting letters had been addressed to the Marquis of Lema by the German Ambassador, Prince Ratibor.(3) Nevertheless, despite personal sentiments, both dynastic parties, with the outstanding exception of Romanones, managed to conceal their internal differences and give an image, until the end of the war, of cohesion regarding the declaration of neutrality.

There is abundant literature concerning the ideological division of Spain between *Germanophiles* and *Francophiles*.(4) Although an accurate definition of both sides in ideological, social or political terms is difficult, it can be affirmed that in general terms the so-called "Official Spain" was *Germanophile* and "Real Spain" was *Francophile*. The more economically backward Castille supported the Central Powers and the more dynamic areas of the periphery the Allies. The Right wanted a victory for the Imperial forces and the Left for the Western Democracies. The main *Germanophile* voices in the country were those of the clergy, the army, the aristocracy, the landowning elites, the upper bourgeoisie, the court, the Carlists and the *Mauristas*. All

regarded a victory of the Central Powers as a triumph for those who defended such catholic and traditional values as monarchism, discipline, authority and a hierarchical social order. On the other hand, the main Allied supporters were the Regionalists, the Republicans, the Socialists, the professional middle classes and the intellectuals. In fact, those who wanted to transform the existing oligarchical liberalism into a genuine democracy.

As the conflict went on, neutrality began to lose its initial meaning. On the one hand, the friends of the Allied cause would increasingly regard it as a sham and thus would switch to positions ranging from benevolent neutrality to diplomatic rupture with Germany and even open intervention. On the other hand, it was evident even to the most rabid *Germanophiles* that with the country surrounded by the Entente Powers and the British fleet controlling the seas, to join forces with Germany would amount to military suicide. Hence they became champions of a strict neutrality as the best way to support the Central Powers. They were not in fact neutral but pragmatism forced them to accept neutrality as the best solution. Their advantage was that their pro-German feelings could be easily disguised under the vague facade of a neutrality that they presented as representative of patriotism, *españolismo* and opposition to foreign interference in Spanish affairs, while the case of the pro-Allied forces advocating entry into the war could be shown as the work of foreign agents bordering on treason.

Many supporters of the Central Powers were *Francophobes*

rather than *Germanophiles*. They put forward historical examples such as Morocco and Gibraltar to argue that Spain had nothing to gain from an Allied victory, while the triumph of the German armies could favour Spanish interests. Germany represented the best defence of the West against Russian barbarism. The most outstanding case of *Francophobia* was that of the Catholic church. Its hierarchy and its main journal *El Debate* portrayed the Kaiser as God's sword. Despite Wilhem's Protestantism, he was regarded as a Catholic Prince in disguise raised up to chastise immoral and faithless France with divine vengeance and to restore the temporal power of the Pope. Throughout the four years of war, the Church was the institution which offered the most unyielding position and the most coherent ideological support for the German cause. Not even the invasion of Catholic Belgium softened its stand. Many would argue that it was God's punishment of the nation which had allowed the construction of a monument to Ferrer Guardia, the Spanish Anarchist executed in 1909 after being accused of being the mastermind of the week of riots and destruction of churches in Barcelona known as the Tragic Week. After the Bishop of Southwark's tour of Spain in October 1915, he declared that only the Bishops of Madrid and Ciudad Real were friendly towards the Allies, but the Primate and the rest of the clergy had made clear their pro-German sympathies and hatred of French Republicanism. (5)

The army did not present the same cohesive front as the church. Most of the officers were not *Germanophiles* in the strictest sense of the word, but they admired the efficiency and

discipline of the Prussian army. There were some outstanding examples of *Francophile* Generals such as Miguel Primo de Rivera or Eduardo López Ochoa, but the majority were well aware of the inability of the Spanish army to participate in the European conflict and thus they loathed the idea of departing from the initial strict neutrality. Furthermore, Allied reports warned that there existed a military party, containing among others, the Minister of War General Echague, which was not only very confident of a final German victory but was also hoping that if the Entente was badly beaten, Spain could, under some pretext or another, annex Portugal.(6)

Carlists and *Mauristas* were the two political parties which voiced *Germanophiles* feelings more openly. Their strong catholicism, monarchism and conservatism pushed them against Protestant Britain and Republican France.(7) The speech delivered by the Carlist spokesman Vázquez de Mella on 31 May, 1915 marked the official U-turn from outspoken *Germanophilia* to an all-out defence of strict neutrality. The Italian example made the supporters of the Central Powers in Spain realize that there was no way the country could side with Germany. Henceforth those journals close to Carlism and *Maurismo* such as *El Correo Español*, *La Tribuna*, *El Universo* and *La Acción* would adopt the line that patriotism and internal independence forbade a departure from neutrality. Ironically, the leaders of both movements disagreed with their followers. The Carlist Pretender, Don Jaime, was fighting in the Russian army, and Maura continually disappointed his *Germanophile* followers when he alluded to international

affairs and stressed that Spain was inevitably linked by cultural and economic realities to the Western powers. The Conservative statesman was inclined to defend a neutral stance which was clearly benevolent towards the Allies. The British Ambassador, Sir Arthur Hardinge, regarded Maura as a pro-Allied leader who had to act with caution so as not antagonize his pro-German followers. After Maura's speech at the Royal Theatre on 21 April, 1915, the British Ambassador wrote:

"...Maura is too much of a statesman to believe in the possibility of Spain pursuing a policy of hostility to France and Britain which would have involved the repudiation of agreements such as that of Carthagera to which he had been a party himself...his followers were greatly taken aback when Maura proclaimed himself a convinced supporter of the Entente with the Allies...Least of all did they expect that his remarks would support the policy of Romanones..." (8)

Similarly, Hardinge wrote after a speech by Maura in Berlanga on 10 September, 1916:

"...The important point in it was Señor Maura's account of his own part in the Carthagera agreement of 1904 and of his defence of that agreement as dictated by the interests of Spain in Morocco and the Mediterranean, and by her natural affinities as a Western power...I am inclined to think that Señor

Maura was playing to the gallery, for the clerical elements of his party were a little depressed by his evident attachment to the Carthagena agreement and only became responsive when he took to abusing Cardinal Richelieu and indulging in mournful references to Gibraltar. But these trimmings do not affect the general character of the dish which he served up to his political supporters...His present policy proved to be identical to that of Count Romanones...".(9)

The Court was the last important pro-German stronghold. It was led by the Queen Mother, the Austrian Archduchess María Cristina, and considered victory for the Central Powers as the best guarantee of survival for the old order. Naturally, the English Queen, married to Alfonso in 1906, defended her country of birth. Alfonso XIII was regarded by all the Allied diplomats as a genuine and real friend of their cause. It was even alleged that the article "Fatal Neutralities" expressed the feelings of the Monarch and that it had been written by Romanones in order to please him. Most of Alfonso XIII's apologists emphasized that he remained throughout the four years of war above political tendencies. Yet it seems that the main objective of the Spanish Monarch was to consolidate his personal position at home and abroad so as to play a leading role in the new European concert. He aspired to the role of mediator in the conflict and if possible to benefit from it by enlarging the Spanish colonial empire. In order to achieve that purpose the King in 1915 set up

a Bureau to deal with prisoners' conditions, deportations, general information about missing citizens and soldiers of the belligerent countries, humanitarian aid, pardons, etc. By the end of the war, his role had been crucial in obtaining 50 pardons and 5,000 repatriations, tackling 25,000 cases of relatives in occupied territories and investigating the whereabouts of over 250,000 missing persons or prisoners of war. However, after the March Revolution in Russia and the entry of the United States into the war, Alfonso adopted an increasingly *Germanophile* position which he was able to conceal under the perfect cover of defending Spanish neutrality.(10)

The intellectuals constituted the main defenders of the Allied cause in Spain. They had been the traditional adversaries of the church competing for control of education and culture. The European conflict placed intelligentsia and clergy in different camps. The intellectuals were not only admirers of Republican France and democratic Britain but also *Germanophobes* who detested the authoritarian system that the Central Powers espoused. In a sense by supporting Britain and France, the historic enemies of Spain, they were choosing Europe over Spain. They were opting for a future Europeanized Spain, modern, secular and democratic in place of the tradition-ridden, priestly, oligarchical Spain that was. These intellectuals were known as the Generation of 1914. Many of them such as Pérez Galdós, Pérez de Ayala, Unamuno or Valle Inclán had been members of the Generation of 1898. They were now joined by younger poets, academics and writers of whom a perfect example would be Manuel Azaña, President of the Madrid

Atheneum. On 10 July 1915, Pérez de Ayala published in *Iberia* the first expression of solidarity with the Allies. The Valencian novelist Vicente Blasco Ibáñez produced a series of pamphlets during the war denouncing German violence and barbarism. He would turn those into his famous book "*Los cuatro jinetes del apocalipsis*" ('The four horsemen of the apocalypse') which then became a Hollywood film. In January 1917 a coalition of intellectuals presided over by Pérez Galdós formally established the anti-*Germanophile* League. They made no secret of their belief that the outcome of the conflict would determine the future political order of Europe. Thus a victory for the Allied forces would bring about the democratization and modernization of the continent. Spain would then be able to free herself from the oligarchy, backwardness and *caciquismo* in which she had stagnated for so long. The magazine *España* was the main publication of the pro-Allied camp. It was edited until February 1916 by Ortega y Gasset and then by the Socialist Luis Araquistáin who relied on British financial support to keep the magazine afloat. Spain's intelligentsia contributed with articles to promote the Allied cause and in its pages there appeared the first manifesto of the anti-*Germanophile* League calling for the defence of liberalism and democracy and exhorting Spaniards to fight the false neutrality defended by the *Germanophiles* whose real objective was to prevent the country from achieving the progress and liberties which were represented in the war by the Western Powers. Pío Baroja and Jacinto Benavente constituted the two notable exceptions within Spain's cultural elite. Ironically, both seem to have been Germanophiles for the wrong reasons. The

pseudo-anarchist Basque author, Pío Baroja, believed that Germany was the only power which could shatter clericalism in Europe. Benavente, for his part, published a manifesto in *La Tribuna* on 18 December, 1915 which was signed by a long list of secondary figures in the artistic and academic world. He defended the pro-German neutralists in Spain from the accusations of reactionaries by alleging that, unlike those who based their international views on fatalistic and geographic imperatives, they were the defenders of an independent Spain, free to align with the countries she deemed appropriate. Furthermore, the playwright remarked that he believed in a future socialist world order and this could be best created by Germany, the cradle of Socialism. Thus Jacinto Benavente and Pío Baroja sponsored the Imperial cause for reasons diametrically opposed to those of the church and the Right.(11)

Catalanists and Republicans were the principal political groups to side with the Allies. The main leader of the right-wing Catalan *Lliga Regionalista*, Francesc Cambó, himself never publicly departed from neutrality. On some occasions in the Cortes he even used the example of the German Empire to demand for Catalonia the same kind of autonomy that the German Lander enjoyed. But the overwhelming majority of the Catalan political elite were outspoken *Francophiles*. Historical links with France and admiration for the principles and ideals defended by the "sister" nation made most Catalanists believe that a French victory represented the best hope for the fulfilment of their nationalist aspirations. There were more than 2000 Catalans

fighting in France in the so-called Catalan Legion. The contacts between Catalan Nationalists and French Republicans created serious problems for many governments in Madrid.(12)

On the international question, Republicans represented the opposite view to that of Carlists and *Mauristas*. Right from the start, they demonstrated where their sympathies lay. Republicans from all the different groupings made clear that a French victory would be a triumph for the cause of Republicanism in Spain. According to them, the country had to side with the Western democracies or it would remain a backward non-entity in Europe. Their press like Alejandro Lerroux's *El Radical*, Marcelino Domingo's *La Lucha* and Roberto Castrovido's *El País* were the mouth-pieces of the Allied cause. During the conflict Lerroux became the leading pro-interventionist spokesman. On more than one occasion, he was attacked by hostile neutralist crowds and had to run for his life. His shady reputation did not help him nor did it benefit the Allied cause. The British Embassy regarded him as an adventurer and an embarrassment. His speeches and actions were seen by the Allies, particularly in the first year of the war, as a gift to the *Germanophiles* and as a useless provocation to the government. On 26 May, 1915 in a speech at Santa Cruz de Tenerife Lerroux equated the kind of neutrality defended by the Dato cabinet with cowardice. There were all kind of rumours in June 1915 that the Radicals were plotting to bomb 27 German ships in Barcelona with a view to drawing Spain into the conflict. Earlier that year, Lerroux himself had become involved in the messy business of mediating in a transaction

between Spanish groups who intended to sell rifles and ammunition to the British firm Vickers. Prime Minister Dato was enraged when he heard that Lerroux had asked for a commission of £120,000 partly for his own services and partly as an outright bribe to be offered to Dato himself. (13)

A different image was presented by the Reformist party led by the Asturian Melquiades Alvarez. Since its creation in 1912 that political group had adopted an accidentalist stand. Thus without abandoning its Republican principles it had vowed to accept the existing regime if this was prepared to carry through a real process of democratization. Alvarez initially approved of the neutrality adopted by the government, but gradually moved to support a more benevolent attitude towards the Allies. On 1 May, 1915 he declared in Granada that Spain should side with France and Britain even if defeated. This was welcomed by the Allied diplomats as it appeared to be based on a principled assessment of the political reality, unlike that of Lerroux which seemed motivated mainly by profit or demagogy. In September 1915, Alvarez visited Paris and on his return he had become the chief spokesman for the Allied cause in Spain. (14)

The neutrality issue also had an impact on the labour movement. The organized working class in Spain was divided between Anarcho-Syndicalist and Marxist currents. The first was represented by the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT) and the second by the Socialist party (PSOE) and its trade union the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT) These two organizations would

adopt different positions to the war. The CNT had been created in 1910 and had only just emerged from years of repression by the time of the outbreak of the hostilities in Europe. Its membership of only 15,000, mainly concentrated in Catalonia and Andalusia, meant that its influence was relatively small. This trend would not change until the end of the First World War when the CNT's membership increased dramatically turning it into the main workers' organization in Spain. The Anarcho-Syndicalists adopted an internationalist stand condemning the war and refusing to take sides in what they regarded as a capitalist struggle. Despite the fact that some leading Anarchists in Europe such as the Italian Malatesta, the Russian Kropotkin and even the French Anarcho-Syndicalist trade union, the CGT, sided with the Allies, the overwhelming majority of Spanish Anarchists and Syndicalists remained committed to neutrality. Their determination to adhere to that formula was confirmed in a Congress held in Ferrol in February 1915 which concluded with the watchword, "Revolution before War". During the last years of the conflict, Anarchist intransigence and violent class warfare would become an asset to the Germans who cleverly manipulated and used some of the extremist elements in the CNT for their purposes.(15)

The Socialists presented a different picture. In 1914, with only one Deputy in the Cortes and electorally allied to the Republicans since 1909, they still had a long way to go to catch up in size and influence with their European counterparts. Yet with almost 100,000 members in the UGT and with a solidly centralized and carefully built organization, the Socialists

could claim to speak in the name of the Spanish proletariat. The outbreak of the war caught them completely unprepared. Initially they proclaimed their internationalism and denounced the 'imperialist contest'. However, as it became clear that the Second International had failed to prevent the war and Germany invaded neutral Belgium in the summer of 1914, the Socialists began to change their initial stance. Soon the editorials in *El Socialista* were pointing to German militarism as the main cause of the war. The Socialists' new position was clearly revealed in an article on 12 September, 1914 called "*Formas de Neutralidad*" ('Ways of being neutral'). It portrayed the European war as a struggle between the Central Powers defending the old order and the Entente which was fighting for progress and democracy. It argued that Socialists, unlike the reactionary elements in the country, believed that Spain should remain neutral because of economic and military deficiencies, but that neutrality should be benevolent towards the Allies. Thus Socialists and Republicans were in virtual agreement. This pro-Entente position was confirmed by the rhetoric of the old and authoritarian Socialist leader Pablo Iglesias. On 5 November, 1914 Iglesias expressed in the Cortes his support for the Allied cause. A few months later, Fabra Ribas, a member of the PSOE's National Executive, published a pamphlet entitled "*El socialismo y el conflicto europeo: Kaiserismo, he ahí el enemigo*" ('Socialism and the European conflict: Kaiserism, the enemy!'). At the 10th Congress of the party held at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid between 24-31 October, 1915, Iglesias and the PSOE's leadership defeated the internationalist opposition. Two questions were dealt with: the

continuity of the *conjunción* or alliance with the Republicans and the attitude towards the war. Through its tight control of the apparatus of the party, the National Executive imposed its views on both matters. Iglesias himself and his right-hand man Julián Besteiro, a University professor, spoke on behalf of the continuity of the *conjunción* and won by a narrow margin of 3,106 to 2,850 votes. The internationalist motion was also defeated by 4,090 to 2,018 votes. Henceforth with the PSOE leadership firmly in control and the alliance with the Republicans confirmed, the Socialists became one of the outspoken defenders of the Allied cause in Spain.(16)

In the struggle to incline Spanish neutrality towards one or the other of the warring blocs, the Allies could count on important economic and geographic advantages. It seemed evident that unless the Western Powers were close to being badly beaten, no Spanish administration would contemplate the idea of moving closer to Germany. Yet these initial advantages were outweighed by an active and masterly strategy conducted in Spain by the Central Powers which gave them the initiative virtually throughout the four years of war. Their strategy can be divided into two phases: until early 1916, they followed a diplomatic campaign; for the remainder of the conflict, that campaign was reinforced by a very well organized intelligence network whose activities ranged from sponsoring press offensives against unfriendly politicians to financing both Anarchist groups in the peninsula and rebel guerrillas in Morocco. The objective was to ensure that Spain would never abandon her neutrality.

Until late 1915, there are hardly any references to German espionage in Spain. The dismantling of a wireless apparatus in a Carmelite convent at Portugalete (Bilbao) in October 1914 was probably an isolated case.(17) Yet by then the Director of the British Intelligence Service had already noted the close relations established between the German Embassy and the clergy, military and upper classes as well as Germany's influence on right-wing newspapers such as *ABC*, *El Correo Español*, *La Correspondencia Militar*, *El Debate* and *El Universo*.(18)

In fact, Germany had the advantage over her rivals in two important respects. Firstly, the cause defended by the Central Powers could easily be portrayed as synonymous with that of the forces of order in Spain. Through its control of the right-wing media, the German offensive created an image of Germany as the best friend of the Monarchy and the ruling political order, while the Allies were described as supporters of revolutionary and Republican groups in the peninsula. Secondly, Germany's efficient press campaign was far superior to that pursued by the Western Powers. The Allied press campaign did not take off until early 1916, and was mainly due to the activities of pro-Allied elements like the journalist and leading Socialist Luis Araquistáin who managed to convince the British Secret War Propaganda Bureau to subsidize a propaganda offensive which could counter that of the Central Powers.(19)

One example of Germany's skilful propaganda was her

ability to exploit the Portuguese case to create bad blood between the two peninsular states, and, indirectly, between Spain and Portugal's friends, the Entente. In October 1910, after a turbulent and violent decade, Portugal proclaimed a Republic of a clear radical character. Subsequent relations with Spain, which certainly had a hand in some of the conspiracies to restore the Portuguese Monarchy, were far from friendly. Unlike Spain's neutrality, Portugal's was openly benevolent towards the Allies. As early as October and November 1914, the British Embassy in Madrid was warning the Foreign Office that some Spanish circles and the King himself would be unhappy if Portugal threw in her lot with the Entente. The conservative British Ambassador, Sir Arthur Hardinge, even wrote that Britain should never sacrifice her friendship with Spain to Portuguese ambitions or exigencies.(20)

Throughout 1915 the pro-German press in Spain continually referred to the support given by the Western Powers to the Leftist Portuguese Republic. The British Foreign Office and the Ambassador at Lisbon, Lancelot D. Carnegie, reached the conclusion that Portugal should not become a belligerent as she was more useful rendering services as a neutral. Furthermore, the active participation of the Portuguese Republic in the war would present Germany with a golden opportunity to promote ill-will between the two neighbours and would be disquieting and unwelcome to almost all the dynastic politicians and the King. Carnegie was therefore instructed in July 1915 to let the Portuguese Foreign Minister Soares know that the British government was anxious that

Portugal should not become a belligerent. During the following months both Hardinge and Carnegie pursued the same line with other Portuguese Ministers and the President of the Republic, Bernardino Machado. The Portuguese politicians recognized that intervention in the war might make matters more difficult between the two peninsular states and expressed their fear that if the Allies got badly beaten, reactionary and monarchist elements in Spain could either foment a revolutionary outbreak in Portugal to overthrow the Republic or else find an excuse to proceed with a full-scale invasion. Hence they indicated that they were against declaring war on Germany, although the provocative and violent attitude of the latter finally forced the Portuguese to break off diplomatic relations and to withdraw the Ambassador in Berlin. (21) As a result Germany herself declared war on Portugal in March 1916. The Portuguese example and the extreme care displayed by the British diplomats revealed the Allies' deep insecurity with regard to Spain. They felt that Germany could always exploit her excellent relations with the Spanish Court, army and church and embarrass the Entente on sensitive problems such as Portuguese intervention.

Additionally, Germany's other major advantage was that she had ample room to manoeuvre on territorial concerns. It is highly unlikely that the Germans really believed that Spain could be tempted to the extent that she would decide to enter the war. Yet it proved to be an astute approach by which the Central Powers could both show their "Spanish friends" the value of maintaining that friendship and also put sufficient pressure on

the government to maintain strict neutrality in the conflict.

The advantage enjoyed by Germany can easily be seen if it is understood that her real aim was to prevent any Spanish administration departing from the position adopted in August 1914. Unlike in the Italian case, where the territory coveted by the Italians belonged to the Habsburgh Empire, the Germans could promise territories to Spain that did not belong to them or their Allies. Thus knowing that geographic and economic factors barred Spain from aligning with her in the war, Germany could not only be generous with promises in exchange for an almost impossible alliance, but also hint that Spain's strict neutrality might be rewarded in the new European order which would arise after a German victory. On the other hand, the Western Powers had to face the dilemma of either rejecting any territorial re-settlement and thereby confirming the idea spread by the *Germanophiles* that they were historic enemies who had always sought to weaken and humiliate Spain, or else sacrifice valuable territory merely to secure Spanish gratitude.

German diplomacy was relatively successful in 1915. It is well documented how its initiative permeated different Spanish political circles. Western diplomats were thrown off balance when friendly Spanish politicians, obviously reacting to the Germans' introduction of territorial concessions to the agenda, approached them with demands that they should match these concessions. As early as January 1915, Prime Minister Dato confided to Hardinge that there were rumours that pro-German elements were looking for

a new candidate for the Spanish throne to whom Tangier, Gibraltar and Portugal had already been promised by the German Embassy. Dato naturally dismissed them as pure fiction, nevertheless he noted that the strongest argument among *Germanophiles* was that Germany had never done Spain any harm in the past, and might conceivably do her some good.(22) One month later, the Spanish Ambassador in London, Merry del Val, confirmed that his government and King were determined to maintain neutrality, but he pointed out that the Germans were organizing regular propaganda by buying up newspapers and intriguing with the clergy. They had also offered Spain Gibraltar and Tangier. The Foreign Office believed that what the German Ambassador in Madrid, Prince Ratibor, had actually promised was that if Spain were to take Gibraltar and Tangier, Germany would not interfere.(23) The extent of the concessions the Germans were prepared to offer kept changing throughout the rest of the year. Sometimes only Gibraltar and Tangier were on offer, at other times they included control of Portugal and French Morocco as well. It might be argued that these concessions were increased in order to create a deeper impact in Allied circles. The sources of information cannot be doubted as they included such figures as the Count Romanones and the editor of the *Correspondencia de España*, Leopoldo Romeo, and also French and British citizens who had been in contact with the Spanish Monarch.(24)

The Allies had a certain interest at the outbreak of the hostilities in drawing Spain in on their side. On 17 August, 1914 a secret report issued by the Admiralty War Staff on 24

December, 1912 was circulated. The advantages of an alliance with Spain were underlined:

"Under existing conditions, in the event of a war between the Triple entente and the Triple Alliance, the strategic position in the Mediterranean limits in a marked degree the offensive operations of the Entente....

...The accession of Spain to the Triple Entente as an active partner would introduce a change which may make its influence felt through all the plans of the Triple Alliance. Spain could possibly put an army of 50,000 men into the field, in addition to the reserves kept at home and the garrisons of distant positions...The mere knowledge that the Franco-British command of the Mediterranean was backed by 50,000 troops would introduce a fresh element into the situation which Italy could not afford to ignore, and which might in time help to weaken her adhesion to the Triple Alliance. Italy is peculiarly vulnerable to amphibious attack.

The other results of a Spanish adhesion to the Triple Entente would be, first, addition of the Spanish ships of war to the sea forces at the disposal of the Entente--which though providing a small increase of strength only, would be of considerable service in certain directions; and, secondly, the right of our own ships to use certain Spanish ports.

...To sum up

Should Spain join the Triple Entente, the military

situation would be improved to the extent by which the Spanish army could increase the effect produced by the Franco-British maritime supremacy in the Mediterranean in the later stages of a war.

British overseas commerce in the Atlantic would be more safely conducted and more easily defended.

No corresponding disadvantages worthy of consideration immediately present themselves".(25)

Simultaneously, in 1914 the British Foreign Office felt it vitally important to break-up a possible German intelligence centre at Tangier and concluded that if France would agree, the best solution would be to let Spain have Tangier as the price of her alliance.(26) Yet, as emerged from the Admiralty's report, the Italian position was crucial when considering the advantages of a possible understanding with Spain. Hence the neutrality adopted by Italy and her entry into the war on the side of the Western Powers in May 1915 certainly cooled the Allied initiatives towards Spain. Neither France nor Great Britain was unhappy with the neutrality adopted by Dato and there is no evidence that they tried to influence the Spanish government to reconsider its position. In any case, what the Entente probably expected was a formal approach from the Spanish administration offering intervention in exchange for territorial concessions, but it never intended to take the first step.

The Dato cabinet was not prepared to abandon formal neutrality. Hence it rebuffed all the German offers as well as

avoiding any approach to the Allies. However, Spanish politicians, particularly those regarded as friendly, kept alluding to the necessity of obtaining some territorial gain. Their main objective was to acquire Tangier. Yet they did not and could not promise anything beyond their friendship and moral support. Obviously, the Entente could not consider this as an acceptable basis for discussion.

On 18 April, 1915 Romanones spoke at Palma de Mallorca. He already hoped to succeed Dato in the government, and in order to do so he needed the support of all the factions of his Liberal party. Thus Romanones had to be careful not to lay himself open to charges of pro-intervention. Hence his former pro-Allied views were somewhat played down. Nevertheless, once more he insisted that Spain should remain loyal to the international line she had begun before 1914. Isolation was not an option for any European state at the current time. The Count also pointed out:

"...The possession of the Moroccan coasts is one of the most sure means of defending our interests in the Mediterranean...for this reason the Liberal and Conservative governments have maintained the agreements of 1904, 1905, 1907 and 1912...It is natural that the government should observe silence but we who have no such responsibility are obliged to declare that the possession of Tangier constitutes a national aspiration...".(27)

Learning of Romanones' speech, the British Foreign Office instructed Hardinge not to push the question of Tangier. The French Foreign Minister Delcasse wished to leave the question open.(28) A few days later, Maura repeated the same argument at Madrid's Royal Theatre: "...*The future of Tangier must be Spanish and only Spanish...without Tangier, Spain cannot possibly fulfil her mission in the Protectorate...*".(29). Two other leading Liberal politicians known for their pro-Entente sympathies, González Hontoria, a former Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, and Pérez Caballero, former Ambassador in Paris and Foreign Minister with the Moret cabinet in 1910, reached a similar conclusion. In an article in *El ABC*, the former pleaded for unity of purpose among the many Spanish factions in order to concentrate public opinion on a definite goal. That goal ought to be the ultimate acquisition of Tangier. Pérez Caballero declared in *El Mundo* that Spain had only one ambition in the Mediterranean and that was the occupation of Tangier. Moreover, he suggested that France had accepted that fact in 1902 and that Britain's interests would in no way suffer. But such an object could only be obtained by loyalty and friendship towards France and Britain.(30) The King himself showed a keen interest on the subject. This was the impression that both Monsieur Cooreman and the Bishop of Southwark gained after their meetings with Alfonso XIII in March and October 1915 respectively.(31) The Spanish Monarch even obtained the good will of the Russian Ambassador, Baron Budberg, in order to put pressure on the Allies to obtain Tangier.(32)

The Western Powers were open to any suggestions but they were not prepared to give territory without gaining something in return. However, that was what the Spanish King seemed to imply in his conversation with Monsieur Cooreman:

"...His Majesty expressed friendly sentiments but said that he was in difficult position between the Germans, who were supported by the Spanish Right and who offered him Gibraltar, Morocco and a free hand in Portugal, and the Allies who seemed not to feel gratitude for the services which he had rendered them. The King refrained from stating what he expected from the Allies, but Monsieur Cooreman derived the impression he had Tangier in mind. His Majesty did not apparently mention the nature of the services to which he made allusion...".(33)

To the Allies, the strategy followed by the Spanish Monarch and the dynastic politicians amounted to virtual moral blackmail. Not lending their ears to the impossible German offers could not conceivably be regarded as services rendered to the Allied war effort. Between the months of May and November 1915 France and Britain had to consider how to deal with Spanish territorial claims. The British believed that active Spanish assistance could be of value and therefore an arrangement should be made in exchange for her intervention. In July, the British War Office supported the idea of giving Tangier to Spain and together with the Admiralty were inclined to think in positive terms about exchanging Gibraltar for Ceuta. Simultaneously,

however, objections were also being raised: the French had to agree and there was the problem of continuous anarchy in the Spanish zone in Morocco. It was seriously doubted that Spain could maintain order and assure security for European life and property. Thus there was always a strong case for not pushing matters and instead waiting for the Spanish government to make a formal approach both with its demands and with what it was prepared to offer in return. After talks between the British Foreign Minister Grey and his French counterpart, Cambon, this was finally the policy adopted by the Entente.(34)

Dato never contemplated the idea of departing from neutrality and consequently he never approached the Allies with any proposal which could have jeopardized the non-involvement of his country in the conflict. Yet his problems were not over for the impact in Europe was to make itself dramatically felt on the Spanish economy and society. Dato's inability to tackle the growing economic crisis brought about his downfall in December 1915.

During the conflict Spain underwent a profound social, demographic and economic change. She took advantage of her neutral status to supply both camps, foreign intervention was eliminated in the internal market and new outlets, which had to be abandoned by the belligerent nations, were taken over. The country experienced its first industrial take-off. The period of the Great War was a time of unexpected economic growth but it also seriously eroded the fragile foundations of the established

ruling order. The war years were ones of extraordinary profits but equally of staggering price rises. They would bring about prosperity but they would also exacerbate the overall misery of the nation.(35)

During the first months after the outbreak of hostilities, the Spanish economy was in a state of disorder and confusion. There were difficulties in obtaining raw materials abroad and international credit was harder to procure. This adversely affected the stockmarket and financial and banking institutions. Yet by early 1915 a previously unknown phase of expansion of the economy began. The radical drop in imports together with the rising volume and prices of exports meant that a poor nation, almost overnight, saw a sudden flow of gold across her frontiers. Spain experienced a period of rapid accumulation of capital which was created by a highly favourable Balance of Trade:(36)

Balance of Trade, 1914-1920

	<u>Value</u>			<u>Volume</u>	
	<u>In millions of pesetas Gold</u>			<u>Index.-1913=100</u>	
	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Exports</u>
1914	1,169	937	-232	79'0	74'9
1915	1,367	1,454	+ 87	77'9	98'0
1916	1,531	1,975	+443	68'9	105'0
1917	1,556	2,541	+985	52'9	102'1
1918	1,683	2,437	+754	43'1	73'8
1919	2,119	2,470	+611	66'9	101'8
1920	2,571	1,875	-706	100'0	79'6

After the years of war, this kind of artificial protection disappeared and Spain returned to her traditional position of deficit. A golden opportunity was thus missed as profits were not wisely ploughed back to re-organize and rationalize the economic infrastructure. During the war, as exports grew and imports dwindled, the Balance of Trade registered an era of fabulous profits. Hundreds of new businesses and joint-stock companies were established and the Bank of Spain increased its gold reserves from 674 million pesetas in 1913 to 2,500 millions in 1917. However, the amount of money in circulation also increased from 1,931 million in 1913 to 3,866'9 million in 1919. Prices shot up dramatically causing a situation of rampant inflation which led to shortages, widened the gap between rich and poor and initiated an internal migratory current



that dislocated the weak foundations of the Spanish economy. Thus in the year 1915 an inflationary cycle began stimulated by an unchecked rise of domestic prices which, by 1920, were 223'19% above those of 1914, the explosion in external demand, the difficulty in importing basic products and the increase of gold reserves. Additionally, between 1914 and 1920 the peseta would lose half of its purchasing power.

Evolution of Prices.(1914-1920): (37)

<u>Semesters</u>	<u>Countryside</u>	<u>Cities</u>
April 1909-March 1914	100	100
April 1914-September 1914	106	106'9
October 1914-March 1915	110'8	107'7
April 1915-September 1915	117'1	113'8
October 1915-March 1916	118'4	117'6
April 1916-September 1916	123'4	120'3
October 1916-March 1917	125'6	123'6
April 1917-September 1917	139'8	136'1
October 1917-March 1918	149'3	145'4
April 1918-September 1918	172'8	161'8
October 1918-March 1919	178'5	167'7
April 1919-September 1919	190'9	180
October 1919-March 1920	208'1	192'3
April 1920-September 1920	220'3	202'3

Furthermore, this economic and financial boom was extremely uneven. Industrial production expanded more rapidly

than that of agriculture and therefore the prices of manufactured products rose more rapidly than the others. The boom benefited only certain regions and certain social classes as profits were mainly monopolized by a rising industrial bourgeoisie. Industrial regions consequently entered a phase of feverish activity while other areas of the peninsula were devastated by scarcity, shortages and inflation. The mining sector went through a golden age, particularly the production of coal in Asturias. The chemical and hydroelectric industries also expanded greatly. The Catalan textile concerns experienced a period of massive growth as they could now supply not only to most belligerent nations but they also made inroads into traditional British markets in Latin America. The Basque steel, iron and shipping companies also increased their profits, especially the latter which benefited from the spectacular rise in transport costs. Finally, the banking sector was the other great winner of the period. In four years the number of financial companies and private banks doubled.

While the war favoured the expansion of certain industrial and financial enterprises, it also exacerbated the regional, social and economic differences in the country. For example, while the forced reduction of imports caused gold to flow into the national coffers and brought about prosperity for the Catalan and Basque middle classes, it also meant severe scarcities of foodstuffs and manufactured goods, rising prices and worsening living standards for rural and urban workers. Substantial profits were reaped above all by speculators who

facilitated the exportation of virtually anything required by the war machinery regardless of the consumption needs or welfare of the Spaniards, and by profiteers who hoarded production in expectation of a boom in prices. Furthermore, the railway network proved unable to cope with the increased volume of traffic and virtually collapsed. Foodstuffs, raw materials and basic items were sold freely abroad without any limit. The regions of Central and Southern Spain suffered most tragically from the effects of the war. A current of migration from the countryside to the cities and from the South to the North began to assume significant proportions. Salaries could not keep pace with the rising prices of such basic products as sugar, eggs, bread, potatoes, meat and dairy products. There was widespread unemployment and scarcity. Consequently, for most people this period was one of crisis characterized by food shortages, a fall in real salaries and severe material distress. It was a situation popularly described as *Crisis de Subsistencias*.(38)

The uneven impact of the war on the Spanish economy and society sparked off continuous food riots, mutinies and popular protests. The mobilization of social forces which had previously remained politically passive contributed to the breakdown of existing forms of hierarchical and clientelist politics, confronting the governing elites with the uncertainties of popular politics, the unwelcome appearance of more genuine democracy, and the rapidly advancing threat of Socialism.

In 1915 the first signs of popular discontent, social

unrest and economic hardship were becoming evident. The Dato administration proved unable to cope with these new realities. It initiated the nationalization of foreign-owned assets in Spain and of the external debt. By 1920 half of the foreign assets had been nationalized and the external debt had been liquidated. However, the Conservative government failed miserably to solve the *Crisis de Subsistencias*. Rather Spain's socio-economic crisis rapidly deepened with the return of over 40,000 Spanish workers from other European countries and Latin America, the introduction by the belligerent countries of quotas in their imports and of restrictions in their exports. Shortages, unemployment and inflation were the results. In September 1914 a *Junta de Iniciativas* was set up under the direction of the former Minister of Interior and right-wing Conservative Juan de la Cierva. Its objective was to channel, co-ordinate and implement a series of initiatives to deal with the crisis. In February 1915 Cierva resigned and the *Junta* was dissolved. Thereafter *Juntas Provinciales de Subsistencias*, formed by the Civil Governor, the Mayor and a delegate from the Treasury, were created in each capital. None of their attempts to control and regulate prices and exports of basic products led to any positive outcome as prices kept rising and profiteers and speculators prospered. The Conservative cabinet, like the following *Turno* administrations, proved unable or unwilling to fight those who benefited from the exceptional circumstances provided by the war. This was scarcely surprising, as those profiting were most often the very same local notables and *caciques* to whom the political class owed its votes. Simultaneously, the attempt in June 1915 by the Minister

of Finance, Gabino Bugallal, to issue a loan to cover the Treasury Debt fell very short of expectations as capitalists preferred to invest in the shares of shipping or textile companies.

By late 1915 the government seemed to have abandoned its efforts to find solutions for the economy. Dato insisted that the military reforms should take precedence in the list of parliamentary business over every other item, including the budget. On 6 December, the Liberal leader, Count Romanones, backed by the Republican, Radical and Carlist minorities presented a proposal which amounted to a motion of censure. He requested the Chamber to declare that the duty of the government had been to submit an integrated package of economic and financial measures appropriate to the crisis through which the country was passing. Romanones demanded that the Chamber should proceed without delay to the introduction and discussion of such a bill and to that of a budget suited to the internal needs of the country and to the most pressing requirements of its Treasury. Realizing that he had lost the 'goodwill' of the other dynastic party, Dato resigned. (39)

3.- The Romanones administration: the domestic challenge:

The Liberal leader, Count Romanones, rapidly formed a new government after the fall of Dato in December 1915. The Count was known for his cynical approach to politics, a shrewd ability in party manoeuvring, a skilful gambler's style with regard to important issues and for his good contacts at Court. The Count was regarded by many as the perfect example of the *Turno* professional politician: a man without clear cut ideological principles or political ideas, but able to remain in power by his clever manipulation and control of the electoral machinery and its *clientelista* foundations.(1) His record in internal party manoeuvring and opportunism was above that of his peers. In 1909 he was one of the Liberal notables who encouraged the then party leader Segismundo Moret to take advantage of the turbulent situation created by the crushing of the anticlerical and antimilitarist riots of that summer to join forces with the Republicans and oust Antonio Maura, the Conservative Prime Minister, from office. Once this was achieved, Romanones was one of the leading Liberals who exploited the fact that Moret was too close to the Republicans, to end both his Premiership and his leadership of the party and replace him with José Canalejas. After Canalejas' murder in November 1912 Romanones took over the leadership of the Liberal party thereby defeating all the other faction leaders. In fact, he managed to outmanoeuvre them by claiming the right to take "temporary" charge of the Premiership as he was then the Speaker of the Lower Chamber.(2) One year later, Romanones was behind the initiative to split the

Conservative party and reconstruct the rotational basis of the *Turno* which had been opposed by Antonio Maura, the Conservative leader, since his fall from power in October 1909. There were increasing rumours that the other Liberal notables, annoyed by the Count's rise to power, were plotting his downfall. Romanones was not prepared to let his main rival, the Marquis of Alhucemas, form a new cabinet which might have represented the end of his supremacy in the Liberal party. Hence he preferred instead to back a Conservative government with which to re-organize the *Turno*. The Count's strategy also brought to a halt an important move led by Melquiades Alvarez and other moderate Republican elements. They had almost come to accept the Monarchy when the King had collaborated in the fall of Maura from power. Alvarez had created the Reformist party in April 1912 with the objective of both preventing the "authoritarian and clerical" Maura from returning to office and incorporating representative sectors of the Republican middle classes and intelligentsia within the Monarchist camp in exchange for educational, constitutional and social reforms. From June 1913 the Reformists agreed to take part in a coalition government headed by the Marquis of Alhucemas. This might have led not only to a renewal of the Liberal party but also to a realignment of political forces and the democratization of the system. Yet this initiative was successfully blocked. Maura's refusal to rotate with those whom he regarded since 1909 as unprincipled and treacherous Liberals was an obstacle to Romanones' scheme. But the Count kept the leadership of his party when on 29 October, 1913 the bulk of the Conservative party, known henceforth as *Idóneos*, decided to

abandon Maura and form a cabinet presided over by the rich lawyer and former Minister Eduardo Dato. The *Turno Pacífico* survived but the Conservative party was irretrievably divided between *Mauristas* and *Idóneos*. (3) Thus the Count's successful bid for power in December 1915 was a kind of confirmation that he was the strong man of the political system who had been pulling the strings since October 1913 and now wanted to be in personal charge. (4)

Romanones' second administration was to last from December 1915 to April 1917. This period is crucial to an understanding of the crisis of hegemony of the Constitutional Monarchy which would explode in 1917. During this stage the final breach between government and the governed, between *España Oficial* and *España Real*, began to take shape and could no longer be concealed. It opened an era in which the dynastic politicians lost once and for all their leading role in political society and found their exercise of power increasingly questioned by all sections of the political spectrum.

The programme Romanones outlined at the opening of the Cortes in May 1916 was widely welcomed. The government promised to solve the *Crisis de Subsistencias* by stimulating the economy through a vast plan of economic and financial measures to fight shortages, inflation and unemployment, to foster agriculture, public credit and transport, to prevent the export of capital and emigration, to strengthen national defence, to modernize the judicial and educational systems, to reduce expenses in Morocco

and to maintain strict neutrality.(5) Yet the impossibility of delivering any of these promises, plus Romanones' own continuous U-turns confirmed the mounting evidence that both *Turno* parties lacked the ability to adapt themselves to the changing circumstances brought about by the war and increased the general disillusionment with the established order. Now the *Zeitgeist* was the spirit of corporatism.(6) Three key groups--the industrial bourgeoisie, labour movement and army -resorted to corporatist solutions in the search for mechanisms of self-defence through which their particular interests would be better protected. Additionally, unlike the other dynastic leaders before or after him, Romanones became directly involved in the international question. Spain under his government came very close to joining the Entente forces. This would cost him the Premiership. At the time of his departure from office, Romanones left a country more polarized than ever before by the neutrality debate, his own party was split and broken, and the bourgeoisie, army and proletariat were eagerly awaiting the moment to strike against the *Turno*. The seeds of destruction of the existing order had been planted. The crisis of hegemony of the Liberal Monarchy was a reality.

During the sixteen months that the second Romanones administration lasted the divorce between society and state became more pronounced than at any other time since 1875. The rapid economic, social and ideological changes produced by the Great War meant that the regime's lack of grass roots support or popular appeal in a period of mass mobilization could no longer

be concealed. Different social sectors, upset by the inability of the government to satisfy their demands, resorted to corporatist solutions in order to protect their respective interests.

1.-The Labour Movement:

The organized labour movement had always been divided ideologically and geographically between two antagonistic camps: a Marxist tendency concentrated in Castille, Asturias and the Basque Country and an Anarcho-Syndicalist dominant among the workers of Catalonia, Levante and Andalusia. Their evolution and strategies were very different.

Marxism was represented by the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) and its trade union, *La Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT) Spanish Socialism suffered from several deficiencies which to a large extent explain its failure to establish its hegemony in the organized labour movement. The Socialist leader, Pablo Iglesias, and the National Committee based in Madrid exercised their intransigent authority through their control of the party, trade union and daily newspaper, *El Socialista*. Lacking an intellectual tradition, they interpreted Marxism through the writings of French Socialists such as Jules Guesde and Paul Lafargue, which actually bore little relation to the Spanish situation. Hence they defended reductionist, rigid and deterministic positions. The preservation of the purity of the movement was considered paramount and thus the PSOE isolated

itself from contacts with other progressive forces which might 'contaminate' it with bourgeois ideas. They had an almost blind faith in the future victory of Socialism in the world. Official party rhetoric was therefore full of revolutionary fervour and promises of a classless society after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In practice, however, Spanish Socialists employed an extremely moderate and reformist strategy. They concentrated on the daily struggle to obtain immediate gains and under the strict control of Iglesias, emphasis was laid on discipline and organization. Moreover, in spite of the corrupt character of the *Turno Pacífico*, the Socialists subordinated the economic struggle to political and electoral initiatives. In fact, the first Socialist Councillors were not elected until 1905. The hollowness of the PSOE's strategy, torn apart by internal tensions between revolutionary theory and legalist action, limited the appeal and hindered the growth of the movement. Absorbed by political matters, they established their headquarters in Madrid when industrial Barcelona should have been the main focus of their activities. The evolution of Spanish Socialism was thus slow and even painful but built on a solid organizational basis. Its strength mainly lay among the labour aristocracy of Madrid, the Asturian miners, and the workers of the steel and shipping concerns of the Basque Country.

On the other hand, Spanish Anarcho-Syndicalism had always followed an irregular evolution: moments of euphoria and mass membership were often followed by state repression and the movement's subsequent virtual disappearance. Yet socialist

centralism, authoritarianism and politicism hardly appealed to Catalan workers or Andalusian landless peasants. Direct action and violent methods were not alien to them since they could not obtain redress for their grievances from a corrupt political system that either failed to understand the Catalan class struggle or was completely dependent on the votes delivered by the Andalusian *caciques*. Nevertheless, far from constituting a real threat to the regime, anarchist terrorism and insurrectionalism were regarded as a nuisance to be dealt with by police repression. Moreover, the loose character of its organization facilitated its destruction. By the turn of the century, the movement had been crushed and only in 1907 did a revival seem to take place when *Solidaridad Obrera* was created in Barcelona to organize the local trade unions regardless of their ideological leanings.

After the anticlerical and antimilitarist riots which took place in Barcelona in July 1909, known as the Tragic Week, and the repressive response of the central administration the two movements came to different conclusions. The Socialists abandoned their traditional isolationist stand and in November 1909 established a *conjunción* or Alliance with the Republicans. During this period, the Socialists made a more systematic use of the strike weapon initiating a series of nation-wide strikes in 1911 and 1912. Yet their main concern remained the electoral and organizational aspect of the *conjunción*. It seemed to pay off when Pablo Iglesias became the first Socialist Deputy in May 1910. Furthermore, a number of important intellectuals like

Julián Besteiro, Luis Araquistáin and Andrés Ovejero decided to join the party.

Shortly after the creation of the Republican-Socialist alliance, *Solidaridad Obrera* and other non-Catalan and non-Socialist trade unions met at Barcelona in October 1910 with the objective of setting up a national organization: *La Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* or CNT was created. From the beginning the recently created CNT was divided between a moderate syndicalist tendency and an anarchist hard-line. The former seemed to gain the upper hand when young leaders like Salvador Seguí and Angel Pestaña imposed their views. Terrorist methods of "propaganda by deed" were discarded and instead emphasis was placed on the creation of a powerful organization. Nevertheless, the CNT continued to be more militant than the UGT. Revolutionary Syndicalism borrowed from the French *Confederation Generale du Travail* constituted its main ideological philosophy. It rejected politics and concentrated on the economic struggle by means of direct action spearheaded by a powerful trade union movement. Thus the Syndicalists were soon behind a series of ill-timed outbursts and badly co-ordinated strikes. At the end of 1911, the CNT was declared illegal by a Barcelona judge. Then, following the assassination of the Liberal Prime Minister Canalejas in November 1912, a crackdown on the organization forced the Confederation to endure a clandestine existence.(1

After the outbreak of the First World War, the

Socialist movement with experienced cadres, a patiently-built organization and 84,762 members in the UGT was clearly the leading and most important force in the Spanish labour movement. The CNT did not begin its reconstruction properly until 1915 and by then had only 15,000 militants. Apart from the traditional tactical and ideological differences, the pro-Allied position of the Socialist leaders as opposed to the neutral stand of the Anarcho-Syndicalists seemed to widen the gap between both organizations. The impact of the war was such, however, that for the first time the dream of the unity of the Spanish proletariat was almost realized.

The hardship and distress brought about by the European conflict had to be borne mainly by the working classes. While some areas in the North and the East of the country experienced a dramatic economic boom and industrial expansion, the Centre and the South were terribly hit by unemployment and recession. The workers' conditions therefore varied according to the region. In Valencia, Barcelona, Vizcaya, Asturias, Santander and León, salaries during these years increased by more than 100% while in Extremadura and Andalusia by only 50%. Nevertheless, at no time did salaries catch up with prices.⁽²⁾ The enforced return of thousands of Spaniards working abroad, internal migration from the agrarian South to the industrial cities of the North or Madrid, the sudden end of crucial imports and the rising trend of exporting basic products were different features of this period which all combined to destroy the semblance of social harmony in the country. Furthermore, while fortunes were being

amassed by industrialists, a galloping inflation rate was eroding the living standards of the workers. In many cases, recently-arrived migrant workers to cities such as Barcelona had to endure appalling living conditions, derisory wages and insecurity of employment. To make matters worse, the entrepreneurial inefficiency of the parvenu bourgeoisie was matched only by the prodigality with which it squandered its profits. Much new found wealth was frittered away on ostentious display rather than rationally invested in industry or agricultural modernization. Such cavalier disregard for the living conditions of those on whose backs the wealth was created could hardly fail to antagonise Spanish workers.(3)

In early 1916 the *Crisis de Subsistencias* had become a reality. In only two years the prices of basic staples had risen alarmingly: 1 kg. of bread by 24'3%, 1 kg. of beef by 33'5%, 1 kg. of cod by 57'8%, 1 kg. of potatoes by 35'2%, 1 kg. of chick-peas by 20'2%, 1 kg. of rice by 10'5%, 1 kg. of sugar by 18%, a litre of milk by 13'8% and a dozen eggs by 30'9%.(4) As workers' wages could not keep pace with prices, resentment, discontent and hatred against the authorities mounted. Food riots, social unrest and violent clashes with the Civil Guard became a common feature all over Spain.

After a steady loss in membership during the first year of the war, from late 1915 onwards the labour movement experienced a remarkable advance in numbers of militants and simultaneously achieved a previously unknown strength in national

politics. Membership of the trade unions shot up within this period mainly for two reasons: the employers' willingness to satisfy their demands for fear of losing markets at this extraordinary moment when huge profits could be made, and the inflationary cycle which pushed workers to fight in order to maintain their basic living standards. Between 1910 and 1918 the industrial proletariat grew by 60%. In particular the numbers of miners, dockers, textile workers and those engaged in transport and metallurgy increased.(5) This was a crucial moment in which the organized labour movement was to become aware of its strength and potential to challenge the status quo. Thus the more effective and constant social struggle resulted in a massive display of working class mobilization. In 1916 social unrest and strike activity increased dramatically. 2,415,304 working days were lost in comparison to 382,885 in 1915. The violent and militant mood of the workers could be seen all over the country: during the first months of 1916 Barcelona was rocked by a wave of strikes. Initially only bricklayers, metal workers and bakers were involved but by March it had become almost a general strike. There were numerous bloody events: 'Scabs' were often attacked and even shot by Syndicalists. Several workers were also wounded by the police or arrested. In late January there were popular protests in Valencia, Castellón, Palencia and Bilbao. In February there were demonstrations demanding jobs and bread in Málaga, Santander and Saragossa and a general strike began in Valencia. In March social unrest spread to Murcia, Valladolid, La Rioja and Bilbao. There were riots in Logroño leaving one dead and five wounded. There were violent clashes in the docks of El Ferrol and

the mines of La Carolina (Jaén), Río Tinto (Huelva) and La Unión (Cartagena). In La Unión alone nine people were killed and fifty wounded.(6)

Despite the revolutionary mood of the workers and the general spirit of militancy, the Socialist leadership did not change its traditional attitude: fierce rhetoric in speeches and articles in *El Socialista*, while extreme moderation and caution in practice. Pablo Iglesias and his colleagues showed more interest in international issues and the electoral campaign. There was an evident gap between the ruling elements of the party and the workers.(7) Nevertheless, there was continual pressure for action from the Socialist rank and file which could not be ignored forever.

During the first months of 1916 *El Socialista* and *España* published a series of defiant and aggressive editorials attacking the Romanones administration for not dealing with the *Crisis de Subsistencias* satisfactorily and accusing the government both of condoning violent repression of the strike movement and of siding with the employers in the social conflicts.(8) In practice, however, the Socialist leadership continued to be as cautious and legalist as usual. As early as 20 January, 1916 the provincial federation at Orense called upon the National Committee of the UGT to organize a general stoppage across the country to force the government to do something about the social crisis. The Committee brushed aside the idea, deeming it harmful for the organization. Instead delegations from party

and union visited Romanones at least three times between January and March to apprise him of the dissatisfaction of the workers, to protest against the repressive methods used by the authorities and to demand relief measures to solve the social and economic crisis.(9) Romanones' personal record hardly suggested that he would heed the calls for redress.

Romanones' chicanery was rapidly confirmed when on 25 February the Count sacked his Minister of Finance, Angel Urzaiz: one of the very few *Turno* politicians who was regarded by both right and left as an honest man trying to seek genuine remedies for the social distress. Romanones insisted that he was forced to dismiss his Minister as Urzaiz had frequently acted on his own without consulting the other members of the Cabinet. Yet Urzaiz argued that the real reason he had to go was that his economic measures were damaging certain privileged interests.(10) He was replaced by Miguel Villanueva, Logroño's main *cacique* and one of the leading Liberal notables, who immediately reversed Urzaiz's measures. Yet the Socialist party continued to devote most of its energies to campaigning for the general elections scheduled for 9 April. Romanones once more proved to be a master in the art of trickery and deception. He promised to organize clean elections and even spoke against article 29, which permitted the automatic return of Deputies when they were unopposed in their constituencies and thus constituted the most important weapon in the armoury of the local *caciques*. In fact, a record 145 Deputies, more than a third of those in the Congress, were returned by means of article 29. Among them were all the five

candidates for the province of Guadalajara, Romanones' stronghold. In the elections of March 1914, 93 Deputies had been elected in this way. Under the Minister of Interior, Santiago Alba, the elections were fixed as usual in Madrid.(11) The new chamber of April 1916 had a majority of 235 Liberals and 86 *Idóneos*. The Republican-Socialist *conjunción* returned only 13 Deputies, among them just one Socialist, Pablo Iglesias. It was such a shameful spectacle with all the main dynastic leaders having several family members in the Congress with them that it was known as the "Cortes of the relatives".(12) The tone of the Socialist editorials suggested that they were genuinely surprised and outraged by the way in which the elections had been conducted as if this was the first time!. In editorials both in *El Socialista* and *España* they affirmed that Spain was not yet ready for Socialism. They distinguished between a reactionary plutocracy and a progressive bourgeoisie. The former was represented by the Monarchy and the oligarchies, the latter by the Republican and Regionalist parties. The Socialist editorials revealed that the best known dynastic politicians were members of the boards of the main national companies. They affirmed that this was proof that within the existing system the country was dominated by a few privileged interests. The Socialists concluded that it was in the interest of both proletariat and bourgeoisie to remove the Bourbon Monarchy and replace it with a modern capitalist Republic.(13)

The XII Congress of the UGT held at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid on 17-24 May was a turning point in the history of the

Spanish labour movement. The seeds for the mobilization of its militants in an open challenge to the state were sown there. Moreover, the first initiatives were made to seal a pact with the CNT. Nevertheless, they were adopted reluctantly by a leadership under constant pressure from the rank and file.

Two days before the opening of the Congress, the National Committee of the UGT had been discussing different solutions to deal with the socio-economic crisis. Pablo Iglesias backed by his right-hand man, the Madrid-born Councillor and moderate leader of the plasterers' trade union, Francisco Largo Caballero, argued that the working class consciousness had not yet been formed. Thus the workers should avoid a direct confrontation with the state. Iglesias stressed that it was not prudent to call for a general strike. The people were hungry and under such conditions they could only carry out "epileptic movements". The UGT should therefore work for the discipline and organization of the proletariat and not force it into dangerous initiatives. In the end a motion presented by the more radical railworkers leader Daniel Anguiano and Largo Caballero was endorsed by the rest of the National Committee. This argued that in order to give an impression of strength a campaign of agitation should be initiated through meetings and demonstrations to force the government to tackle inflation and unemployment. (14) The revisionist Socialist and Professor of Logic at Madrid University Julián Besteiro was commissioned to draw up the final resolution. It was introduced into the agenda of Congress on 22 May and received overwhelming approval. The main points were the

following:

"The current crisis is not only hurting the proletariat. A good part of the bourgeoisie is also suffering from this obsolete regime which is sacrificing the welfare of the majority of the citizens for the sake of a minority of plutocrats.

Thus this message is directed to all those hurt by the policies of the present government and whose agreement is deemed fundamental for a common campaign of national protest.

It is proposed:

- 1. To demand once more from parliament and government: the reduction of transport fares; the implementation of public works; the regulation of exchange and trade; the suppression of industrial privileges; an end to unproductive expenditure, particularly the criminal war in Morocco.*

- 2. To prepare the public and to secure a response from parliament and government, the UGT is to organize an intense campaign to attract as many militants as possible.*

- 3. After that campaign one day of demonstrations and meetings is to be held throughout Spain in order to attract as many people as possible.*

- 4. The National Committee with reports from the provinces and the collaboration of the regional delegates is to be empowered to determine in a period of three months whether it is convenient to organize one day of nation-wide*

stoppage.

5. *If after the one day nation-wide stoppage, government and parliament do not give a satisfactory response, the National Committee is to summon the regional delegates and together decide what line of action should be adopted". (15)*

The motion was carefully phrased in very moderate and legalistic terms. The Socialists regarded government and parliament as the only possible sources of a solution to the crisis. Only if they failed to provide one would more active initiatives be adopted. Yet this motion constituted the party's first response to the demands from below. Moreover, the Socialists' scheme not only sought to appeal to the proletariat through a long campaign of propaganda and mobilization but also insisted that the objective was to win over all those damaged by the crisis. Consequently, the UGT-PSOE leaders took an important step forward in becoming the champions and main partners of the Republican-Socialist *conjunción*.

At the same Congress, a crucial boost was given to the hopes of working class unity. A resolution from the Asturian delegates, Isidoro Acevedo and Manuel Llana, calling for the collaboration of both trade unions was overwhelmingly approved. It may appear contradictory that while stressing their Republican commitments the Socialist leadership was also making overtures to the more radical CNT. However, this rapprochement can be explained by several factors. Firstly, the socio-economic crisis was being felt acutely by the entire labour movement. Moreover,

there had always existed the hope that workers' unity could be achieved. There was a general consensus among the rank and file of both CNT and UGT in 1916 that the tragic situation made it essential. On 4 May 1916, the Madrid bricklayers' trade union had demanded that the UGT's National Committee initiate contacts with the CNT. On 23 May, during the XII UGT's Congress the marble workers' trade union had also advocated the necessity of both organizations working together for common goals. Later, there was the motion introduced by the Asturian miners. The pressure of the militants could no longer be ignored by the Socialist leadership.(16) Nevertheless, the old-guard reformist UGT's leaders had historically been reluctant to collaborate with their Anarcho-Syndicalist counterparts. The Socialists were concerned with the discipline and centralization of the movement and despised the lack of co-ordination and violent methods of Anarcho-Syndicalists. It seems that even the moderate Acevedo and Llaneza did not believe in alliances with the CNT. They had been obliged to move such a resolution against their own principles since this was a compromise voted in Asturias by the miners whose interests they represented.(17) Iglesias and his colleagues must have felt that they could not turn down the proposal as this would have infuriated the Socialist rank-and-file. Moreover, they probably realized that with the CNT struggling to re-emerge and still with a very low membership this was the best moment to clinch a pact on their own terms. The UGT would thus, they hoped, become the leading force within a unified labour movement. Secondly, it was a particularly opportune moment because the CNT, whose Congress was taking place in Valencia at the same time as

the one held by the UGT in Madrid, had clearly expressed its desire to collaborate with the Socialists. On 11 May, the Anarcho-Syndicalists stated that aim and were invited to send a delegation to Madrid. The fact that the CNT was largely controlled by moderate Syndicalist leaders such as Salvador Seguí and Angel Pestaña, who were concerned mainly with the organization of the movement, and the temporary decline of those Anarchists bent upon doctrinal purity and violence, made the idea of joining forces more attractive to the Socialists. (18)

There was hardly any revolutionary aspiration in the Socialist strategy. When at the UGT Congress the Anarchist delegate, Mauro Bajatierra, spoke in defence of the use of sabotage in the economic struggle, Pablo Iglesias quickly opposed the idea arguing that in such a case the labour force would become the main victim of its own tactics and besides it would place the workers in an inferior moral position. (19) Furthermore, on 6 June, a delegation of the UGT headed by Julián Besteiro visited the Prime Minister, handed him the conclusions of the Congress and exhorted him to solve the problems of shortages, unemployment and inflation. Once more, the Socialist leaders were behaving as moderate bureaucrats informing the government well in advance of their plans in an attempt to avoid having to take more active measures. (20)

Nevertheless, the fuse had been lit and could not be extinguished. The final push came from Angel Lacort, a leading Anarchist from Saragossa, who organized in his city a meeting of

delegates from both the UGT and the CNT. The UGT was represented by Largo Caballero, Julián Besteiro and the moderate Vicente Barrio who had presided over the Socialist Congress the month before, and the CNT by Salvador Seguí and Angel Pestaña. On 17 July, 1916 the historic Pact of Saragossa was signed by both parties. For the first time in the history of the Spanish labour movement the two rival movements had decided to form a common front in order to force the government to take action over the socio-economic crisis. Romanones panicked and ordered the arrest of all those who had been present in Saragossa.

Furthermore, increasing Romanones' worries, the UGT-CNT Alliance had arrived in the middle of the most important strike in Spain since 1912: that of railway workers against the *Compañía del Norte* begun on 12 July. The importance of this strike lay in the fact that the workers' demands were not only for the customary pay rises but also for official recognition by the company of the existence and right of the local trade union to represent its militants. The company categorically refused as it preferred to deal with workers on an individual basis encouraging personal contracts and opposing their organization into a trade union. Both government and company were to suffer a dramatic defeat while the labour force gained one of its most important victories. Yet it was to be a Pyrrhic triumph. Right from the start, the cabinet revealed its true colours. Rafael Gasset, Minister of Public Works and leading figure of one of the most influential Liberal factions who also owned *El Imparcial*, one of the most important Liberal mouth-pieces, refused to act

as mediator and openly sided with the Company. At that stage, the railworkers' leaders Trifón Gómez, Daniel Anguiano and others would have backed down with the blessing of the UGT's National Committee if it had not been for the resolution of the militants. Alleging that a transport strike was a national disaster, the government made good use of all its resources to defeat the workers: the Cortes was quickly closed, constitutional guarantees were suspended, martial law was declared, leading trade unionists were arrested and the militarization of the rail services was ordered. Andrés Saborit, a member of the UGT's National committee and on close personal and ideological terms with Julián Besteiro and his revisionist position, had been surprised in Asturias by the outbreak of the strike. In an exceptional and unexpected display of audacity and against the orders of the National Committee, on 16 July Saborit was able to persuade the Asturian miners to launch a strike in solidarity with the cause of the railworkers. Romanones lost his nerve. Despite all his chicanery and tricks, he did not have the ruthlessness to order a bloodbath. Romanones was a politician who preferred to do a U-turn and seek a solution which would permit everyone to save face. This was achieved when on 18 July all the conflicting parties accepted the mediation of the Institute of Social Reforms headed by the moderate and veteran Republican Gumersindo Azcárate. On 29 July the Institute ruled in favour of the workers' demand for the official recognition of their trade union. On 9 August a Royal Decree passed by the government recognized the legal character of the trade unions as the representative of the workers in their disputes and forced the

companies running public services to accept that fact.(21

The crucial victory in the railway strike gave an important boost to the morale of the labour movement, now strengthened and united by the Alliance sealed in Saragossa. The campaign of mobilization proposed in May and temporarily disrupted by the events of July was therefore resumed with greater zeal. It began with a rallying call on 30 September in *El Socialista*. The *Casa del Pueblo*, Madrid's Socialist headquarters, appealed to public opinion to join with the united working class in demanding the common goal of solutions for unemployment, inflation and shortages from the government. Five days later *El Socialista* accused the plutocratic regime of being unable to fight speculators and caciques. The Socialist newspaper proposed a number of remedies for the crisis including a tax on farmland, nationalization of uncultivated land and prohibition of exports of those basic commodities which were scarce at home. The tension between fierce rhetoric and moderation in demands still remained. Furthermore, a regime which was deemed incompetent and corrupt was given plenty of advance warning about every single initiative adopted by the labour leaders. Romanones, denounced during the summer by the Socialists as one of the main shareholders of the largest mining company in Morocco and therefore a prime example of the plutocracy in power, was still approached and briefed on all matters by these very same Socialists. 22 On 15 October, a day of demonstrations and meetings was organized in Madrid at which Francisco Roldán, the General Secretary of the CNT, joined forces with the leading

elements of Spanish Socialism. For more than a month thereafter UGT and CNT members shared the same platforms in rallies all over the country.

Despite the apparent collaboration and goodwill between Anarcho-Syndicalists and Socialists, there were always tensions which were never fully resolved. Yet until late 1917 the UGT-PSOE was to be the hegemonic force and the CNT would follow that lead with a certain reluctance.

Firstly, there were always petty local clashes in the mutual competition for control of certain sectors of the labour force. Perhaps the most important incident took place in Barcelona when Anarcho-Syndicalists tried to take over *La Naval*, a dockers' trade union which constituted one of the few remaining Socialist strongholds in the city. Largo Caballero had to travel to the Catalan capital twice in August and September 1916 to obtain the promise of the Syndicalist leaders that they would persuade their militants to back down.(23) More damaging in the long-term for the relations of both organizations was the different attitudes that each adopted towards the international issue and the government.

Another source of conflict was their different position towards the European war. The growing pro-Allied stand displayed by most Socialists clashed with the neutralism of the Anarcho-Syndicalists. The victory of the pro-Republican and pro-Allied position proposed by the Socialist leadership in the

PSOE Congress of October 1915 represented the start of an all-out campaign in favour of the Western Powers' cause. A final attempt by neutralists in the Madrid section of the party on 26 November 1916 to pass a motion which called on the workers to concentrate on the labour struggle and remain aloof from the Imperialist conflict would be swiftly defeated by the official party line espoused by Saborit and Besteiro.(24) Simultaneously, the tone of Editorials in *El Socialista* and *España* would become more and more unrestrained. From the second half of 1916 onwards, a clear commitment to the Entente and standard attacks on German militarism would give way to a more belligerent mood. In December 1916 *El Socialista* would use patriotic slogans, questioning why the country had to undergo the disaster of 1898 and the senseless adventure of Morocco yet was doing nothing to defend the national honour when Spain's fleet was being sunk by German submarines. The Socialists would just stop short of advocating intervention as in the first months of 1917 they would be accusing Germany of breaching Spain's neutrality and pressing the government to break diplomatic relations with her. News of the Russian Revolution in March 1917 would be received with enthusiasm and regarded as an Allied victory. In a series of articles under the headline "Against the German Spirit", *El Socialista* would argue that the overthrow of Tsarism was a proof that the Russian people wanted to carry on fighting. It was therefore a defeat for those traitors seeking peace with the Central Powers. Now the end of absolutism in Russia had helped clarify the real nature of the war: a struggle between Democracy and Autocracy. 25)

On the other hand, the CNT never abandoned its early internationalism. The message was that the workers should not waste their time with a bourgeois war. Hence the Anarcho Syndicalist newspaper, *Solidaridad Obrera*, attacked interventionism and argued that faced with the idea of fighting an alien war the proletariat should stage a revolution.(26) On 16 September 1916, the CNT confirmed its intention to participate in the campaign of mobilization organized by the UGT and queried what attitude the Socialist trade union would adopt if the Romanones cabinet was to declare war on one of the two sides.(27) The question was ignored by the UGT. The international conflict was thus not deemed an issue worth spoiling the UGT-CNT honeymoon period. Nevertheless, there was always the danger that if Spain did enter into the war they could find themselves in two hostile camps.

Finally, more threatening to the labour alliance was that the impatience shown by the CNT towards the blatant passivity of the government totally contradicted the caution and prudence advocated by the UGT. The impotence or the unwillingness of the Romanones administration was revealed in full. Its only positive response came with the passing of the *Ley de Subsistencias* on 6 November, 1916. This law basically amounted to the same emergency measures adopted by the Conservatives one year earlier, but now complemented with tough talk: the government was empowered to reduce tariffs in order to allow the import of basic commodities, to acquire foodstuffs and raw materials and sell them at regulated prices, to expropriate

production which was deemed essential for the life of the nation, and finally to create a *Junta Central de Subsistencias* to supervise the whole affair. (28) This *Junta* was quickly set up on 14 November and two Socialists, García Cortés and Matías Pérez, accepted the invitation to join it. The hollowness and bankruptcy of the new body was unmistakable. Lacking any executive powers, it could only offer advice and ideas which mostly went unheard by an administration too weak or too frightened to take measures which might harm the interests of those *caciques* and speculators making profits out of the *Crisis de Subsistencias*.

The Socialists were not prepared to endorse hasty actions. On 19 October, Francisco Roldán, General Secretary of the CNT, had already made clear that an all-out strike should be launched within a period of 30 days. The UGT's Central Committee was shocked and decided to appeal over Roldán's head to Seguí and the other Syndicalist leaders in Barcelona. The impasse remained for exactly one month. On 19 November, Francisco Roldán and two Anarchists, Gabriel Calleja and José Villanova representing Saragossa's labour movement and Barcelona's textile workers respectively, met at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid with the UGT's National Executive Committee and all the Socialist regional delegates who had led the campaign in the provinces. A final strategy was to be decided. Yet what Roldán and the other two did not know was that a few hours earlier the UGT leadership had met with its appointees to the *Junta Central de Subsistencias* and had supported the proposal presented by Andrés Saborit that a nation-wide stoppage of only 24 hours should take place on 18

December and that time should be given to the government to assess whether the *Ley de Subsistencias* and the *Junta* were working successfully. Hence Roldán and the two Anarchists found themselves isolated at the gathering. The CNT Secretary was even reminded by Julián Besteiro that when his colleagues had signed the Saragossa Pact they had accepted the conclusions approved in the UGT's Congress of May.(29) It was a diplomatic way of letting the CNT know that its initiatives had to be subordinated to those decisions adopted by the Socialists. The next day *El Socialista* published the resolution to carry out a 24 hour nation-wide stoppage on 18 December and just in case Romanones had failed to read the paper a Socialist delegation visited him that night.

The actual 24 hour stoppage on 18 December was a complete success for the labour movement and an example of organization and efficiency. Romanones himself recognized and praised this in the pages of *El Liberal*. The Conservative press had a different opinion and regarded it as the tyranny of the trade unions endeavouring to impose their will on the rest of the nation. The weakness of the Liberal government encouraged the labour movement to continue with its damaging campaign.(30) The same night another Socialist delegation headed by Julián Besteiro once again informed the Prime Minister of the distress of the working class and warned him of more resolute actions yet to come unless the government adopted radical measures.

During the first months of 1917 the economic situation worsened, social unrest increased and the government was found

wanting. In Barcelona cabinet-makers declared a strike which was particularly violent with numerous clashes involving fire-arms. The Catalan textile industry was hit by strikes in Sabadell. In Bilbao, in January the metal workers went on strike paralysing its most important industrial concern, *Altos Hornos de Vizcaya*. In Cádiz, a transport strike disrupted the life of the city for several weeks. There was a general strike in Saragossa in February. The dispatches of Civil Governors revealed their impotence faced with the distress of their provinces. The Governor of La Palma de Gran Canaria suggested in February the creation of soup kitchens to feed the starving population. The collapse of the orange export industry and the closure of many mines brought unemployment and misery to Eastern and Southern Spain. Food riots and popular demands for bread and work became a common feature in the provinces of Valencia, Castellón, Murcia, Seville, Córdoba, Jaén, Almería and Huelva. The government was bombarded with letters from the local authorities asking for extraordinary measures to avoid the economic collapse of these areas. The inability of the Romanones administration to act showed not so much its wickedness as the bankruptcy of the existing system. Madrid was a perfect example of this incapacity. There the Socialist councillors and members of the *Junta de Subsistencias* demanded the introduction of fixed prices for bread and the seizure of livestock. It was attempted in February but a concerted offensive by wheat-growers and cattle-owners forced the government to back down. (31)

Even the moderation of the Socialists had limits.

Under pressure from the rank and file and also from the more militant CNT and getting only hollow promises from the government, they realized that the time for action was approaching. They decided to be at the forefront of a modernizing movement in Spain, stressing that far from adventurism, their objective was a political revolution which would bring about the democratization of the country.(32) The Socialist strategy was thus to throw in its lot with the middle classes in order to appear not as dangerous radicals but as partners in the achievement of the so long-delayed bourgeois revolution.

On 12 January Pablo Iglesias expressed precisely the contradiction between the traditional Socialist prudence and the urgency to take active steps to topple the regime. The veteran leader observed that it appeared as if the King had gone to a mental hospital and chosen the nine most dangerous patients to form a government. Still the Socialists waited for two months before embarking on an active course. The lack of positive measures to fight inflation and unemployment, the sudden closing of the Cortes in February and then the report of García Cortés and Matías Gómez describing the *Junta de Subsistencias* as a powerless and useless institution finally prompted the Socialists to adopt a more forceful stand.(33)

On 1 March the Republican Alliance was consolidated when Julián Besteiro, Andrés Ovejero and García Cortés, members of the PSOE's National Executive Committee, shared a platform at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid with Roberto Castrovido, the

leading Republican Deputy and editor of *El País*, and Marcelino Domingo, the fiery Catalan Republican. The message was that by closing the Cortes, Romanones had confirmed that the ruling system could not respond to the needs of the country. Only a Republic could bring about democracy and answer the demands of public opinion.(32) On 6 March the regional delegates arrived at the capital to report the general mood of their areas. The following day, *El Socialista* gave a full account of what had been discussed and agreed. The conclusion was that the stoppage of 18 December had not been enough. Living standards kept falling and prices rising. The dramatic situation demanded drastic action.(35) Hostility towards the regime reached its peak a week later when Santiago Alba, Minister of Finance and *cacique* of Valladolid, launched a plan to tackle the debt of the Treasury by resorting not to direct taxation but by appealing to the patriotism of the country and issuing bonds for a loan of a nominal value of almost 1000 million ptas redeemable over 50 years by means of quarterly withdrawals to bear interest at the rate of 5%.p.a. *El Socialista* described it as the total victory of plutocracy and *caciquismo* over those in the system who still had hopes that it could be reformed from within. While hunger kept spreading across the country, the Socialist journal observed, this administration was still studying the problem and promising solutions in the near future. The time was up. The only valid solution was to get rid of a regime which only cared about the privileges and interests of a minority.(36)

On 25 March, the CNT published a manifesto calling for

a workers' Assembly to discuss the gravity of the crisis which they described as "to be or not to be". Thus, on 27 March, delegates from both Trade Unions met at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid. The University Professor Julián Besteiro, who had become the virtual substitute of a chronically-ill Pablo Iglesias, again drew up the manifesto which was unanimously approved and signed by Seguí and Pestaña for the CNT, representatives from the UGT's National Committee and by the regional delegates. The main points of that remarkable document were:

To the Spanish proletariat and to the country:

After our campaign of protest...against the abuses of the administration and the political class of this country...the general strike of 18 December 1916...should have produced some relief to the evils suffered and recognized by everyone. Nevertheless, despite our pacific warnings and our constant complaints...unemployment and the Crisis de Subsistencias every day brings more discomfort and misery to the proletariat.

...Is there any Spanish ruler who could affirm that our unbearable living conditions are not the consequence of a regime of privileges, of a constant orgy of private ambitions, of an unchecked immorality, which find in our public institutions a shelter which should instead be provided for the fundamental interests of the people?...Railway companies, shipowners, mining concessions, industrialists, cattle-dealers, wheat-growers, profiteers, middlemen, trusts...find protection in our

governments while people perish or emigrate...

...It is no longer possible to deceive the country with promises or brilliant speeches...

....Why should we keep complaining or what is the use of the general recognition of the justice of our demands by the very same rulers if a solution is not provided?...

...All these evils, perceived every day by the workers, have convinced them that the partial struggle of each local trade union against the employers is not enough to solve their grave problems.

The organized labour movement has therefore concluded that it must be united in the common fight against a system of government which protects exploitation. Responding to this belief, representatives of La Unión General de Trabajadores and of La Confederación General del Trabajo have unanimously agreed:

1. After considering that neither government nor parliament have done anything to meet the demands presented by the representatives of the working class and in order to force the ruling class to introduce fundamental changes which guarantee a minimum of decent living standards, the general strike, the most powerful weapon in the hands of the proletariat, is to be used for an indefinite period of time.

2. Henceforth, without interrupting its campaign of social demands, the labour movement is to adopt all those measures deemed necessary to proceed with success in the preparation of the general strike.

3. Those who are signing this document feel that their duty is to organize and lead the movement and to determine the date on which the general strike is to take place..(37)

Romanones responded with the usual methods adopted by the *Turno* leaders when they felt that their world was being challenged: workers' centres were closed, constitutional guarantees were suspended and those who had signed the manifesto were arrested. This decision was encouraged by the Monarch who told the British Ambassador that the government had to show resolve as workers were threatening the state.(38) The only disturbances and clashes took place in Valladolid organized by the local Socialist leader, the controversial maverick García Solís, against express orders from Madrid.(39) Nevertheless, public opinion turned in favour of the workers' leaders and they had to be released on 3 April. There was a consensus in Spain that the with the passing of the *Ley de Subsistencias* the government enjoyed a monopoly of power. It could regulate prices, impose quotas and take all sort of measures; yet those faculties were not being exercised. The cabinet was accused of choosing to repress social turmoil instead of preventing it by offering positive alternatives.(40)

In the spring of 1917, the labour movement was more united than ever before. The Socialists, never truly committed to revolution, had managed so far to mobilize the proletariat and lead the CNT in an open challenge to the state. Yet their strategy rested on the belief that they should behave not as

agents of agitation but of the construction of democracy. Thus the manifesto signed in March was not a declaration of war on capitalism. On the contrary, it was an invitation to the bourgeoisie to take its hegemonic position in society and collaborate with the working class in the removal of the oligarchical regime.

2.-The bourgeoisie:

Spain constituted in 1914 one of the most clear examples of the persistence of the old regime.(1) The bourgeoisie failed throughout the nineteenth century to complete its historical task and seize control of the political apparatus of the state. The Restoration system devised by the astute politician Cánovas del Castillo in 1875, represented the consolidation of a reactionary coalition formed by Crown, Army and the financial and landowning oligarchies of Southern and Central Spain. The institutionalization of *caciquismo* or the uncontested supremacy of the local powerful in their areas in exchange for the return to the Cortes of the official Deputies provided the foundations of the Canovite edifice. Under a facade of liberal devices such as constitution, parliament and even universal suffrage two monarchist or dynastic parties, Conservative and Liberal, enjoyed a monopoly of power. Both parties were actually the same factions of professional politicians who represented the interests of Andalusian fruit and olive oil producers and Castilian bankers and wheat-growers. The more dynamic commercial and industrial bourgeoisie of the

periphery were minor partners of the ruling coalition. They were granted social peace and economic protection but denied access to the major political decision-making centres.

The Spanish defeat of 1898 at the hands of the United States paved the way for the consolidation of different political forces which had been left out of the *Turno Pacífico*. The moral and psychological effects of the end of the overseas colonial empire and the loss of lucrative markets galvanized the energies of those who felt that the Canovite system had to be reformed or destroyed. The progressive urban middle classes had been organized in Republican parties that were too fragmented to present a coherent alternative to the ruling order. Moreover, the Catalan industrial bourgeoisie decided to back an autonomous political formation in 1901, the *Lliga Regionalista*: a socially conservative group and pragmatist in politics which envisaged a decentralized modern capitalist economy with its representatives holding the reins of power in Madrid. Part of the strategy consisted in using the autonomist lever to exert pressure on the central government and obtain economic concessions for Catalonia. In Barcelona in 1905 army officers, offended by what they regarded as intolerable anti-Spanish editorials and cartoons, ransacked the offices of both the Catalan satirical magazine, *Cu-Cut* and of the *Lliga Regionalista's* newspaper, *La Veu de Catalunya*. The inability of the government in Madrid to re-assert the authority of civil power provided the first opportunity for all the Catalan Republican and Regionalist groups to join forces in the so-called *Solidaritat Catalana* under the leadership of the

Lliga and its intelligent and Machiavellian spokesman, the lawyer Francesc Cambó. Only the fiery anti-clerical demagogue, Alejandro Lerroux, remained hostile. This appeared to confirm the ambiguous and dirty character of Restoration politics. Central governments in Madrid had financed and propped up Lerroux in Barcelona just to create trouble for the Regionalists and woo the workers with false promises. The elections of 1907 smashed *caciquismo* once and for all in Catalonia when *Solidaritat* won 41 out of the 44 parliamentary seats. Yet the Alliance was short-lived as the *Lliga* was soon to reveal the ambiguity of its programme. The anarchy, violence and disorder of the Tragic Week in 1909 stretched to the limit the conservatism of the *Lliga* whose leaders, frightened by the revolutionary events, rapidly moved away from *Solidaritat* and preferred to pursue on their own a pacted Home Rule for Catalonia. The remaining Republican factions formed a *conjunción* with the Socialists in November of that year. The *conjunción* was soon to lack the two strongest Republican factions: the Republican Radical party created by Alejandro Lerroux in 1908 and the Reformists set up in 1912 by the Asturian pragmatist Melquiades Alvarez as a moderate and "accidental" Republican formation which was prepared to accept the Monarchy in return for the real democratization of the regime.(2)

A turning point was reached during the years of the First World War. Both ideological and economic factors determined the new zeal with which the bourgeoisie represented in Regionalist or Republican groups attempted to storm the *Turno* stronghold. The European conflict produced an unexpected economic

prosperity and rapid industrialization which stimulated movements of democracy and self-determination. The nation no longer possessed the overwhelmingly backward economy and peasant social structure on which its deep-rooted oligarchical system had hitherto rested. This process of urbanization, economic growth, political awareness and social mobilization strengthened the positions of both bourgeoisie and proletariat and diminished that of the landowning oligarchy. As a result the new rising forces tried to wrest political power from the traditional governing elites. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that Spain did not constitute an isolated example in the continent. In fact, the Spanish case was the regional version of that crisis of hegemony which engulfed the other European states during these years. Generally, this crisis had as distinctive features a mutinous officer corps, dissident national minorities, a radicalized proletariat, alienated intellectuals, shortages of food and raw materials, general strikes and peasants' uprisings.(3)

The Romanones administration represented that crucial stage at which the dynastic politicians clearly lost their leading status in society. It marked the moment in which the *Lliga Regionalista* led by Cambó initiated its frontal offensive against the ruling system. The industrial and commercial bourgeoisie was the main beneficiary of the economic profits reaped from their control of war production. As the bourgeoisie grew richer, its confidence increased and so it did its desire for political power.

Cambó was the mastermind behind the plan to carry out a political revolution which would breach once and for all the *Turno* fortress. He would gain in 1917 the enthusiastic support of the Republican parties and the Socialists. Nevertheless, the seeds of that campaign had been carefully sown in 1916.

In 1915 Catalan industries discovered seemingly endless opportunities to export their products. The textile mills in particular, were inundated with orders from north of the Pyrenees and had to work around the clock to meet demand. In other sectors of Catalan industry, the disappearance of European competition from the Spanish market acted as a firm stimulus to import substitution. Among the industries to benefit from this development were electrical goods, engineering, metallurgy and vehicle construction. A similar process of capitalist development took place in the Basque country, Asturias and Santander. The main beneficiaries were the Basque metallurgical and shipping companies and the coal-mine owners of Asturias.(4) Soon business and industrial organizations throughout Spain, and particularly the employers' organizations in Catalonia, maintained a constant stream of demands and petitions to Madrid, where the *Lliga* politicians forcefully advocated the virtues of advanced capitalism. The two major demands were the concession of free port status for Barcelona and the concession of export subsidies. They were met by delaying tactics from the Dato administration and finally felt insulted when Cádiz, a non-industrial town, was granted the status of a free port. Moreover, the conflict between Catalan industrial interests and Castilian wheat lobbies was

exposed when the latter campaigned in Valladolid against the Catalan demands.

The situation worsened when the Liberals, the dynastic party most clearly identified with Castilian agrarian interests and with Spanish centralism, returned to power in December 1915. Santiago Alba, the rising star in the Liberal party and an ambitious politician with regenerationist ideas for Spanish agriculture but also the leading *cacique* of Valladolid, the wheat lobby's stronghold, was appointed Minister of Interior and therefore the man to supervise the elections scheduled for April 1916. The *Lliga* felt provoked when Alba organized the so-called Castellana Pact, an extensive coalition of diverse forces in Catalonia ranging from the remnants of dynastic groups to Lerroux's Radical Party and left-wing Catalanists in order to beat the Regionalist party.(5) The result was the opposite of what was intended: the *Lliga Regionalista* not only managed to increase its vote in the city of Barcelona, where it obtained an overwhelming victory, and to maintain the size of its vote in the rest of the region, but also was prepared to mount an all-out offensive against the ruling oligarchies in Madrid.(6)

The objective of the *Lliga* was to consolidate the hegemony of Catalan capitalism in Spain. This was to be accomplished by selling the idea of an "*Espanya Catalana*" whereby a politically autonomous Catalonia offered a backward agrarian Spain a blueprint for the creation of a modern capitalist economy.(7) In order to achieve that purpose, the Catalan party

knew it had to gain access to positions of power in Madrid and this was barred as long as the *Turno* politicians were in full control of the situation. For this task, Francesc Cambó proved to be one of the shrewdest statesmen of the Restoration period. A man with the ability of creating, leading, organizing and changing, as the situation required, all sort of coalitions of often disparate groups in which the *Lliga* was to be the dominant force.(8) He had already masterminded *Solidaridad Catalana* in 1907 and would repeat the manoeuvre ten years later. The difference was that whereas in 1907 it was a struggle for political hegemony in Catalonia, now it was a battle for control of the entire country.

Cambó's offensive began on 21 May, 1916 in a speech given during the so-called day of "*Fiesta de la Unidad*". In a threatening tone, the Catalan leader declared that Catalonia was a nation with its own characteristics and identity and promised to discuss in the Cortes the recognition of Catalan as an official language and the question of Home Rule. Cambó's lieutenants, Rahola and Ventosa, gave similar speeches the same day in Barcelona.(9) The promise was fulfilled when the subject was first raised on 4 June by the Regionalist Senator Abadal in the Senate and then on 7-8 June by Cambó himself in Congress. Cambó demanded a profound modification of the structure of the state stressing the fact that Catalonia was a nation which demanded recognition of its own language, and an Assembly with its own executive to administer the internal business of the region. He caused a major upset when he warned that if his

demands were not satisfactorily dealt with, his party could seek redress in the peace conference at the end of the hostilities in Europe.

The Catalan issue took up a great deal of the parliamentary agenda during June 1916. Most newspapers in Madrid accused the *Lliga* of separatism. There were a succession of Deputies, including the majority of those returned from Catalan provinces, who to a greater or lesser extent criticized the Regionalist initiative and emphasized that the *Lliga* with just 13 out of 40 Catalan parliamentarians could only claim to speak for a minority in Catalonia. Lerroux embraced Romanones in the corridors of the Cortes and promised the government his total support to fight Catalan separatism. Eventually, the Prime Minister himself declared on 8 June that he was not going to take part in a dialogue with the *Lliga* which actually amounted to political blackmail. Romanones showed more moderation a week later when he recognized the existence of a Catalan question. Yet he observed that there were other pressing problems which needed to be urgently examined by the Cortes. His government, he declared, was prepared to listen to anyone, providing no threats were uttered. Taking a very mild and appeasing stance, the Count denied that he had refused a dialogue but confirmed that there was an immense gap between what his cabinet could grant and what the Regionalists demanded. (10)

The *Lliga* only found a degree of sympathy from the *Maurista* movement and even the *Mauristas* were divided in their

attitude. Maura represented the most important example of Conservative regenerationism. Since 1911 he had preached the idea of a revolution from above as the only way to prevent an insurrection from below. Maura's formula was an attempt at replacing the artificial character of the Conservative party, only in power because of the manipulations of the local *caciques*, with a genuine mobilization of the Catholic middle classes. Maura and Cambó had established cordial relations in 1907 when the former had been Prime Minister and the latter had been a leading member of *Solidaridad Catalana*. Unlike Liberal administrations characterized by centralism and veiled support for people like Lerroux, Maura had sought to meet some of the regionalist demands with his ill-fated *Ley de Administración Local*. He always regarded the *Lliga* as the Catalan example of what he sought for the rest of the country. In 1913, when in an internal coup the Conservative elite ousted Maura from the leadership of his party, a unique phenomenon in Restoration politics took place. A 'Maurista' movement from below, mainly formed by conservative middle class youth, emerged to rally around the dismissed leader. Maura was the only dynastic politician who ever achieved this. A total devotion to Maura and an anti-establishment campaign could, however, hardly conceal the internal differences within the *Maurista* movement. There were those with reformist and Christian-Democratic leanings, whose most outstanding representative was the Aragonese Lawyer Angel Ossorio. They sought to democratize and modernize the political system. On the other hand, there were those *Mauristas* like Goicoechea, leader of the *Maurista* Youth, and Delgado Barreto, editor of the party

newspaper *La Acción*, who represented an authoritarian, nationalist and ultra-conservative current in Spanish politics.(11) Those differences became more evident from 1916. Angel Ossorio who had been Governor of Barcelona in 1909 showed a tolerant attitude towards the *Lliga* and the regionalist question. On 31 May, 1916 he published an article in *La Acción* called the "Catalan Warning" in which he praised the activities of the *Lliga*, described as an school of citizenship, and attacked the false *españolismo* of Lerroux. However, at the same time, another leading *Maurista*, Gustavo Peyrá, the rabid centralist and hard-liner from Gerona, was writing to Maura with an opposite view. Peyrá claimed that the *Lliga* was a separatist party that exploited the weaknesses of the central governments in Madrid and whose activities should be investigated by the Spanish Embassy in Paris. He also stated that he was in total agreement with the Captain General of Barcelona, General Alfau, that no concessions should be made to the *Lliga*.(12) Maura felt himself compelled to intervene in the debate. On 30 June and 1 July he adopted a middle course in the Cortes. He warned that separatism would be a national disaster but he also applauded the noble spirit of the *Lliga* and invited its representatives to join other political forces to achieve common objectives.

Maura, Romanones and most politicians misunderstood Cambó's strategy. The Catalan leader was far from a separatist or isolationist. In fact, the Catalan question in parliament was not its sole aim, as many believed, but just part of a very carefully devised plan which had as its main goal the disruption

of the activities of the governing elites. Cambó and his party were determined to show that Spain could no longer be ruled without the goodwill of the Catalanists. Amidst the heated debate on the Catalan question, the leader of the Regionalist minority revealed both his bitterness at the present position occupied by his party in Spanish politics and the determination to change that:

"We, the Regionalists represent a unique case...We spend our time fighting governments, and yet we are a group of men prepared to govern, who have been born to govern, who are ready to govern, who have shown skills to govern...and nevertheless we seem doomed to remain in the opposition...".(13)

In his June speech Cambó had constantly attacked the artificiality and the hollowness of the *Turno*. He had in mind a realignment of political forces in the country in which the *Lliga* and Catalan industry would each play a leading role in the process of political and economic modernization of Spain. In the offensive against the dynastic parties, Alba was singled out as the man to bring down. Cambó wrote in his memoirs:

"The government formed by Romanones was weak...There was only one man with the aspirations and conditions of Caudillo: Santiago Alba..."

...Alba was not only clever, but also an intelligent man, with a political culture above the other Liberal

notables...

...Alba regarded me as a future enemy, as the man who could deny him the post to which he aspired. Thus, from the first moment, his obsession was to fight me. By doing that, he was not only adopting a personal position, but also following his anti-Catalan feelings...

...Alba had chosen to give me battle and I had accepted the challenge and was prepared to go to the end...

...Alba constituted an obstacle not only to my person but to any attempt at Catalan participation in the government of Spain. My duty was to stop him or at least to prevent him from seizing the leadership of his party...". (14)

Leaving personal resentments aside, Cambó reveals how Alba was, because of his youth and personal charisma, the strong man in the Turno. If this was to be destroyed, Alba's rising career would have to be stopped. This task was facilitated by the fact that soon after the elections of April 1916 Alba abandoned his post of Minister of Interior to become Minister of Finance. This was the position from which he could either reach the top or else expose by his fall the inadequacies and contradictions of the regime. In fact, the latter was to happen.

Alba endeavoured to increase his prestige with an ambitious scheme of economic and financial reforms. It gave the Regionalists the chance to mount an impressive coalition against the government. Alba's aim was to carry out a ten-year programme of public works, naval, military and cultural reforms

representing a total expenditure of 2134 millions of pesetas. However, prior to proceeding with his so-called Plan of National Reconstruction, the Castilian Minister argued that it was necessary to solve the budget deficit which had kept growing particularly since the start of the Moroccan campaign in 1909 and which by 1916 amounted to 850 millions of pesetas. He therefore announced his intention of levying a tax on excess war profits earned by industry and trade, but not by agriculture.(15)

Industry and trade were not prepared to bear the brunt of the costs and sacrifice their recent gains while the landed oligarchy would be unaffected. Cambó was able to utilise Alba's tax proposal to build up a formidable coalition of economic groups and hence become the undisputed leader of the industrial classes. The duel between Cambó and Alba in the Congress represented the clash between the rising industrial bourgeoisie and the ruling landowning oligarchy.(16) Yet Cambó's success was also determined to a great extent by two factors: firstly, the internal factionalism and personal rivalries which characterized the dynastic parties played strongly against Alba. Thus many dynastic notables, jealous of Alba's meteoric career, were happy to see him badly mauled in parliament. A glaring example was Count Romanones who saw his leadership endangered by a possible victory of his own Minister. Cambó wrote: "*The Count had to make efforts not to applaud me...after that campaign Romanones kept giving me signs of his personal sympathy*".(17) Secondly, the very foundations of the existing system made it impossible to introduce a modern economic programme. The dynastic parties were

prevented in practice from undertaking any lasting regenerationist measures by the glaring fact that they were not supported by public opinion and their remaining in office depended on the local *caciques* who exchanged votes for control of their local fiefs. Thus although the budget deficit kept growing, governments could not introduce a modern fiscal system which would have hurt the interests of those to whom they owed their positions. (18)

In Congress on 3 June and two days later in the Senate, Alba presented for the first time officially his economic and financial programme, including his tax on excess war profits made by industry and commerce but not by agriculture. A campaign was immediately launched to wreck it completely. The campaign was to be conducted both inside and outside of the Cortes.

Business and industrial concerns mounted an impressive and noisy protest against Alba's measures. It was a model of economic mobilization and organization previously unknown in Spanish history that reflected the growing strength of the national bourgeoisie. At no time would it be matched by preparedness or willingness on the part of the government to defend its plans. Even before Alba had officially presented his programme in the Cortes, right-wing journals like *ABC* had published editorials showing their opposition. Catalan industrialists were the first to express their resolution to fight to the last the tax on excess war profits. In *La Veu de Catalunya*, the organ of the *Lliga Regionalista*, Cambó's

lieutenant, Ventosa, described it as an economic monstrosity and a criminal attempt to hurt industry in Catalonia and Spain as a whole. Basque industrialists followed suit. Led by the shipping owners, they demanded the withdrawal of the tax. Soon all the more important commercial and industrial organizations, the so-called *fuerzas vivas* of the nation, had joined forces. Most vociferous among them were *Fomento del Trabajo Nacional de Barcelona*, *Asociación de Navieros de Bilbao*, *Círculo de la Unión Mercantil e Industrial de Madrid*, *Cámara de Comercio de Zaragoza*, *Unión Gremial de Valencia* and *Industria y Navegación de Sevilla*. There were several arguments used to attack Alba's tax proposals. It was claimed that the tax would halt investment, frighten away capital and would therefore hurt production. It was described as unfair since it affected industry and trade but not agriculture. Moreover, its retroactive character, they suggested, would be anti-constitutional and would introduce a fatal precedent. A more cynical argument, although probably true, was to point out that the lack of preparation by the administration made it impossible to carry out successfully the imposition of such an ambitious law. Obviously they were not prepared to collaborate with the state and make matters easier. The peak of the protest took place when representatives of the industrial elite attended a meeting on 28 June 1916 in Madrid at the Hotel Palace. The leading Basque industrialist, Ramón de la Sota, set out their conclusions: the tax was unfair and harmful. Hence it was to be fought to the end. A commission then went to the Cortes to meet leaders of the different parties and inform them of their resolutions. Cambó was well aware of them. He had been present at the gathering and had

declared his total support for the industrialist cause.(19)

As had happened with the labour movement, the industrialists were assuming the role of defending their interests in an open clash with the state. The gap between *España Real* and *España Oficial* was becoming a worrying fact for the *Turno* politicians.

In the Cortes, Alba fought with determination for his economic plans. He tried to appeal to the patriotism of the Chamber and several times expressed his readiness to seek a compromise. It was all in vain. Cambó brilliantly marshalled the hostile campaign against Alba's Bill. On 17 June his right-hand man, Ventosa, fired the first warning shot. Four days later, the Chancellor obtained a partial victory when a Royal Decree was passed establishing the personal liability of managers and directors of those companies which could be affected by the tax on excess war profits. It was bound to infuriate the opposition. On 24 June Gabino Bugallal, Minister of Finance in the former Conservative cabinet, on behalf of his party, voiced the distress of his group with regard to the retroactive character of the Bill. He also expressed his intense disappointment at the government's resort to Royal Decrees. On 26 June Cambó initiated a destructive all-out offensive. The *Lliga* leader virtually quoted the arguments put forward by the industrialists and warned that the introduction of such Bills would signal the divorce between country and government. Cambó's intervention was followed by those of the spokesmen of all the parliamentary groups.

Antonio Maura, Gabino Bugallal, the right-wing Conservative and leader of his own group Juan de la Cierva, the Basque Deputies connected with shipping and iron interests Fernando María Ibarra and Horacio Echevarrieta, Alejandro Lerroux, the left-wing Catalanist Felipe Rodés, Melquiades Alvarez and the parliamentary leader of the Republican-Socialist *conjunción*, Julián Nogués, took part in the debate. All of them, to a greater or lesser extent, found fault with Alba's Bill. The only outright support came from Lerroux. This was unlikely to raise the spirit of the Chancellor. That day nine Liberal Deputies introduced a motion of confidence in Alba's programme. It was won with 150 votes in favour. That victory was actually a deadly blow to the Minister's hopes. With all the other parliamentary groups absent, only 150 out of 235 Liberal Deputies were backing him up. Henceforth Alba attempted a conciliatory approach but all his calls for reaching an understanding went unheard. Cambó and his friends practised a successful obstructionism throughout July. The position of the government, forced to take a defensive stand, was so desperate that many believed that the outbreak of the railway strike had provided the perfect excuse for closing the Cortes on 13 July. Alba vowed to continue the defence of his plans after the summer. Nevertheless, they had already been mortally wounded. (20)

Ironically, Alba could not count on the support of the left. He was neither trusted nor believed by the labour movement. His tax was deemed fair and necessary but there was widespread scepticism as to whether such a corrupt system could introduce any progressive legislation. Luis Araquistáin expressed exactly

the feelings of his fellow party men when in the magazine *España* he wrote: "This tax is needed but I cannot see how someone like Alba can really be all for it". He concluded that Alba's economic regenerationism was just a facade. The real issue was a struggle for power in the Liberal party. Araquistáin's suspicions were shared and continually put forward in editorials both in *El Socialista* and in *España*. The Socialists argued that it was all a comedy whose real object was to get more money from the people. In the end, the brunt of the expenditure would have to be borne by the working class. On the other hand, Cambó, although regarded as the natural class enemy, was viewed in a comparatively favourable light as the man to develop modern capitalism in Spain. According to Socialist theory, a bourgeois democracy had to be established in Spain before even thinking about the triumph of Socialism. Cambó seemed the appropriate politician to carry out a bourgeois revolution in the country. Cambó's attacks against the government were described as a catapult to destroy the obsolete regime. *España* even devoted its entire number of 22 June to the Catalan question and the two leading figures of Catalan Regionalism, Francesc Cambó and Prat de la Riba, contributed two articles. On 2 July, Cambó was invited by the PSOE to give a speech at the *Casa del Pueblo* in Madrid. There he won his audience over when he declared that the only two real forces in the nation were Catalan Nationalism and Socialism. (21)

When the Cortes opened again in September the plan of resuming the debate about the tax on excess war profits had to be abandoned since as Alba himself recognized, the most urgent

task was to present the budget for the following year. In fact, it was not going to be discussed any more. The tax was effectively dead and buried. On 30 September the Chancellor read to a packed chamber the final version of his economic programme. He divided his finance measures into two: an ordinary budget and an extraordinary one, known as The Plan of National Reconstruction, which embraced a vast amount of naval, cultural and public works measures for the following ten years. Alba asked for the collaboration of the minorities to accomplish his programme and expressed his willingness to enter into a positive dialogue with them.

Alba's hopes were soon dashed. On 21 October his programme was rejected by the Assembly of Industry and Commerce. The industrial elites of the nation did not trust Alba and wanted his head. Cambó decided to go in for the kill. The Catalan politician wrote:

"Our purpose was not to have any of his Bills passed, not even the ordinary budget...we continued our campaign throughout 1916, analysing every detail of each Bill...He.(Alba) had to see how one after another of his Bills were being torpedoed before his eyes...He had to go through the shame of not just failing to have his grandiose project approved, but not even having, as any ordinary minister, his budget passed...".(22)

Thus the Lliga Deputies in parliament launched

themselves once more into a meticulous cross-examination and dissection of every single measure in Alba's programme. Cambó described the Chancellor's projects as either tolerable, acceptable or unacceptable. He conceded that some measures of national reconstruction were imperative but he concluded that Alba's plan was not the one the country needed. Many of Alba's proposals were certainly essential to the well-being and prosperity of Spain, but, however desirable in theory, they were unacceptable in the form in which they had been submitted; their details had not been thought out and they would be unjust in their operation. Cambó further contended that many of the items which figured in the extraordinary budget ought to have been in the ordinary one and that their inclusion in the former was only a device on the part of the government to balance the accounts of the ordinary budget and to delude the public as to the actual annual deficit. In fact, the *Lliga's* leader blamed the "senseless" Moroccan adventure as being the main cause of the heavy deficit in the budget.(23)

Political intrigues, personal rivalries and the growing unpopularity of the government played into Cambó's hands. Furthermore, a deadlock occurred when Reformists and Conservatives insisted on discussing first the ordinary budget while the government wanted to deal with the extraordinary one. The parliamentary debate on 20 and 21 November killed off any remaining hopes of passing the economic programme before the end of the year. Whereas Lerroux offered his total support, all the other parliamentary groups refused to give the government a blank

cheque for a ten year programme.(24) Two alternatives remained open for the government: either to decree a permanent session of the Chamber, a most unpopular precedent, and try to force the budget through before the end of December, or else find a formula of consensus by means of which the old budget for 1916 could be adapted and revived for 1917. After hard bargaining, the second alternative was agreed on 16 December. It represented the final nail in the coffin of Alba's personal prestige and confirmed the loss of credibility of the *Turno* parties. The Conservative administration was discredited for failing to provide solutions to the economic crisis and had not even managed to pass the budget. One year later, and after promises of marvellous improvements to come, only the *Ley de Subsistencias*, outlined in the previous chapter, had been passed and it soon proved to be an utter failure. The Liberal cabinet was in total disarray. Spain's economic life was dependent on a budget dating back to December 1914.

The former Liberal Minister and close friend of Santiago Alba, Natalio Rivas, expressed clearly in his memoirs the state of bitterness and crisis which reigned over the Liberal camp in December 1916. He wrote on 11 December that Borbolla, *cacique* of Seville and one of the leading notables of the Liberal party in Andalusia, had told him that Alba, who still counted on the King's support, should be able to lead his own cabinet in January. Rivas wrote that Romanones was losing his grip on the party. There were many rumours of plots within the party to deprive him of the premiership. The leader of the rival

Liberal-Democratic faction, Marquis of Alhucemas, or the Speaker of the Lower House, Miguel Villanueva, were those named as most likely to succeed. Two days later, Dato's lieutenant, Sánchez Guerra, commented that Romanones regretted that the ordinary budget had not been passed, but he did not care at all about the extraordinary one. An unhappy Rivas noted: "...Romanones' continuous deals with Lerroux only confirm the general feeling of lack of authority...there is confusion, disorder...it would be better for us to fall than carry on like this...". The following week Alba confided his pessimism to Rivas. The Chancellor, urged by Rivas to make his move for the leadership of the party, remarked: "I prefer to see all the fools of the party going for it first...".(25)

Alba's excessive confidence was ill-founded. His party in general, and he the Chancellor, in particular, had been badly humiliated in 1916. He had been defeated by Cambó in their personal duel. No legislation could be passed without the consent of the Catalan minority. Thus in February 1917, only after obtaining the agreement of the minorities, two economic laws were introduced. One was for the protection of industries and included the provision that in some cases the state should furnish 50% of the initial capital. The other was the so-called *Ley de Autorizaciones* which sought to enable the government to adapt the budget to the needs of the various ministerial departments in the present exceptional circumstances resulting from the war. In early March, with a deficit of over 1000 million pesetas and unable to resort to taxation, Alba had to appeal to the people

and issue a loan. Covered twenty-two times over, the loan was a success, but it also demonstrated that no economic regeneration could be expected from the ruling system.

Cambó's political leverage had grown dramatically in one year. During the first months of 1917 he held frequent meetings with the Reformist leader, Melquiades Alvarez, representatives of the Basque Nationalist Party and even with his traditional enemy, Alejandro Lerroux. The Catalan politician was courted by leading Conservatives like Dato and Cierva. In mid-April he was approached by Alba. The Chancellor recognized that the existing administration had no future and proposed to form a new government which would rely on the support of the Monarch and would include both Alba and Cambó, one in charge of the Treasury and the other of Public Works. Cambó suggested that he would be willing to enter into a National Coalition which should be presided over by Antonio Maura. (26)

Yet by then Cambó's strategy was to go beyond the regional character of his party and, at the helm of the industrial and commercial middle classes of the country, to establish an alliance of forces which would lead to power in Madrid. (27) His plan was thus not to join in the petty squabbles of the dynastic politicians but to form a new hegemonic power bloc with which to break the *Turno* once and for all.

In April 1917 Cambó felt he was very close to fulfilling his objective. On 13 April he declared in *El Liberal*:

"...the situation is becoming extremely serious and yet this government is not taking positive measures to deal with the general distress and the food shortages...This administration behaves as if hostilities had never broken out in Europe so that it can carry on with its normal attitude of total passivity...The political system as a whole has proved incapable of dealing with the present situation...Never before has a government been granted so much authority nor a country felt so great a need to be governed...and still nothing is being done...people feel politically orphaned..."

Cambó was thus drawing attention to the political vacuum which he had done so much to create in the hope of then being able to fill it.

3.-The Army:

In the long-term, the worst peril for the constitutional system would be the state of unrest of army officers which during this phase of increasing breach between society and government began to acquire dangerous dimensions.

The armed forces had played a crucial role in the consolidation of liberalism in Spain in the nineteenth century. They defeated the Carlists or absolutists in the 1830s and the victorious Generals controlled the political scene almost constantly for the next forty years. This can be explained by two

facts: firstly, the narrowly-based landed oligarchy which emerged as the dominant force in the 1830s was heavily dependent on the army to keep at bay the threat of both the Carlists and the popular classes; and secondly, once a political clique held power, it automatically gained control of the electoral machinery and therefore fixed the election results in advance. This practice was known as "*exclusivismo*". Hence the only hope for a change of government became revolt. As a consequence, political factions normally had a General at their head and *pronunciamientos* or military coups provided the only mechanism for the rotation of parties in power. Queen Isabel II, following her mother's fate, was sent into exile in 1868. General Pavía's *pronunciamento* put an end to the First Republic in January 1874 and General Martínez Campos restored the Bourbon Monarchy, in the person of Alfonso XII, after another successful military coup in December 1874. (1)

The governing elites which ruled Spain since 1875 did not seize power through a revolutionary process or as legitimately elected representatives. They had been placed in power once more by the army. Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, the intelligent Andalusian politician and the strong figure of the Restoration regime for the next twenty years, worked out a political settlement in which the army was no longer needed as an instrument of change. He created a political formula, known as the *Turno Pacífico*, by means of which a consensus was established among the landowning and financial interests of the country. Two dynastic parties, Liberals and Conservatives,

representing the same ruling oligarchy agreed to alternate peacefully in power without the need to resort to military intervention. Electoral-rigging, economic backwardness and political passivity ensured their supremacy in political society. Yet Cánovas did not plan at any time to do without the active collaboration of the army.(2) He was well aware of the artificial character, despite all the external democratic features, of the Restoration system. Hence the military remained very much an integral part of the power bloc. The officers were the ultimate guarantors of the existing order and the praetorian guard of the ruling oligarchy. As the gradual modernization of economy and society enlarged those groups previously excluded from political power, the industrial bourgeoisie and the urban proletariat, the financial and agrarian elites were obliged to rely increasingly on physical repression to retain their hegemony.

Officers were rewarded with promotions, appointments, seats in the Senate, aristocratic titles and representation in both dynastic parties. Politics was left in the hands of civilians but in exchange they were not to interfere in military matters. The post of Minister of War was occupied by a General between 1875 and 1917. Furthermore, the Law of the Constitution of the Army of 29 November, 1878 underlined the important role that the army played in the power bloc. Its second clause stated that the armed forces, besides the normal tasks performed in a constitutional state, had as their primary function the defence of the nation from its internal enemies. The maintenance of public order was left entirely in their hands. The Civil Guard,

the force in charge of policing the countryside, was placed under the control of the Ministry of War. During the history of the Restoration era both parties quickly responded to any social or political unrest with the suspension of constitutional guarantees and the declaration of martial law which granted the army a totally free hand. This militarization of public life revealed the fragility of the constitutional system and facilitated the intervention of the army in politics.(3)

Yet the army's control of its own internal affairs meant that any attempt to undertake even minimal reform was doomed. Its structural problem, *hipertrofia* or excess of officers in relation to the number of servicemen went unchecked. This was a problem decades old, a product of *pronunciamiento* politics, incorporation of defeated Carlist officers into the regular army, and the colonial wars throughout the century. In 1900, there was a ratio of one officer to fewer than four enlisted men. By 1910 Spain still had 16,000 officers for slightly more than 80,000 troops. The officer ratio was two to three times greater than that in France or in Germany, with an army only one third the size. It represented a cancer for the state which devoted about 40% of its expenditure to defence, but 70% of the defence budget went on officers' salaries. Consequently despite the economic burden, modernization and professionalization of the armed services were neglected.(4) Drastic reform was needed but could not come from the army itself, a staunch defender of the status quo, nor from the politicians who felt compelled not to intervene in military matters. General Cassola in 1887, Minister of War in

the Sagasta cabinet, attempted to introduce a comprehensive programme to professionalize the services. Under heavy attack from his fellow officers and abandoned by Sagasta, Cassola was forced to resign one year later and his projects were dropped. This confirmed that the symbiotic relationship between army and the dynastic politicians grew out of their common antagonism to social and economic modernization.(5)

The turn of the century saw the aftermath of the colonial disaster of 1898, the loss of the overseas Empire and the subsequent return of thousands of troops to the peninsula. It coincided with the mobilization of political forces against the ruling system. There were terrorist outbursts and the birth of nationalist politics in Catalonia and continuous insurrections in the Andalusian countryside. The army was therefore pushed to the forefront to defend the established order and increasingly saw itself as the defender of a nation endangered by the divisive effects of regionalism and class conflict. As their activities in defence of the state multiplied the officers also became more intolerant of any criticism. As the "guardians of the sacred values of the *Patria*" they regarded any attack on themselves as an attack on the nation. Additionally, they increasingly became an institution cut off from the rest of society. They resented the antimilitarist attitude adopted by most Spaniards after 1898. There were tales of corruption, incompetence and hardships from the Cuban campaigns of the 1890s. Almost 200,000 soldiers had died not in actual fighting but of disease and wounds due to the lack of a proper medical corps. They blamed the politicians for

the defeat and their unpopularity. Courted by the new Monarch, Alfonso XIII, the army began to act as the praetorian guard of the Monarchy rather than the oligarchy.(6)

A common response to antimilitarist articles was the assault by angered officers on the newspapers' offices. In 1895 the victims were two Republican journals: *El Globo* and *El Resumen*. The officers did not only escape unpunished but the newspapers were closed down.(7) This trend increased after 1898. On 5 May 1900 *El Progreso* of Játiva (Valencia) was attacked, followed one year later by *El Correo de Guipúzcoa*. More serious was the storming and beating of employees in the offices of the satirical magazine *Cu-Cut* and *La Veu de Catalunya*, journal of the *Lliga Regionalista*, in 1905. A wave of popular anger spread throughout Catalonia. The Liberal cabinet presided over by Montero Ríos resorted to the usual practice of suspending constitutional guarantees. It soon found itself caught between a political mobilization in Catalonia which gave birth to the coalition of Catalan forces known as *Solidaritat Catalana* and the rebel officers supported by the entire military corps. There were rumours that the officers were planning to attack the Cortes and the Civil Guard made clear they would not fire against their brothers in arms. The King took an active role. The Montero Ríos administration was dismissed and replaced by another Liberal cabinet headed by Segismundo Moret more willing to placate the army. On 20 March, 1906 it passed the Law of Jurisdictions to satisfy the officers' demands. Henceforth any offence, however trivial, against army, King or *patria* would be tried by military

courts. This represented a significant limit of expression and confirmed the privileged role of the military within the power bloc. It was therefore not a watershed in the Restoration period but a continuity of the rule established in 1878. The acceptance of the new law showed the fear of the governing elites. The capitulation of the dynastic politicians revealed their weakness: unable to assert civilian supremacy by an appeal to popular opinion and abandoned by the other source of constitutional sovereignty, the King, they provided the army with an opportunity to impose its demands on the state.(8)

A new crisis arose again in Barcelona when, in the last week of July 1909, the population revolted against the calling up of the reserves for service in Morocco. The so-called Tragic Week was brutally repressed by the army. Over 104 civilians were reported killed and 1725 civilians were tried by military courts. Five of them were executed.(9) The armed forces proved once more to be the main bulwark of the regime against any social or political challenge. The Moroccan adventure, however, also marked a split within the services. The introduction of promotion on merit in 1910 contributed to the alienation of those officers based in the peninsula who envied the privileged positions and extra incomes enjoyed by the favourites in the Ministry of War and the King's Military Household, and the recognition and promotions extended to those in elite units in Morocco known as the *Africanistas*.(10)

The First World War would be the decisive moment. It brought about the final breach between the officers corps and the ruling system it was supposed to defend. The inflation and economic hardship caused by the conflict hurt army officers as much as other classes. The hostilities in Europe also revealed the Spanish army's incapacity to engage in any major modern contest and encouraged the government to break traditional policy and to intervene in military affairs. First, General Echague, Minister of War in the Dato administration, and then General Luque, holder of that office in the Romanones cabinet, tried to introduce reforms to tackle the system of merit promotions and the necessary cutbacks in the officialdom. Yet those initiatives represented a departure from the agreement between army and dynastic politicians which had so far guaranteed the continuity and survival of the *Turno Pacífico*.

Any reform struck at the security of bureaucratic middle-ranking officers who now also suffered from inflation, shortages and worsening living standards.(11) Thus any tampering with the status quo was bound to anger the officers. In 1916 General Luque prepared a comprehensive military reform Bill which attempted to increase the standing army to 180,000 soldiers, financed by a substantial though hardly radical reduction of officers. It also dealt with the sensitive question of merit promotions. This reform Bill was a brilliant exercise in compromise: Luque minimized the necessary cutbacks and accepted that in the meantime the seniority principle would continue. But provisions such as a promotions freeze and aptitude tests

threatened officers below the rank of Colonel.(12)

It was a secret to nobody that the Spanish army was in desperate need of military reform, but Luque's Bill did not satisfy military opinion. All sort of criticisms began to be launched against it: priority was given to the re-organization of the higher commands by simply superannuating most of the senior officers in order to make room for junior and doubtless often less capable successors, not enough attention was paid to the welfare of the troops and to the details of munitions, armaments and instruction. A common reflection made was that it was putting the cart before the horse. The final straw, however, came with the introduction of tests of intellectual and physical ability. A mistake was certainly made when these tests were first applied only to the Infantry corps and in the particularly restive city of Barcelona. The anger of the inhabitants of that garrison was boundless.

The officers had been observing how the working classes were obtaining pay rises and concessions by joining trade unions and declaring strikes, measures barred to the armed forces by their code of discipline. Thus deeply disturbed by the erosion of their living standards, by the mounting economic hardships and incensed by the government reforms, the officers began to absorb some syndicalist principles. From the second half of 1916 they set up *Juntas Militares de Defensa*, a kind of officers' trade union. These *Juntas* were initially established in Barcelona but soon spread across the peninsula. By January 1917, the idealist

and arrogant Chairman of the Central *Junta* at Barcelona, Colonel Benito Márquez, was boasting that the *Juntas* had become a reality in all the garrisons of Spain with the exceptions of only Madrid and Morocco. (13)

The language used and some of the objectives pursued by the *Juntas* could be linked to the general "regenerationist" dynamic of the era. There were harsh words against the ruling *Turno*. The officers were also spurred by their hostility towards both the privileged members of the Palace clique, mainly based in the Military Household of the King, and the elite troops serving in Morocco or *Africanistas*. Unlike their colleagues in the peninsula where promotions were awarded in a bureaucratic order corresponding to seniority and regardless of merits and competitiveness, the *Africanistas* could advance relatively quickly by showing ability on the battlefield, bypassing the army's bureaucratic pyramid. Nevertheless, the story in Morocco had been one characterized by nepotism and corruption with thousands of medals and awards being given for the simplest of reasons. Hence the *Juntas'* movement sought to reorganize the army and to fight corruption and favouritism. Yet despite all the regenerationist rhetoric, the main objective of most officers was always the defence of the collective interests of the corps. According to their beliefs, this would be achieved by ending the favouritism and privileges enjoyed by the palace clique and the *Africanistas*, by imposing a rigid promotion system based on strict seniority and by organizing themselves in order to obtain pay increases. (14)

The *Juntas de Defensa* were initially not taken seriously and even seem to have been welcomed by the Captain General of Catalonia, General Felipe Alfau. The regulations of the *Juntas* were presented to Alfau in early 1917. He supported and encouraged his officers. The Minister of War, General Luque, was well aware of what was going on and made no objection. According to Colonel Márquez, neither General Alfau nor Luque opposed the establishment of *Juntas*. In fact, these Generals wanted to use them for their own personal ambitions.(15) It was not until the Russian revolution in March 1917 when the Monarch feared that their existence constituted a potential threat to the regime, that Romanones ordered their dissolution. Alfonso XIII drew a parallel between the soldiers's Soviets in Russia and the *Juntas de Defensa* in Spain. The anti-oligarchical language of the Spanish officers and their attacks upon the Palace Generals, made the King believe he could become the target of the *Juntas'* anger. He therefore forced his government to take measures. In early April General Alfau was summoned to Madrid and told by Romanones and Luque that the *Juntas* had to be dissolved. The following week he communicated the authorities in the capital that he had done so with total success.(16) As events were to prove this was far from true.

4. The Romanones administration: the international challenge:

Until early 1916, although fierce fighting raged around the continent, Spain never considered departing from its initial strict neutrality. That position would be seriously challenged during the Romanones administration. No other Prime Minister, during the years of conflict, became so much involved in the international dispute. Labour militancy, military reforms and economic plans were crucial issues during this period and yet they were almost overshadowed by the foreign question. In fact, the war seems to have dominated Romanones' business agenda. This attitude led to a phase of active agitation and polarization of the country around the neutrality issue. Furthermore, the two warring blocs, in particular the Central Powers, turned their attention to Spain such that it became a new theatre of operations. The fall of the Romanones government in April 1917 did not put an end to German intervention in Spanish internal affairs. On the contrary, it represented the culmination of a successful campaign of infiltration and mobilization. In the domestic field, however, nothing could be the same again after April 1917. The ruling governing elites had lost their hegemony and would never manage to win it back.

No *Turno* politician had welcomed the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. A conflict of such magnitude was bound to damage their artificial and fragile leading position in Spanish political society. Hence most of them, regardless of their respective sympathies for one or other European camp, longed for

a quick end to the war so that they could return as soon as possible to their normal political routine. As the conflict dragged on, they realized the increasing threat that it could spread to the peninsula. Thus they tried to bury their heads in the sand, ignore what was taking place beyond the borders and hope they had been forgotten.

Count Romanones was an exception. He was one of the very few dynastic leaders who believed that Spain should abandon its formal neutrality. As early as August 1914 he had stated his views openly in the famous editorial "Fatal Neutralities". According to him, the only way in which Spain could re-build her Empire in Northern Africa and strengthen her economy was through closer collaboration with France and Britain, the main naval and colonial powers, and not through diplomatic isolationism. Moreover, personal reasons also influenced his determination to cement links with the Entente. He was one of the largest share-holders in the mining industries of Morocco and of coal and pyrite mines in Asturias and Southern Spain whose production went to France to prop up the Allied war effort.

After the outburst of criticism that "Fatal Neutralities" aroused, Romanones played down his pro-Allied feelings. Throughout 1915 as he felt he was close to regaining political power, he insisted that Spain should never abandon her position of neutrality. Once he was Prime Minister he tried to erase from everybody's memory his earlier pro-Allied views by claiming that his personal sympathies should not interfere with

the interests of the state, but he never gave up his previous convictions. The Count, during his troubled Premiership, endeavoured to pursue an increasingly pro-Entente international policy but disguised this fact from public opinion. He used secret diplomatic channels as favourite means to deal with the Western Powers. To his despair, his initiatives were received by evasive Anglo-French responses. Romanones could not go beyond certain limits. He could not contemplate the idea of breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany. Hence the Entente was not prepared to satisfy Spanish imperialist ambitions in exchange for mere promises of platonic friendship. Romanones' approaches, however, triggered off a vicious campaign against his government orchestrated by the Central Powers with the help of their Spanish friends. Germany had important interests in the peninsula. They included investments, 70,000 nationals and over 40 vessels which had sought shelter in Spanish ports at the outbreak of the war. The presence of a pro-Allied Prime Minister in power was a pending threat to all these interests. It was imperative therefore to bring about his downfall. The result was to push Romanones more and more towards the Allied camp. By early 1917 the situation was such that the continuity of an administration headed by the Count was bound to lead inevitably to a diplomatic rupture with the German Bloc.

When Romanones took office in December 1915 he quickly realized something had to be done to dispel the impression which undoubtedly prevailed that he intended to depart from neutrality. He therefore appointed Miguel Villanueva, *cacique* of Logroño

known for his *Germanophile* leanings and a leading personality in the democratic faction of the Liberal party led by the Count's rival, the dull Marquis of Alhucemas, foreign minister. It was a smart attempt to kill two birds with one stone: to show everybody he had abandoned his pro-Allied views and to win the support of the other main Liberal clique. When Urzaiz was sacked in February 1916 Villanueva became Chancellor and then after the General Elections of April 1916 he was promoted to the influential post of Speaker of the Lower House of the Cortes. The Prime Minister then had the way clear to entrust his friend Amalio Gimeno with foreign policy.

Romanones continued to stress in official circles his total commitment to strict neutrality. On 16 March he spoke at the *Círculo Liberal* in Madrid, the elite policy making group within the Liberal party. The Count told his audience: "*Spain remains and will remain neutral because this is her firm will... the present government like that presided over by Dato will observe in its relations with the belligerent sides the strictest neutrality...*".(1) This idea was repeated to a packed Cortes during the Crown Message on 10 May, 1916. One month later, Romanones stood up again in Congress to point out that neutrality was not the monopoly of one party but the faithful interpretation of the unanimous opinion of the nation. The maverick Count even suggested he had been the first to support it without any reservations when Dato proclaimed it for the first time two years earlier. What Romanones was clearly not prepared to do was to allow a public debate on neutrality. Thus when the fierce

Republican Marcelino Domingo tried to bring up the issue in October, he was told that it was such a sensitive subject that it could not be discussed in parliament at that time. Yet he promised that the Deputies would be allowed to express their views before the end of the year. Romanones' call for "patriotic" silence was promptly backed by Dato. It is no wonder that in late December, noting that the issue had been ignored and that the Cortes was about to be closed, Domingo and the other members of the Republican-Socialist minority voiced their disappointment and anger. (2)

Parliamentary passivity contrasted with feverish diplomatic activity. The Prime Minister's intention was to conduct foreign policy unseen by parliament. He relied mainly on diplomatic activities in Madrid, Paris and London which could not be scrutinized or commented upon by politicians or journalists. A *Germanophile* and ultra-conservative, Polo de Bernabé, and a neutral aristocrat, Merry del Val, retained their posts as Ambassadors to Berlin and London respectively. But León y Castillo, a former Ambassador at Paris with good connections among French political elites, returned there and Fermín Calbetón, a close friend of Romanones and leading figure in the Liberal party, was sent to the Vatican.

León y Castillo and Polo de Bernabé defended two opposite foreign policies. The former totally shared Romanones' view that Spain should move towards the Western Bloc. In April 1916 he wrote: "*I am for a neutrality leaning towards the*

Allies...it is inconceivable for us to continue with the kind of neutrality that some want to impose upon us with threats of civil war...Fatal neutralities was not only an editorial, but is becoming a prophecy and if God does not protect us it could become a catastrophe".(3) However, at the same time Polo de Bernabé was affirming: "I am unhappy that Villanueva is no longer at the Foreign Office. The kind of strict neutrality pursued by him is exactly that which I personally identify with..."(4)

Despite all his declarations of strict neutrality, the Spanish Prime Minister had not abandoned those ideas expressed in his editorial "Fatal Neutralities": the Great War in Europe had presented Spain with a golden opportunity to re-construct her Empire and her economy. Isolation in the international field would be a terrible mistake. The nation had to back the Allied cause and extract a price for it. Yet Romanones knew he had to act with extreme caution so as not to arouse suspicions. Thus he left Polo de Bernabé at Berlin and moved his man to Paris. Romanones' instructions were clear: Spain's destiny was inevitably linked to that of France and Britain. He informed León y Castillo that he was there with the full confidence of the government. His mission was to let the French authorities know that Spain was ruled by a friendly and supportive government, and then to obtain their consent for the modification of Tangier from its existing international status to formal Spanish control. According to Romanones, Tangier was his main concern. The city was not only the key to the control of the Mediterranean but also to the final pacification of the Spanish Protectorate in

Morocco. (5)

If the Count seriously believed that the French were prepared to agree with his plans for Tangier, he was either naive or had been misinformed. León y Castillo found in France a proud and stubborn nation determined to fight to the end. The cruel and bloody battles of Verdun and the Somme were soon to reveal that resolution. Moreover, France's image of Spain was of a state marked by its *Germanophilia*. The fact that the government was temporarily in friendly hands was meaningless as long as important institutions such as the Church, Army and Court did not make any effort to disguise their pro-German feelings. The Spanish Ambassador at Paris was therefore not exactly met by a welcoming party. He despaired that while Portugal had made an intelligent move by throwing in her lot with the Allies, thereby guaranteeing her interests in a future international order by ensuring her presence at the Peace Conference, Spain whose economic and political destiny was inevitably linked to that of the Western Powers, even if they were beaten in the war, continued to be disliked because of a neutrality which in fact was playing into German hands. León y Castillo was thus pessimistic about the likelihood of France acquiescing to a change in the status of Tangier. He suggested that time and money would have to be invested in order to win over French public opinion. (6)

León y Castillo, encouraged by Romanones, promptly raised the issue of Tangier with the French government. In fact,

the account of his interview with the French Prime Minister Briand was not without its comic aspect. The Spanish Ambassador in opening the conversation said he was too old and broken a man to be able to do much in the way of negotiations, to which Briand replied that the brave attempt which he had just made to take Tangier by storm was a most gratifying proof of youthful vigour. Briand went on to say that he did not think that the present was a very suitable moment to discuss the question of Tangier. If France were suddenly to let it be known that she was prepared to acquiesce in a Spanish occupation of Tangier, without any corresponding concession on the part of the Spanish government, such an announcement would be interpreted as a sign that she was losing confidence in her ability to defeat Germany and was endeavouring to conciliate the neutral powers.(7) Castillo continued to approach leading French political figures such as Clemenceau, Pichon, Barthou and Frencinet. Yet his correspondence reveals the deadlock in which Spanish diplomacy found itself. A policy of nominal friendship, but empty hands in practice, would not obtain Tangier. The French were not prepared to discuss the question unless Spain adopted a new position. An alternative approach could be to see whether Britain, which with Spain and France was the other major power ensuring the international status of Tangier, was more willing to satisfy the Spanish demands.(8)

Romanones thus attempted to win the co-operation of Britain for his bid for Tangier. He failed as the British proved to be almost as unresponsive as the French. During the first

months of 1916 the Spanish Embassy at London was bombarded with instructions to the Ambassador Merry del Val. He was to seek support for Spanish claims over Tangier, to complain about the hostile attitude adopted by Mr. White, the British representative in the city and to increase the commercial exchanges of coal and steel between the two countries. In June he even wrote to Merry: *"We must be prepared for anything and aware of what they want from us, even intervention".*(9)

The British did not jump at the idea of a Romanones administration. As long as Spain did not abandon her official neutrality, a theoretically more friendly government could be more a source of embarrassment than of anything else. Immediately after the fall of Dato, this feeling was expressed by the British Ambassador at Madrid:

"I am not at all sure that a more openly friendly government may not be an embarrassment both for Spain and for ourselves. Mr. Dato held the balance well, officially and privately he was most friendly. Romanones may press for a price and try to raise the question of Tangier...".(10)

The Foreign Minister, Edward Grey, agreed with Briand that it was not an opportune moment to discuss Tangier. He recognized that it was a natural aspiration for Spain but insisted that no decision could be taken without French consent. Grey was not totally unsympathetic towards Spanish demands believing that in order to keep Spain friendly some concessions

might have to be made. Nevertheless, he also stressed that Spain should be asked something in return for that concession. Otherwise nobody wanted Tangier to be given up and Gibraltar was a sacrifice that Britain could not afford. Besides he did not know what else they could offer.(11)

In late March, at the request of Merry del Val, Edward Grey agreed to discuss the question of Tangier in Paris with the French government. Grey wrote to Arthur Hardinge that he had urged the need for keeping Spain happy, but recognized that it was difficult for the French to relinquish Tangier. Briand said that it was impossible at that moment to make such a concession as it would have the appearance of yielding to blackmail and would not be tolerated by French public opinion. Yet he did not preclude it from being considered at a more favourable time.(12) After meeting Geoffray, the French Ambassador at Madrid, Hardinge concluded that the subject of an eventual transfer of Tangier to Spain would be postponed until the end of the war. In the meantime, with very little hesitation, the French reply was that the cession of that city in the middle of the war would be regarded in France as a sign of weakness and as intended to draw Spain into the war on the side of the Allies. Furthermore, it might offend the Sultan of Morocco, who, although for practical purposes a vassal of France, required during such a difficult period, rather delicate handling as Turco-German emissaries were endeavouring to promote a Muslim movement against France and her Allies in Northern Africa. Moreover, it would be unwelcome to the French element in Morocco, and there was no certainty that its

effect would be to render in the long-term the Spaniards more friendly in their attitude towards the European war. It appeared possible to Hardinge that those difficulties might be overcome by a secret understanding between France and Spain. In the event of a successful termination of the war, including the recovery by France of the two provinces lost to Germany in 1870, the French government would be willing on the conclusion of peace to transfer Tangier to the Spanish zone, it being understood that until that event the Spanish government would maintain a benevolent attitude towards the Allies.(13)

In an attempt to win public support for a more benevolent neutrality towards the Allied cause, Romanones sought to enlist the aid of Antonio Maura. The veteran Conservative statesman was still the most respected and influential politician of the Spanish Right and his voice was bound to have a decisive influence on those sectors of society identified with law and order, who were in fact the core of the *Germanophile* movement in Spain. Some of his followers were among the most noisy supporters of the Central Powers. Ultra-conservatives, Catholics and Monarchists, these *Mauristas* loathed the idea of a victory for Republican France and for the political principles which that country represented. On 4 September 1916, Maura met Romanones and the King in Santander to discuss the international question and work together with them on preparation of the major speech he was to deliver six days later at Berlanga.(14)

Maura's speech before a huge audience of his followers

at Berlanga in September 1916 was the second of the three he delivered during the war. The first one at the Royal Theatre at Madrid in April 1915 had already revealed a veiled pro-Allied tendency. At Berlanga, Maura came very close to the international stance maintained by the Count. This was hardly surprising since they had exchanged ideas a few days earlier. The speech was as most of Maura's usually were: of great length, eloquent, verbose and abounding in allusions to abstract general principles. He dealt in the main with the war and foreign policy, making an important public declaration which emphasized a certain leaning on the part of Spain towards the Allied cause. Intervention in the European war was rejected, but a rapprochement with the Allies was defended as the logical conclusion drawn from history, economy and geography. He defended his own part in the Carthage agreement of 1904 with France and Britain, signed while he was Prime Minister, as dictated by the interests of Spain in Morocco and the Mediterranean, and by her natural status as a Western Power. Maura finally referred to Tangier as indispensable to Spanish expansion in Morocco and bearing in mind the audience which he was addressing, claimed that Spain had the right to expect to be treated as a sister by the Entente. If, however, the general policy of England and France sought to weaken the influence and power of Spain, it would be the natural duty of Spanish statesmen after the war to reconsider their position and perhaps to look for support in a different political combination. (15)

Maura's speech stunned part of his normal audience.

The *Maurista* journal *La Acción* went out of its way to stress that Maura was still a staunch supporter of strict neutrality, but others described it as a betrayal. Romanones himself declared he was in total agreement with the ideas presented by the old Conservative leader. Republican leaders like Melquiades Alvarez and Alejandro Lerroux gave a grateful welcome to his views. Lerroux even argued in his journal *El Progreso* that after two years of war, Maura and he were in full agreement. (16)

Maura's tacit support for Romanones' foreign policy failed to produce the expected effect upon the Western diplomats. They were, if anything, dismissive and unimpressed. The British Foreign Office wrote: "*The Spanish government's attitude may now have been modified by the speech of Maura, though it seems more likely to be intended as a form of blackmail--a hint that Spain might help us in return for Gibraltar or Tangier*". (17) The French adopted a similar approach. The Ambassador in Madrid thought that it would not affect the situation as Spain could only help the Allied cause if she was to serve them in some concrete and practical way, for instance, by the seizure of the interned German ships. Moreover, he described Maura's speech as an attempt to hedge and envelop in pompous and lengthy phrases, a statement which contained nothing new, whilst France might be asked to pay an inconveniently high price for words which had no real value. (18)

A practical and immediate departure from the official strict neutrality was something that Romanones, in a country

divided by philiias, was unable to offer. The Liberal leader claimed in his memoirs that there were substantial offers to persuade him to join the Entente, especially during the meeting he held with the French Foreign Minister at San Sebastián in September 1916. However, Romanones maintained that when he realized that the general mood in the country was against a direct involvement in the conflict he refused to throw in his lot with the Allies and instead merely sought to work for a benevolent neutrality towards their cause. 19) In fact, he withheld a good deal of the truth as he was prepared to go further than he suggests.

There is no evidence that at any time France or Britain exercised any kind of economic or political pressure to force Spain to join them in the war. Surrounded by Allied countries who controlled the sea routes and depending for her economic survival on the trade with them, Spain would not have been able to withstand their combined action. On the other hand, the story was very different in the case of the Central Powers. The relative passivity of the Western Powers contrasted with the ruthless determination and forceful methods of Germany and her friends to ensure that Spain never abandoned the position it had adopted at the outbreak of the war.

Germany identified her cause with that of the people of law and order. She could find her most ardent supporters in the Army, aristocracy, Court and clergy. On 27 January, 1916 leading representatives of all those institutions turned up at

the German Embassy in Madrid to celebrate the Kaiser's birthday and express their sympathy for Germany at that critical time. (20) Moreover, it was commonly believed in the ruling circles that the Allies, France in particular, were in contact with all those forces opposing the political status quo. Even Romanones was worried when in the spring of 1916 Republicans and Catalanists formed a Legion, several thousand strong, to fight in France. From July 1916 the Legion's headquarters at the Rue Beauregard were under surveillance and its contacts with French politicians closely followed by members of the Spanish Embassy in France. (21) Yet the German strategy in Spain began to change in 1916. Knowing that the government of the country was in unfriendly hands, Germany embarked on an active and ambitious campaign of de-stabilization, infiltration and sabotage which went far beyond the diplomatic activities permissible for any country acting in neutral territory. There were three objectives: to gain control of public opinion, to damage the interests of the Allies and to bring down any hostile administration.

Control of public opinion, in particular the press, was an important German success. Both the Central Powers and the Western Powers took advantage of the exorbitant rise in the price of paper to come to the financial rescue of different newspapers and thus managed to influence their editorials. In this practice the former always held the lead while the latter only reacted in 1916 when the advantage enjoyed by the Central Powers had become evident. A secret British Report in October 1917 noted the poverty and weakness of Anglo-French propaganda in Spain in

comparison with that of the Central Powers. It confirmed that the substantial sums lavished by the latter on the Spanish press had paid off as public opinion was to a large extent moulded by the German Embassy. (22)

The primary objective of all the publications in Spain, either friendly or controlled by German capital, was as Gerald Wolters, agent of the North German Lloyd at Barcelona, suggested: to ensure the strict maintenance of neutrality. To that end Germany did not just seek to control that part of the right-wing media closest to her ideological position, but also invested heavily both in the Liberal press edited by rivals of Count Romanones and in the pro-neutral Anarcho-Syndicalist journals. It was obviously a covert operation in which these newspapers received large amounts of money and in return defended the maintenance of strict neutrality. Following German instructions, they would oppose any departure from that position. Whereas right-wing newspapers would accuse any interventionist politician of treason to Spain, those on the left would stress the fact that the working class would be the section of society paying with their lives for the madness of entering into the 'imperialist war'. (23)

Virtually all the journals of the political right were in friendly hands or sponsored by them: the most widely read being the Monarchist *ABC*, the *Maurista La Acción*, the Carlist *El Correo Español*, the Catholic *El Debate* and *El Universo*, the Conservative *La Tribuna* and *La Nación*. The last two were

practically owned by German capital. The only important exception was *La Epoca*, the official newspaper of the Conservative party. The Allies had a firmer control over the media close to the centre or the soft left which defended a foreign policy similar to that of Romanones. Good examples were the Count's mouthpiece, *El Diario Universal*, as well as *El Liberal de Madrid*, *El Heraldo de Madrid*, *La Correspondencia de España* and *EL Imparcial*. Germany, however, had influence over the main journals of the democratic faction of the Liberal party: the Marquis of Alhucemas' *La Mañana* and *El Día*, edited by Alcalá Zamora, future President of the Second Republic. In theory, all the main publications of the left backed the Allied cause. This was the case with Araquistáin's *España*, the Republican *El País*, and *El Parlamentario*, Lerroux's *El Progreso* and the PSOE's newspaper, *El Socialista*. Nevertheless, German capital was behind the neutralist editorials of *Solidaridad Obrera*, organ of the CNT, and of the ultra-left Republican *España Nueva*, edited by the controversial Republican Deputy Rodrigo Soriano. (24)

Until the end of the war, the concerted and well-organized campaign carried out by the *Germanophile* press proved to be a formidable force. Any criticism of Germany--be it of innocent lives lost in a submarine attack or atrocities committed in the territories occupied by her--was rapidly depicted as warmongering and an open invitation to intervention. Even the sinking of Spanish vessels was justified. Ironically the owners of those vessels, accused of smuggling contraband and collaboration with one of the warring factions, were blamed for

their own misfortune. After all, Germany was only fighting for her survival and she had to do so with all the methods available to her. In June 1916, before the submarine campaign had begun in earnest, one of the most vociferous *Germanophile* journals published a series of articles under the headline "A Sensational Document". It provided a complete list of Spanish companies producing material for the Entente and of Spanish ships contributing to their war effort by carrying cargo from one Allied port to another. In fact, it was almost a final warning to the Liberal government to put an end to contraband and profiteering and an advance justification of a possible change in the hitherto benevolent attitude adopted by Germany towards the Spanish merchant fleet. Furthermore, the articles were used as the proof that the main cause of the inflationary trend affecting Spain was the fact that her transport and basic products were being cynically used or exported abroad.(25)The right-wing press disguised its *Germanophilia* with slogans of patriotism and *Españolismo*. They were the defenders of the ultimate interests of the nation seeking to prevent the country from sliding into a disastrous war and fighting for strict neutrality. Their effort was combined with that of the left which continually accused those pro-Allied elements in Spain of being behind the orgy of exports which was tearing the country apart.

By 1916 German influence in Spain was such that the nation was regarded in the Western Chancelleries, if not as a *Germanophile* country, at least as a doubtful friend. This was not only a result of the image given by a bellicose *Germanophile*

press, but also by the dramatic intensification of German activities in the peninsula which went largely unpunished. There were flagrant cases of complicity between German agents and Spanish authorities, examples of infiltration in Anarchist groups and subsequent organization of strike action so as to disrupt industrial production and exports for the Allies, and finally unrestrained and vicious submarine attacks off the Spanish coasts.

In February 1916 the British Foreign Office received a Secret Report warning of the potential danger presented by the presence of between 70,000 and 80,000 German residents in Spain and confirming that the recent wave of strikes in Barcelona had been fomented by German agents for the purpose of stopping exports from this area reaching France.(26) In May Mr. Vaughan, Secretary of the British Embassy in Madrid, wrote that it had been verified that German submarines were furnished with many supplies in Spanish waters. This was taking place between Castellón and Alicante, being the most dangerous zone in the neighbourhood of Valencia where small vessels belonging to the rich tobacco smuggler March were being used for the purpose. Also, a consignment of one million cartridges had been seized at Madrid railway station which suggested that many others had got through. The belief was that its destination was Morocco to support the Moorish revolt against the French.(27) In June a serious incident occurred when, without previous notice, the German submarine U-35, supposedly the author of several attacks on Allied convoys in the Mediterranean, arrived at Cartagena. An

embarrassed Romanones had to face an avalanche of protests coming from Paris and London. The official version given by *El Imparcial* was that it had brought a personal letter of gratitude from the Kaiser to King Alfonso XIII for the excellent treatment given to those German officers who had surrendered to the Spanish authorities in Guinea after the loss of the colony of Cameroon. There were, however, suspicions that its real mission was to establish links with the crews of German ships interned in Spanish ports and to co-ordinate new actions with other submarines near the coast of Bilbao.(28)

During the next months French complaints mounted about submarine raids off the Spanish coasts and German money and arms reaching the rebel Moors in Morocco. In July León y Castillo wrote to Romanones: "*What a pity!. The French just want a proof of our friendship, and this is the spectacle we are providing*". Romanones was determined to show the Allies where his sympathies lay. In early August he decided to protest against the German treatment of civilians in occupied territories. On 27 August he briefed León y Castillo that the German government had been informed that no more visits would be allowed and that its submarines should stop using Spanish territorial waters.(29) On 1 September, the Spanish Prime Minister sent a note to the M narch expressing his belief that the country should adopt a more benevolent neutrality towards the Allies. Then on the eve of his meeting with the French Foreign Minister, the Count told Colonel Tillon, the French Military Attache, that it was not his wish that neutrality should assume a position of equidistance

between the belligerent nations, but should be one of sympathy for France and England and that he was most desirous of giving evidence of this.(30)

Romanones' pro-Allied initiatives confirmed the worst suspicions of the Central Powers. Germany abandoned the carrot and henceforth used the stick. After September 1916 the number of submarine attacks, sabotage and spying activities shot up dramatically. The result would be to divide the country into those who were prepared to defend neutrality at any price and thus were willing to justify any German action and those who argued that such hostility should be answered by the immediate rupture of diplomatic relations. The Prime Minister's attempts to check Germany's manoeuvres were unsuccessful. The odds against him were formidable. He was confronted by a very resourceful and well organized intelligence network which was backed by a powerful press lobby and could act at will with the complicity of authorities that in particular cases like Guinea and Morocco reached scandalous dimensions. After December the battle between Romanones and Germany and her Spanish friends was to the death. There could be only two possible outcomes: either a final breach with the Central Powers or the end of his premiership. The fact that the most ardent supporters of his foreign policy were Republicans and Socialists persuaded the bulk of the dynastic forces that his downfall was a price worth paying.

Like the other neutral nations Spain had seen her trade affected by the hostilities. Both sides tried to hurt each

other by imposing an economic blockade to disrupt the other's supply lines. They drew up lists of products which they would not allow to reach an enemy port. Thus neutral vessels, if caught carrying forbidden cargo, could easily be accused of smuggling contraband and have their goods seized. Allied naval supremacy, from the very beginning of the conflict, meant that a desperate Germany had to resort increasingly to the use of U-boats instead of surface ships. In the first stages of the war, German submarines limited their role for the most part to searching neutral boats and destroying prohibited goods. As the war dragged on, however, the U-boats began to sink any vessel navigating towards an Allied port. Friends of Germany argued that circumstances had imposed those methods upon her. Yet for those on the receiving end the change of tactics made a serious impact, especially in terms of loss of lives and destruction of material. Spanish vessels had often been detained by French or British warships and driven to an Allied port where they were fined if contraband was found. Crews and boats were promptly released once the fine was paid.(31) German submarine action had been relatively moderate towards the Spanish merchant fleet. During the first two years of the war only 8 Spanish ships had been sunk. After September 1916 that policy was changed radically. In just one week during that month three Spanish boats-- *Olazábal*, *Mayo* and *Luis Vives*--were sent to the bottom of the sea. Germany had decided to switch to bullying tactics. The idea was to show Romanones and those contemplating a departure from strict neutrality what they were risking. By April 1917 the toll had risen to 31 ships or 80.000 tons of much needed naval

transport.(32) A real battle of words was taking place in public opinion. The barbarism of the Teutonic war machine was constantly denounced in the Liberal or Republican journals which demanded strong measures to put an end to the disaster. Yet for the *Germanophile* press it was only the natural outcome of the conflict. They argued that Germany was within her rights to treat as enemies all those supplying the Allies with the means to continue the war.

Relations between the Spanish authorities in the African colonies of Morocco, Guinea and Western Sahara and the neighbouring French administration had never been particularly cordial. There had always been rivalry and probably also a certain degree of jealousy towards the more competent and successful French colonial system. The outbreak of the war in Europe caused even further deterioration of the already troubled relations. Admiration for the efficiency and discipline of the German army and pleasure at the setbacks of France was not strange to many Spanish officers, but it was almost the rule among those in the colonies. Thus they were more than happy to turn a blind eye to the activities of German agents.

An outrageous example of complicity took place in Spanish Guinea. In early 1916, facing an all-out Allied offensive, the German colonial army in the Cameroons retreated towards Spanish Guinea. In February France and Britain expressed their agreement with the internment of sixty German officers and several thousand native troops in the Spanish colony. The

intention was that the German officers would shortly be sent to the peninsula to be held in Saragossa and the disarmed natives returned to their country.(33) Time passed and the operation kept being postponed. In October the French Ambassador Geoffray called the attention of Amalio Gimeno, the Spanish Foreign Minister, to the arrival at Fernando Poo, the capital of Spanish Guinea, of cases containing ammunition and rifles which had found their way to a camp of interned German officers. The German Commandant had been heard to say that they would return in triumph to the Cameroons in a few months. The French Ambassador requested the German officers to be immediately transported to the peninsula and the natives to the Cameroons. He also announced that French authorities on the nearby coast had received orders to divert to their ports all Spanish ships bound for Fernando Poo so that they might be searched for guns. Gimeno promised two vessels to convey and convoy the Germans to Spain.(34) The close degree of cooperation between the theoretically imprisoned German officers and the Spanish authorities soon became evident, particularly those between the Germans, the Governor Angel Barrera and the Commandant in Chief Manuel Giménez Pidal. Barrera had been aware of the presence of weapons at the German camp and had done nothing to prevent it. Moreover, German and Spanish officers not only fraternized openly but they even interchanged duties as if they belonged to the same army. On 28 October 1916 two French cruisers, *Surcouf* and *Astrea*, arrived in the colony with guns positioned and manned and did not leave before informing Barrera that the Allies would not consent to the presence of armed Germans near their former colony of the Cameroons. In December

the British government communicated to the Spanish Ambassador in London its dissatisfaction with the situation in Guinea. There was no doubt about the good intentions of the Spanish government but neither the Naval department nor Governor Barrera could be trusted.(35) The news that the removal operation had begun did not arrive until February 1917. The previous month a parade had been held in honour of the Kaiser with the participation of Spanish officers. Yet Governor Barrera retained his post until March 1918.(36)

Morocco, divided between a Spanish and French Protectorate since 1912, represented the clearest example of rivalry and lack of collaboration between both administrations. Both colonial powers had the tacit consent of the Sultan to establish their zones of influence but they had run into the opposition of armed natives. After 1909 the continental powers had been engaged in guerrilla warfare, but co-operation had been lacking. Instead, mistrust had been the general rule. Germany took advantage of this situation to create trouble for France in her North African possession.

In 1916 at the same time that Romanones was making his bid for Tangier, the French had been complaining about German agents in the Spanish zone being active in encouraging, arming and financing a Moroccan rebellion. The German consulates at Tetuán, Larache and Melilla had become bases for spy networks from where German nationals like Bartels, Koppel and Richtels provided the rebel leaders, Abd-el Malek and Raisuli, with money

and weapons to continue their raids into French territory.(37) It was impossible that the Spanish authorities did not know what was going on under their very noses. The Liberal Prime Minister despaired that the German manoeuvres were not only an abuse of the hospitality enjoyed by her nationals but a clear attempt to endanger both the pacification of Morocco and the relations between France and Spain. In fact, the zeal of the Spanish authorities in combating the German-Moorish links in the peninsula contrasted with the passivity of the Colonial officers in Morocco. The police were active in the peninsula in wrecking the German initiative to make Mulay Haffid, new Sultan of Morocco. Haffid, resident in Barcelona, was under the close surveillance of the Spanish intelligence services and Romanones pledged that if necessary he would be expelled from Spain. In November, one million pesetas intended for Raisuli and half a million for Abd-el Malek were intercepted and thereafter orders were given for the arrest and expulsion of Koppel from the Spanish Protectorate.(38) Yet smuggling weapons into the French zone continued without interruption and German officers became advisers to Abd-el Malek's troops. The malice or the weakness of the Spanish authorities was then openly demonstrated when the High Commissioner Jordana demanded that the rebel leader Raisuli be appointed Grand Visir of Tetuán in February 1917. The French Colonial Office was enraged. Nevertheless, Spanish operations in Morocco were restrained by an imperative: to prevent a high number of casualties in what was mostly regarded as an unpopular colonial adventure. Thus the official explanation for appointing such a controversial figure was that in order to pacify the

Spanish zone the collaboration of influential native leaders was needed.(39)

By late 1916 the extent and nature of German operations in Spain were impressive. British secret reports coincided with Romanones' memoirs in their description. Apart from her powerful press lobby and her activities in the colonies of Morocco, Guinea and to a lesser extent Western Sahara, Germany had established spy networks in Bilbao, Barcelona, Valencia, Málaga, Huelva and the Canary Islands. The objective was not only to gather news from France but also to acquire information about shipping routes and to infiltrate anarchist and revolutionary groups. These could then be easily manipulated to disrupt industrial production for the Allies.(40)

December 1916 represented a watershed in terms of the polarization of the country over the neutrality issue. It also brought about an open declaration of war between Romanones and the *Germanophiles* forces in the country. On 12 December the Central Powers published a statement claiming that they were ready to negotiate peace. Yet they made no important concessions and the statement was marked by threats to resume the hostilities in an even more lethal manner if the Western Powers did not accept their overtures. Naturally, the Entente rejected the German terms alleging that they had not chosen war but that it had been imposed upon them. They were not prepared to stop until the might of German military power had been crushed. The peace initiative was followed up by the American President Wilson who

on 18 December sent a note to both belligerents and neutrals in an attempt to see if there was any possibility of finding common ground to stop the carnage. But the gap was too great and nothing came of it.

In Spain the irreconcilability of the two positions was well documented. The pro-Allied press condemned the German approach, applauded the words of the Allied leaders and even accused Wilson of unwittingly acting as honorary agent of Germany. By contrast, the *Germanophile* press praised the peace initiatives and argued that the pro-Allied elements in Spain were behaving like foreign agents, who were not only happy to see the slaughter continue on the European battlefields, but wanted to drag Spain into it as well.(41)

Different peace initiatives offered Spain the longed for opportunity to play a mediating role in the conflict. No other country and no other Head of State had worked so hard to fulfil that role. Alfonso XIII had taken personal charge of establishing a diplomatic centre in Madrid to deal with both sides, gather information on missing citizens and soldiers, act on behalf of the population in occupied territories, advocate the repatriation of wounded or sick soldiers and to perform a large variety of other altruistic services. Additionally, her position of neutrality had enabled Spain to take charge of the interests of some of the belligerent nations in hostile territories. Some outstanding examples by late 1916 were the protection of German interests in Portugal and Romania, those of Austria-Hungary in

Italy and Portugal, of France in Germany, Turkey, Persia and occupied Belgium, of Russia in Germany, Austria-Hungary and occupied Belgium, of Britain in Austria-Hungary, etc.(42) The enthusiasm of the Spanish Monarch for the peace initiatives was reported in full by the British Ambassador:

"The King said that he hoped the Allies would wait for full particulars respecting the German proposals, before they summarily rejected all idea of negotiations. I think His Majesty meant to suggest that what Germany would begin by proposing might be materially modified in the course of discussion; and although the Spanish government would probably share the task of mediation with that of the United States, it is one which the King would naturally undertake with pride and interest, as likely to considerably increase the prestige of his country in world politics".(43)

A few days earlier the Monarch had told his Prime Minister that this was a crucial moment which had to be exploited. He was going to use his visit to Vienna to attend the funeral for the late Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph to meet the rulers of the Central Powers and then on his return journey exchange impressions with the Allied leaders in Paris. From these meetings Alfonso expected to emerge as the arbiter of peace in Europe.(44)

At first Romanones toyed with the idea of the Spanish

Monarch leading the initiative of mediating between both sides. He tried to introduce the idea when he met the French Ambassador and was taken aback when the latter responded that there could be no question of the peace proposals being entertained. The French diplomat was categorical:

"For forty years we have lived under the German menace; we have never been able to take a step without being threatened by the iron fist; successive Spanish governments can testify to the brutal and insolent interference of German diplomacy at almost every stage of Franco-Spanish negotiations respecting our interests and spheres of influence in Morocco. At last the cup has overflowed; France has been attacked without provocation by her enemy and her children have sacrificed themselves in thousands to ensure that this brutal attack shall never be repeated. Any compromise, any patched up peace, such as that which the terms suggest, would provoke an outburst of universal indignation".(45)

In the course of that conversation Romanones suggested that the services of a mediator, who might perhaps succeed in procuring rather more favourable conditions, could be a good solution, but the French Ambassador told him emphatically that his idea would not be accepted by the French government. León y Castillo confirmed that impression a few days later. The Liberal leader acted accordingly and refused to endorse Wilson's initiative. Instead, on 28 December he published a statement

protesting against the sinking of Spanish vessels and alleging that the destructive activities of submarines went beyond the norms of international law. He even clashed with the Monarch when he opposed the latter's attendance at the funeral of the late Austrian Emperor in Vienna and at his wearing an Austrian uniform at the private service which subsequently took place in Madrid.(46)

Romanones' behaviour convinced Germany that he was the main enemy of her cause in Spain. Until then there had existed a significant degree of hostility and suspicion towards him, henceforth there was open war. In late December a vicious campaign began against the Liberal leader. The signal had been given by the Austrian Ambassador, the Prince of Furstenberg, who in an interview on 26 December for *La Nación* had hinted that Count Romanones was behind contraband interests. A few days later the French intercepted a radiogram in which the German Ambassador, Prince Ratibor, requested Berlin for more funds to support an anti-Romanones campaign.(47) For the following four months, savagely hostile editorials were published in the *Germanophile* press. The objective was to overthrow the existing Liberal cabinet. The Prime Minister was singled out as a warmonger surreptitiously seeking to embroil the nation in the European conflagration. Comparisons were drawn between the Count and the interventionist Greek politician Venizelos. Spaniards were warned in apocalyptic tones that under the current Premiership a national disaster was bound to occur sooner or later. All the *Germanophile* newspapers claimed that the post of

Prime Minister was incompatible with the Count's private export interests. They suggested that he was actually using his privileged position to make profits by selling products abroad and was therefore a smuggler of war contraband. Romanones was accused of placing Franco-British interests above the national interests of Spain. He was thus behind every malady affecting Spain, from workers' disturbances and inflation to food shortages and lack of transport. The press called on the government to resign and cease growing rich on the European tragedy and the miseries of the Spanish people.(48)

On 8 January, facing a divided party, social unrest and under heavy pressure from a hostile *Germanophile* press, a besieged and embattled Romanones decided to present his resignation so as to make a come-back reinforced by the confidence of the Monarch. His manoeuvre was in fact entirely staged. Knowing that he was still backed by a majority of Liberal Deputies and counting on the good-will of Eduardo Dato, the other *Turno* leader, it represented a pre-emptive move aimed at forestalling any possible challenge to his leadership. The King himself confided to the British Ambassador that his departure had been a necessary piece of theatre to strengthen Romanones' hand against *Germanophile* forces and rivals in the Liberal party.(49)

The hostile press was not silenced. They were enraged and quickly denounced the proceeding as further proof of the duplicity and bankruptcy of the existing administration. *La Acción* even argued that the Monarch was becoming an unwitting

accomplice in these wicked manoeuvres.(50) Yet Romanones still seemed to be in charge of the situation. The violence of the press attacks had failed to disturb the Count and if anything had strengthened his pro-Allied views.

Between the months of February and April 1917 the polarization over the neutrality issue reached a climax. Spain was very close to abandoning its official position and embracing the Allied cause. Romanones had made up his mind and decided to take the decisive step but was not able to get the necessary backing from the main forces of the regime. On the contrary, the fact that Republicans and Socialists advocated the same foreign policy determined to a large extent his fall from office and the return to strict neutrality.

On 9 January, 1917 in a desperate attempt to disrupt the economy of the Allied states, the Central Powers announced their intention of intensifying the submarine campaign from February onwards. Henceforth any neutral vessel heading towards any Allied port would be sunk. The German initiative provoked anger among the neutral nations. In early February, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany. Araquistáin called the German initiative a declaration of war.(51) Romanones wrote to León y Castillo that were public opinion not so divided he would immediately adopt the American policy. For the present he could not do so but had to wait for the right psychological moment.(52 That attitude was clearly revealed in his speech in the Cortes on 1 February and in the note the Spanish government

sent to Germany five days later. *"The decision of the Central Powers to stop by all possible means all maritime traffic with France, Britain, Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean entails grave consequences for Spain. This government--noted the Liberal Leader--intends that the life of this country cannot be disrupted and shall not be disrupted. So this government is determined to take such steps as may be appropriate to face the existing circumstances"*. Romanones once more appealed to the patriotism of the Chamber and pledged to work in close collaboration with the Cortes.(53) This firm position was confirmed in the note delivered to Germany and described by the French as strong and dignified a protest as could be made by a neutral country. The most important point was the rejection as a legitimate method of warfare of the destructive course pursued by Germany and her allies which jeopardized the economic life of Spain and endangered the lives of her citizens.(54)

Despite all his promises, the Prime Minister did not intend bringing up the issue in public debate. Instead he continued to rely on diplomatic channels. Thus, in response to the insistence of Catalan Republicans like Rodés and Domingo for a discussion of the international question and Morocco, the Prime Minister simply decided to shut parliament on 26 February.(55) In fact, what nobody knew was that the Spanish Ambassador at Paris had already established crucial contacts with the French government. León y Castillo met the French Foreign Minister, Jules Cambon, at the Quai d'Orsay and intimated that his country was willing to go to great lengths to grant direct assistance to

the Allies. In reply to a request for a more precise statement, Castillo said that Spain might place all her natural resources at their command. This was far from impressive since the Allied governments were already in a position to draw materials, manufactured goods as well as agrarian produce from Spain, by virtue of the many purchases, contracts and orders that had been arranged. Cambon asked what Spain expected to obtain in return and was told that she desired Tangier, Gibraltar and a free hand in Portugal. Castillo emphasized that Spain did not want to annex Portugal but just to link both peninsular countries by some sort of Treaty or Alliance. The French Foreign Minister insisted that Spain should intervene militarily even if only on a small scale, but the Spanish diplomat responded that this was impossible for the present due to the divisions in his country. Yet Spain would break off diplomatic relations with Germany, open her ports to the Allies, smash German espionage and contribute to the production of war material. Cambon then stated that he was in favour of granting the Spanish demands although he could not say anything about Gibraltar. (56)

For the following two months the destiny of Spain hung by a thread. Romanones was totally convinced that the only means to consolidate the status of the country among the great powers and to head off the increasingly troubled domestic situation was to depart from strict neutrality. German bullying tactics and the Americans' tough response seemed to bear out his view. International events acquired a frenetic speed. Both Castillo and Calbetón advised the Count to follow the American lead and break

off diplomatic relations with Germany. Calbetón even suggested that the continuity of neutrality was a stain on national honour and dignity.(57) Yet the Count was still waiting for the right moment to act. On 12 February the King's brother claimed that behind the back of the Monarch and of all good Spaniards, Romanones had sealed a secret treaty with the French so that Spain would soon enter into the war on the side of the Allies.(58) On 16 February, an individual who turned out to be a German sailor, was arrested in Cartagena with two suitcases full of explosives. The Count wrote that there was enough dynamite to blow up all the fleets of the world and all the Spanish factories. He commented that it was not surprising that the Allies doubted the reliability of Spain when he could not control what was going on in many Spanish cities.(59)

In March events in Russia proved decisive in intensifying the "war of words" in the peninsula. The Tsar was overthrown and a Provisional Government installed. The end of Autocracy in Russia and its replacement by a modern democratic Republic filled the pro-Allied forces in Spain with joy. Tsarism had been an embarrassment for the Western Powers, but now the new Russian regime, added to the entry of the United States into the war in early April, radically transformed a conflict of imperialist aims into a worldwide ideological struggle. Socialist and Republican journals insisted that the Revolution had not been the reaction of people weary of war, but rather directed against a despotic and tyrannical political order whose leaders were seeking a compromise peace with their Imperial counterparts in

Germany and Austria. These journals became the most outspoken supporters of a diplomatic rupture with Germany and in some cases even advocated open intervention. (60)

The speed with which the Western Powers abandoned the Tsar to his fate and recognized the new regime in Russia sent waves of panic through the Spanish ruling circles. More than ever they were determined to stay out of the European nightmare. Nothing could be gained by joining a side which, it seemed to them, was closely identified with Republicanism. Yet Romanones, regardless of the radical changes in Russia, had already decided to depart from strict neutrality. The psychological moment he was waiting for arrived on 6 April when a German submarine sank the steamer *San Fulgencio*. The numbers of outrageous German attacks on the Spanish merchant fleet had increased dramatically since February. The glaring difference was that in this case, the *San Fulgencio* was outside the forbidden waters and heading towards Spain with a much needed cargo of British coal.

There is enough documentary evidence to show that the events which took place during the two weeks following the *San Fulgencio* disaster could have changed the history of contemporary Spain. During that period the Prime Minister kept in close contact with Western diplomats so as to negotiate terms for a possible departure from neutrality. Simultaneously the debate between the pro-German and the pro-Allied press reached its peak. In the end, Romanones lost the battle. His position was opposed by the other Monarchist leaders. Furthermore, the Allies,

particularly Britain, turned out to be lukewarm towards the Count's move. Unlike France and the United States, Britain considered the price for the Spanish rupture with Germany to be too high. Furthermore, there was hardly any reason to meet Spain's demands if she was forced by German brutality to embrace the Allied cause in any event.

The Prime Minister's correspondence with León y Castillo reveals how the international question had reached a crucial turning point in Spain. The latest German sinking, the entry of the United States and some Latin American Republics into the war, the internal situation in the peninsula were some of the factors that led to the Count's final resolution to throw in his lot with the Entente without wasting any more time. Yet he knew he was playing a deadly game in which the strength of the forces he was fighting was immense. On 14 April he wrote to León y Castillo:

"The crucial moment has arrived, the sinking of the San Fulgencio has been the final straw. The route I will take is already determined in the direction that you know and is a logical conclusion of the conversations of last September...The note to Germany will be the first and fundamental step...But I am not overconfident...opinion does not follow me even within my own party...I do not know how I am going to play my cards yet...the struggle between the Germanophiles and myself is to the death".(61)

At the same time, intense diplomatic activity had been taking place behind the scenes. This had been primarily directed at procuring concessions from France. On 8 March the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs disclosed to the British War Cabinet information from Paris to the effect that Spain was making approaches with a view to joining the Allies.(62) In early April Mr. Vaughan, Secretary at the British Embassy in Madrid, relayed that the French Ambassador, M. Geoffray, had held a long conversation with Count Romanones and discussed the position created by the entry of the United States and some Latin American countries into the war. The Spanish Prime Minister agreed that if Spain maintained her present position she would certainly sink to the level of an insignificant power such as the Netherlands. Romanones had said that the moment had come when Spain could no longer remain neutral and that in the next day or so he would make a public declaration of policy to the effect that she must come into the war on the side of the Allies. If his advice was disregarded Romanones said he would resign. The Count was still confident he had the full confidence of the Monarch, but added that his position was very difficult owing to the King's Austrian connections. They met again in the afternoon and Romanones asked the French Ambassador if he could use his influence with the pro-Allied press to persuade public opinion towards his position. Regarding Tangier, Geoffray declared that France had no authority to dispose of the city but agreed to use her influence with the interested parties to secure it for Spain. Vaughan gathered from the French diplomat that the French military authorities were very keen on Spain taking a positive

course of action. An important gain would be the use of Spanish ports for Allied warships. Another consideration was that France would be relieved of considerable anxiety with regard to German intrigues in Morocco and thus might be able to release some of her troops there. Finally, another important point was that the French believed that if Spain broke off diplomatic relations with Germany the effect on morale would be enormous and would cause any South American states still wavering to do likewise.(63)

The United States, a newcomer to the subtleties of European diplomacy, was the only power to adopt an uncompromising position. Now that the Americans had decided to intervene in the war they thought the other neutrals should make their position clear, especially a country like Spain whose attitude could have an important impact on Latin America. The American Ambassador, Willard, thus attempted to force the issue.(64) Yet the United States was an exception. The other Allied powers, led by Britain, had concluded that it was inadvisable to bring direct pressure on the Spanish government.

The British line was not entirely motivated by pure altruism, but was the result of long and deep consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of possible Spanish intervention in the war. In January 1917, Jocelyn Grant, the Military Attache in the British Embassy at Madrid, completed a long and thorough investigation into the state of the Spanish army. He had established contacts throughout 1916 with artillery officers and members of the General Staff. He concluded that it was pitiful.

Grant observed that transportation appeared to be lacking, equipment was very poor, there was an acute shortage of rifles and ammunition despite recent purchases in the United States, and there were hardly any modern aeroplanes or heavy artillery. It was therefore difficult to believe that the Spanish army would ever be in a condition to threaten anybody except possibly the Portuguese. (65)

Two months later in a joint note concerning Spain's value as an ally, the General Staff and the Admiralty agreed with Grant on the poor shape of the Spanish army which was compared with that of Romania. Yet it was stressed that Spain enjoyed some important advantages. She possessed some of the largest mineral resources in Europe. Furthermore, Spanish intervention could represent for the Entente an increase of half a million active troops and four million in the reserve. They had very little combat experience and lacked competent senior officers. Nevertheless, Spain was not in direct contact with enemy territory; consequently there was no danger of her being overrun and troops could be safely trained before engaging in combat. (66)

The British Foreign Office was more negative in its conclusions. The entrance of Spain into the war on the side of the Allies was regarded as a distinctly mixed blessing. They saw the disadvantages of her cooperation as outweighing the advantages. There were indeed some important ideological and economic contributions that Spain could offer. The decision of such an intensely Catholic country in the world would necessarily influence the feelings of Catholics throughout Europe and

America. Germany would lose her strong commercial position in Spain which would mean important opportunities for British enterprise. Of more direct assistance in the prosecution of the war was the fact that the peninsula would no longer be used as a possible base of supplies for the enemy and the interned German ships in Spanish ports would be freed to carry Allied trade. Yet the Foreign Office believed that the conditions which Spain was likely to impose in return for her assistance meant the disadvantages of her collaboration outweighed the advantages. The Spanish demands amounted to her demands for Tangier, Gibraltar and a free hand in Portugal. With regard to Tangier it was claimed that Spain was quite incapable of governing or developing the city efficiently. She was deemed unable to hold her own territory there and her rule spelt corruption and incompetence. Moreover, British diplomats feared that if France was to agree to Tangier now being Spanish, there would be created a perpetual future danger of France picking a quarrel with Spain in order to seize Tangier and even Spanish Morocco. This would nullify all the elaborate precautions taken in 1904 to exclude France from the Northern coast of Morocco. As regards a possible exchange of Gibraltar for Ceuta, the British Foreign Office felt that the Spanish city would be worthless if certain surrounding hills which were at present included in the international zone of Tangier were not included in the deal. It would require the assent of France for them to be included in a British Ceuta. However, while the war in Europe lasted, there was a chance of procuring French agreement without having to pay an exorbitant price. Later on that would probably be impossible. An

interdepartmental committee, under the Chairmanship of Lord Curzon, with naval, military and diplomatic representatives, had been appointed in early April 1917 to report on the subject. Until that committee reached a conclusion any discussion on Gibraltar should be postponed. Finally, concerning Portugal, the solution of linking that country to Spain by some sort of treaty was not considered detrimental to British interests for Portuguese misgovernment was a persistent source of anxiety. Nevertheless, it was also noted that however exasperating the Portuguese administration might be, there was no avoiding the fact that Portugal was Britain's oldest ally and therefore it would be a gross breach of faith to promise Spain a free hand in that country. Nor could the Allies, who were fighting for the rights of small nations, stand by and let conditions be imposed on Portugal, without themselves being pilloried in the eyes of the world. The Foreign Office was also disturbed that Spain might use the opportunity to refer to the assurances given by the former Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, to Alfonso XIII when visiting England in July 1913 that Britain would not oppose Spanish intervention in the neighbouring country. Such a revelation at that stage of the war could be disastrous. After considering all the pros and cons, the final conclusion reached by the Foreign Office was that on balance the advantage lay in Spain remaining neutral.(67)

The final instructions to Vaughan were that the War Cabinet approved of Spain moving towards the Allied camp, but no territorial promises should be made and in particular the subject

of Gibraltar should not be mentioned. They encouraged the British Secretary to come up with any suggestions. 68) He wrote back insisting that if the "Tangier bait" was judiciously handled it might prove effective and if this was not sufficient an offer could be made to extend Spanish Guinea northwards to include the coast opposite Fernando Poo and to restore the Caroline Islands. Vaughan stressed that the note which the Spanish government was about to send to Germany would be crucial. He described the Spanish Prime Minister as a desperate and isolated politician who admitted that the continuous sinking of Spanish vessels and the prevention of external trade had put him in an impossible position, leaving him with the only alternative of breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany. Yet he found himself the target of a vicious and unbearable *Germanophile* campaign and was continually asking the French Ambassador for help to win the battle for public opinion as alone he could not trust the attitude of the army or the evolution of domestic politics.(69)

The Count had reason to be worried. His foreign policy had been receiving overwhelming support from unwanted quarters. Apart from Republican leaders, the Socialist leader Pablo Iglesias in a plea, as unexpected as it was passionate, had demanded in an editorial in his newspaper that the duty of the government was to break off diplomatic relations with Germany.(70) This could only contribute to the general paranoia among the ruling elites who felt that the Allies had played an important role in the events in Russia. The Catholic *El Debate* even noted that the current British Ambassador at Madrid had been

in Portugal at the time of the revolution there which brought about the downfall of the Braganza dynasty.(71) The *Germanophile* press hammered on continually that there was an interventionist plot led by those who were trafficking with the wealth of the country against the will of the people who wanted neutrality and peace above all. War would only mean famine, ruin and dislocation. The pro-German newspapers even suggested that France and Britain were to blame for the sinking of Spanish vessels. German children were starving due to the Anglo-French blockade and Germany had therefore been forced to respond in kind. Some alleged that it had not been proved that the *San Fulgencio* had been sunk by a German submarine and others that Germany was entitled to sink it since it was transporting British coal. All of them pledged to fight to the death the "contraband party" in Spain which in order to satisfy its economic ambitions was seeking to drag the country into the European nightmare. They were largely successful in giving an impression of patriotism and impartiality as they claimed that they stood for the best for the country; namely, peace and neutrality in the European conflict. In contrast, the belligerent editorials in the pro-Allied press appeared to many to be part of a foreign sponsored campaign which could well cost the lives of thousands of Spaniards.(72)

In addition to losing the war for public opinion, Romanones' strategy suffered a serious set-back when nearly all the main dynastic leaders spoke against the departure from strict neutrality. In his own party, the other Liberal leader, the Marquis of Alhucemas, and the Speaker of the lower chamber,

Miguel Villanueva, declared that the continuity of neutrality was essential for the life of the country. The Conservative leaders Dato and Maura also expressed similar ideas. The only exception was Joaquín Sánchez de Toca, a former Speaker of the Upper House and several times Conservative Minister, who argued that it was not Spain but Germany who had broken neutrality. The two final shattering blows arrived firstly with the publication of a series of editorials in the officers' newspaper *La Correspondencia Militar*, which in a clear allusion to the United States, warned against joining forces with those who in 1898 took advantage of the weakness of Spain to steal its last colonies; and finally when the Monarch himself in a speech to the troops in Leganés (Madrid) confirmed that the intention of Spain was to remain neutral. (73)

A depressed Romanones confessed on 18 April to the Ambassador at Vienna: "*Public opinion is every day more hostile to any protest against Germany's behaviour...behaviour that it even tries to justify...this feeling is shared by many members of my party...*". (74) In the Liberal leader's private papers there is a draft version of the note which should have been delivered to Germany. The Count wrote that in September 1916 he had briefed the Monarch on his intentions to move towards the Allied camp. Then there is a complete list of the most infamous outrages committed by Germany, ranging from espionage to attacks on the merchant fleet. Romanones concluded that Germany should be notified without delay that the next sinking would mean the rupture of diplomatic relations. German interests in Spain would

then be taken over in order to compensate for the country's losses. An active policy would be adopted against German agents abusing Spanish hospitality and relations with the Allies should be strengthened. (75) The Prime Minister's plan seems to have been to send a forceful message to Germany demanding an explanation for the sinking of Spanish ships. If as expected she refused to modify her submarine blockade, he would resign and make his policy a question of confidence and so his return to power would mean an immediate rupture of relations. In fact, there was never a note. On 19 April the King entrusted the Marquis of Alhucemas with the formation of a new Liberal cabinet. The same day another Spanish vessel, *Tom*, heading towards Spanish jurisdictional waters, had been sunk. The *Germanophile* press had finally collected the big prize, the head of the Prime Minister. To add insult to injury, one of them pictured the Count in a cartoon with his heart pierced by a sword named neutral press. (76)

Romanones' interventionist policy had brought about his downfall. In April 1917 he met the opposition of the Restoration's ruling elites. Court, upper classes, Church and King had always been ideologically closer to the Central Powers than to the Allies. The revolution in Russia confirmed their belief that the country could not take the risk of intervening in a major conflict. They concluded that with a restless working class, a reformist Catalan bourgeoisie and an unhappy officer class, it was madness even to consider entry into a war for which, after all, Spain was neither militarily nor economically prepared. Romanones, as the leading *Turno* politician committed

to more active intervention, was forced to resign. Henceforth strict neutrality would be maintained to the end regardless of the price in terms of lives and national honour.

5.- The hot summer of 1917:

The year 1917 proved to be a watershed in Europe. The Revolution in Russia in March and the entry of the United States into the war one month later transformed a conflict between two imperialist blocs into an all-out ideological clash. Such events heralded the arrival of a new era: one of political renovation and mass democracy. The American President, Woodrow Wilson, was regarded by many across national boundaries as the best hope for the foundation of a new democratic world order. The proclamation of his fourteen points in January 1918 seemed to justify those hopes. Freedom of navigation and trade, the abolition of secret diplomacy, self-determination for national minorities and the foundation of a League of Nations to guarantee peace were some of the ideas put forward by the new American diplomacy. However, running parallel to the political offensive initiated by Wilson lay the reality of social distress and economic hardship which could hardly be resolved by his altruistic principles.

The year 1917 was a pivotal year. Mounting domestic tensions in Europe triggered a tide of violence which cut the continent off for ever from the old world of pre-July 1914. Mutinies among French troops after the failure of the bloody Nivelle offensive, the increase of labour militancy in Britain, anti-war demonstrations and creation of workers' councils in Germany, food riots and the erection of barricades in Northern Italy and the triumph of the Bolshevik bid for power in Russia revealed to the different governing elites how their hegemony had

been effectively eroded. Henceforth, they would have to face the political awakening of the masses and their demands for social and economic reform. Furthermore, the consolidation of bolshevism in Russia and the appeal of Lenin's ideas among the dispossessed and despairing masses triggered off a period of political militancy and class struggle which surpassed in intensity that initiated in 1789.

Spain did not escape that fate. The crisis which was to rock the foundations of the Spanish regime represented the regional version of the general crisis which was engulfing the other European states. The Romanones cabinet was to a large extent responsible for unleashing the chain of events which led to the hot summer of 1917. Nevertheless, it only accelerated a process which was inevitable. A backward and oligarchical system which relied on patronage, political passivity and electoral falsification had guaranteed for forty years the undisputed supremacy of a group of professional politicians representing the interests of the financial and landowning oligarchies. That political order of notables could not adapt itself to a changing world characterized by popular mobilization, economic transformation and social expectations. In 1917 the industrial bourgeoisie, army and labour movement rebelled against the status quo. They had in common their rejection of the Canovite settlement, yet they lacked co-ordination and common purpose in terms of strategy and objectives. Thus they managed mortally to wound the status quo but not destroy it. The ruling elites had lost their hegemony in society but were still able to exploit the

divisions between the opposing forces and find solutions to guarantee their survival. However, this demanded a high price. The *Turno* formula which had been the backbone of the Restoration Monarchy had to be abandoned and the monopoly of political power hitherto enjoyed by dynastic politicians was definitely lost. They remained in government but only by relying more openly on the military and widening the ruling oligarchy to incorporate the industrial bourgeoisie. The constitutional regime survived the onslaughts of 1917 but what emerged was a patched up and ailing political system. The old political class had largely lost their room for manoeuvre and were soon to discover to what extent they had mortgaged their future to the goodwill of those with whom they had made a pact.

5.1.- The disintegration of the Liberal party:

The dynastic parties of the Restoration period were characterized by internal factionalism. Their artificial foundations and lack of a coherent programme prevented the development of proper party organization or discipline. Each party was led by several notables who through kickbacks, patronage, nepotism and administrative graft had managed to muster a sizeable number of loyal deputies. The leader was generally the one with the greatest following and influence. In the event of an unresolved dispute, it was commonly accepted that the politician appointed by the Monarch to form a government would be the leader of the party. The Liberal party had always been prone to rivalries and squabbles. Until his death in 1903

it had been led by Práxedes Mateo Sagasta. A pragmatic man and skilful orator, he had agreed in 1876 that his party would alternate in power with the other dynastic group, the Conservatives led by Antonio Cánovas. Under these two statesmen, the so-called *Turno Pacífico* was consolidated and enjoyed its most successful period. Sagasta was Prime Minister five times. A master in the art of electoral manipulation, under his leadership corruption and *amiguismo* flourished. He avoided any serious challenge to his position by permitting cronies to loot the state. Not without reason was he nicknamed the "old shepherd". Finding a successor to his post proved to be a difficult matter. Several bigwigs representing different factions claimed the inheritance and no-one seemed to have the upper hand until Alfonso XIII threw his weight behind José Canalejas, the young and promising star of the Liberal-Democratic faction in 1910. Canalejas' assassination two years later paved the way for a new era of party in-fighting. The shrewd Count Romanones emerged temporarily successful after the leader of Canalejas' faction, García Prieto, Marquis of Alhucemas, reluctantly accepted the Count's leadership.

Manuel García Prieto had been rewarded with the title of Marquis of Alhucemas for his role as Foreign Minister in 1912 in the conclusion of the Treaty with France which divided Morocco into two Protectorates. He was an amiable and kind man, whose political methods seemed honourable by comparison with Romanones' manoeuvres. As son-in-law of the historical Liberal leader, M ntero Ríos, and member of the board of several leading banks,

he had risen rapidly to the top of the party. Yet he was a weak politician, easily dominated by other party notables and not the strong person to lead the country through a difficult period. His weakness would prove fatal for the constitutional order in 1923.

On 19 April, 1917 the Marquis was entrusted by the Monarch with the task of creating a new Liberal cabinet. Four of Romanones' Ministers, including Santiago Alba who continued at the head of the Treasury, remained in office. Alhucemas' plan was to diffuse the tension that had characterized the last months of the Count's time in office. Consequently he immediately published a statement pledging to maintain the same strict neutrality as was upheld by his predecessors in office while adhering faithfully to all the Treaties to which Spain was a party. He also undertook to return the country to normality by restoring the constitutional guarantees which had been suspended by Romanones in March as a result of the UGT-CNT manifesto and to adopt urgent measures to deal with the *Crisis de Subsistencias*. (1) On 22 April constitutional guarantees were duly restored, the Socialist *Casa del Pueblo* was opened and a few days later the useless *Junta de Subsistencias* was abolished. It was too little too late. The Marquis of Alhucemas failed miserably to halt the irreversible crisis of the state. The new government had hardly got onto its feet when a tide of unresolved ideological and socio-economic problems swept it away. Alhucemas would preside over the disintegration of his party and the polarization of politics. His administration would last only fifty three days.

The international question became a thorn in the flesh of the new government. Until early June 1917 the neutrality debate remained a crucial issue. Romanones' pro-Allied position had been the main cause of his downfall. His replacement by Alhucemas had been greeted with enthusiasm or anger by the pro-German and pro-Entente press respectively. The French media described it as a victory for Prince Ratibor and his campaign.(2) The Allied Chancelleries regarded the new administration as pro-German. Several facts supported that impression: the Alhucemas cabinet refused to ratify an agreement with Britain for the export of coal; several interventionist meetings were banned; submarine activities in Spanish waters increased; German conditions for the return of Spanish ships blockaded in British ports were accepted. Moreover, the diplomatic note sent to Germany in protest at the sinking of the *San Fulgencio* and other Spanish vessels was deemed extremely mild. According to Western diplomats, the Spanish note seemed a dignified and firm response as far as the last two paragraphs. The government expressed its inescapable duty to protest against the overbearing attitude of Germany and her methods of aggression against a weaker state. Yet towards the end the note changed dramatically in tone. Instead of the ultimatum that Romanones would have delivered, Alhucemas stated his belief that Germany would welcome the neutrality of Spain and would in future refrain from attacking any more Spanish vessels.(3) Germany was not slow to respond: even as the note was en route to Berlin, the Spanish steamer *Triana* was torpedoed near the coast of Alicante. The impunity and the boldness of submarine outrages peaked in early May when in a single day two French, one

Greek and three Norwegian ships were sunk in Spanish territorial waters in the Cantabrian sea. The French authorities warned the Spanish government that unless decisive measures were rapidly taken to safeguard naval traffic in its waters, France would take over that responsibility. On May 25 it was announced that two Spanish warships had been sent to the Cantabrian coast.(4)

It is hardly surprising that the Allies considered the Alhucemas cabinet as a German success, especially when it was closely compared with the direction followed by its predecessor. It would be wrong however to describe it as a pro-German government. Alhucemas was careful enough not to include Miguel Villanueva and Niceto Alcalá Zamora in his administration. Villanueva, Speaker of the lower chamber of parliament and former Foreign Minister, and Alcalá Zamora, a former minister and editor of the German-financed *El Día*, constituted the two outstanding characters in the Liberal party who held the most openly *Germanophile* views. Indeed, only one Minister chosen by Alhucemas, Julio Burrell, in charge of Education under Romanones and now at the Interior Ministry under Alhucemas, came into that category. It is perhaps more accurate to suggest that the international issue was the excuse sought by different notables to get rid of Romanones and his chicanery. Thus the position of the new cabinet represented a return to a more balanced neutrality that, taking into account the *Germanophile* campaign against Romanones and his pro-Allied line, might easily be regarded as a triumph for the German cause in Spain.

Yet Romanones was not a man to leave quietly. His resignation message was as shocking as it was unexpected. At four o'clock on the day of his fall, the Count handed a statement to the press in which he explained the causes of his departure from office:

"It is my absolute belief that the defence of Spanish lives and interests cannot be fulfilled with efficiency within the limitations of our present international policy...it imposes upon me the duty as leader and patriot to write this document and submit my unconditional resignation...

I have always believed that the only international policy which could enhance the position of Spain in the world was the one initiated in 1902...The outbreak of the war interrupted that policy, but it cannot and must not be changed...The evolution of events has confirmed my belief...a few weeks ago in the Cortes when discussing the German submarine campaign I declared that the life of our country would not be interrupted, now I declare that it is in serious danger of being interrupted...

...another consideration...Spain aspires to the leadership of the moral confederation of all the nations of our blood...This cannot be accomplished in this decisive moment if Spain and her sisters appear divorced...

I cannot honestly be in charge of the government of this country without matching my convictions by my actions...I loyally recognized that a great part of public opinion, including members of my own party, do not share my ideas...

It is therefore impossible for one who deeply feels his position as a liberal and bears the responsibilities of government in a democracy, to rule against public opinion. I do not share that opinion but faced by its opposition I surrender...".(5)

Romanones' message was an exercise in subtlety. Despite all his attempts to disguise it, he confirmed that notwithstanding all his professions of neutrality he had never believed in it. He revealed the factional dissent that had existed in his own party. This was hardly a surprise. The fact that four Ministers had remained in government confirmed the impression that the cabinet had been split by the Count's decision to send an ultimatum to Germany. Four had been loyal to their Prime Minister and resigned with him, four had opposed him and had stayed in office with Alhucemas. Yet to all those who could read between the lines the note constituted clear evidence that Romanones had not resigned but had been dismissed by the Crown. Luis Araquistáin correctly pointed out that no one who knew the political mechanisms of the Restoration system could believe that Romanones had resigned due to the hostility of public opinion. There was no real democracy in Spain. Elections did not return governments, rather governments made elections. The Monarch was the pivot of the whole process as it was he who appointed a Prime Minister who then enjoyed total autonomy to rig the ballot. Government crises were not produced by movements of opinion, rather they originated at the top and were resolved inevitably with the active involvement of the Crown. It was,

moreover, entirely normal for a Prime Minister to remain in office without a clear majority in the Cortes and with hostile factions in his own party as long as he possessed the confidence of the King. Araquistáin concluded that public opinion did not count or otherwise the unpopular Moroccan adventure would have been ended a long time ago. Moreover, it was ridiculous to describe the *Germanophile* press and the Court clique as public opinion. Consequently Romanones had been forced to stand down by the only person with the power to make him, Alfonso XIII.(6) The British Military Attache, Jocelyn Grant, shared that view. On 5 May, after meeting the King he wrote that he was convinced that the Spanish Monarch, under the influence of an almost entirely *Austrophile* Court and the information provided by Colonel Kalle, the German Military Attache, had decided to withdraw his confidence from Romanones when the latter declared in favour of sending an ultimatum.(7)

The statement had a poisonous effect on an already polarized society. The pro-Allied press fully endorsed Romanones' position on foreign policy. *España* and *El Socialista* denounced the activities of German agents who had managed to bring down the former Liberal Cabinet with the support of reactionary politicians and the Monarch. They warned the King that, by becoming the last bulwark against the country taking a pro-Allied line, he was preventing the triumph of democracy in Spain and risking his throne.(8) The *Germanophile* newspapers were furious. The most important Catholic journal, *El Debate*, compared Romanones' resignation message to leaving a bomb under the

armchair of one's heir. It argued that the Count had no right to publish a memorandum which might provoke diplomatic complications, neither had he any right to compromise the Monarch who had favoured him in the past with his confidence. He had committed a political disloyalty in confessing that during his premiership he was conspiring against that neutrality of which, on coming to power, he had declared himself to be the staunchest defender. The Austrian-financed *La Nación* called it a monument of perfidy. The Carlist *El Correo Español* described it as a legacy of suicide. Even the neutralist newspaper of the Conservative party, *La Epoca*, called it a crushing legacy for his successor and an invitation to civil war.

In the spring of 1917 the debate around the international question reached its peak momentarily overtaking the *Crisis de Subsistencias* as the main issue on the agenda and acquiring a frightening dimension. In this context, the manifesto issued by the Reformist Party was very significant. This group represented the moderate wing of Republicanism whose constituency was the progressive middle class and the intelligentsia. Reformism, under the leadership of the veteran Asturian politician Melquiades Alvarez, had accepted the Monarchist regime and in turn had expected to work from within so as to transform it into a genuinely modern democracy. The outbreak of the European war placed them in the pro-Allied camp but, unlike Lerroix's Radicals, their arguments were always marked by extreme caution. For the first time, in April 1917 the Reformist party went out of its way to demand the rupture of diplomatic relations

with Germany. In the Reformist manifesto Romanones' resignation message was praised and called a clear vision of the future. It also noted that at such a critical moment in which Spain was on the verge of separation from her sister nations of the Latin world and her economic life under attack, the maintenance of neutrality meant the most shameful surrender of dignity and honour. The Great War had become a struggle of ideas: liberty defended by the Western Powers and autocracy by the Central Powers. It would be preferable for Spain to be on the side of a vanquished France and England than with a victorious Germany and Austria.(9) The *Germanophile* reply appeared in the right-wing *ABC* two days later. The conservative newspaper said that millions of Spaniards would a thousand times prefer a civil war rather than passively and selfishly collaborate in the ruin of Spain. The *Maurista La Acción* equated *Lerrouxismo*, *Romanonismo* and Reformism. They were all one and the same, part of a foreign-orchestrated campaign whose objective was to drag Spain into the conflict. It exhorted Spaniards to be prepared to counteract this wicked manoeuvre.(10)

The debate around the neutrality issue also raged inside the labour movement. The old Socialist leader Pablo Iglesias made clear his views and those of his party in *El Socialista* on 28 April: the question could no longer be postponed, the moment had arrived to break off diplomatic relations with Germany. García Cortés, former editor of the paper and member of the *Junta de Subsistencias* was still permitted to voice the opinion of the minority of the PSOE which was opposed

to workers taking sides in a capitalist war. Yet in the same pages Luis Araquistáin responded that Socialism should be in the vanguard of the struggle for democracy. Thus there could not be peace without first crushing German militarism.(11)

At the same time, the CNT organ, *Solidaridad Obrera*, was arguing that intervention would play into the hands of those interests represented in Spain by ship-owners, profiteers and, with a clear allusion to Lerroux, a few sham Republican politicians.(12) The Anarcho-Syndicalists were extremely careful not to write anything which might offend the Socialists and damage their unity pact. So the Catalan and most important branch of the CNT, the *Confederación General del Trabajo* (CRT), decided to send an obscure militant, José Burrobio, to Madrid with the task of informing the Socialists of the risks which they were incurring for the labour alliance by pressing ahead with their interventionist stance. His trip was a waste of time. When on 17 May he met the National Committee of the UGT he was told by Largo Caballero that Socialists, regardless of the CNT's objections, would continue to express their opinions.(13) The international question therefore became a growing obstacle for the successful continuity of the alliance between the two workers' organizations. In the second half of May, they were adopting opposing positions. On the one hand, the National Committee of the CNT published an article in which, while stressing its belief that labour unity should be preserved above anything else, criticized the Socialists for abandoning internationalism. On the other hand, the UGT-PSOE confirmed its commitment to the

pro-Allied camp. The PSOE's Madrid branch rejected García Cortés' motion condemning capitalism rather than Germany as the cause of the war and calling for an end to the alliance with the Republicans. Instead they endorsed a proposal demanding rupture with Germany and support for the existing commitments with the Republicans. In a meeting of the UGT's National Committee, Pablo Iglesias went even further. He suggested that the trade union should follow the party's lead and stage a vote to debate the neutrality issue. The veteran leader added that Socialists should offer their total support to any administration prepared to break off diplomatic relations with the Central Powers, although this should not jeopardize their right to oppose the government over domestic policy. It was finally agreed to summon an extraordinary congress to discuss the international issue on 1 July.(14) In fact, the evolution of events was to preclude that congress taking place and was to shift the focus of attention away from the international question to the domestic situation. The Socialist leadership was determined to go ahead with its pro-Allied campaign and seemed to value its alliance with the Republican parties more than that with its Anarcho-Syndicalist counterparts. Iglesias and the others had never had much enthusiasm for joining forces with the CNT and had only agreed to do so as a result of pressure from below and on the condition that they played a leading role. Thus it did not appear to greatly concern them that, if as a consequence of their pro-Allied stance, the labour pact was being endangered. It would have been thus in the hands of the CNT's National Committee to take a final decision. In 1917 both the CRT and the CNT was still

controlled by Syndicalists like Salvador Seguí whose main stress was on the strengthening of the organization and on trade union activity and were prepared to collaborate with the Socialists. Yet their position was beginning to be undermined by a more purist and combative anarchist sector that profoundly rejected any links with the reformists of the UGT. It is thus difficult to conclude that, had the more pragmatic Syndicalist leaders been prepared to follow the Socialist lead, if only for the sake of workers' unity, they would have managed to overcome the opposition of the more radical Anarchists.

In the spring of 1917 the divide between the two Spains was at its widest. In the middle, a bewildered Alhucemas continued to behave as if nothing was happening. In the space of one month two mass gatherings took place in Madrid's bull-ring. The first one on 29 April was addressed by Antonio Maura and mainly rallied *Germanophile* members of the *Maurista* movement and people of conservative leanings. The response came on 27 May when the most outstanding Republican and pro-Allied elements spoke to their followers. Symbolically enough, the second gathering was financed by Count Romanones.(15) Although representing opposite ideologies, both groups could claim to possess a real mass following either on the right or the left of the political spectrum. Moreover, they had something in common: their hostility towards and rejection of the existing status quo.

Maura's speech was once more misinterpreted by his followers. Indeed it could be viewed as an endorsement of the

official neutrality, but as had been the case with his two previous speeches he refused to take an openly anti-Entente line as many *Mauristas* would have liked. He declared that no politician would dare to drag the country into the European war. Overlooking the many German outrages against the Spanish merchant fleet, he even claimed that Spain had received no offence from Germany. Yet Maura insisted once more that Spain's cultural and economic affinities inevitably linked her destiny with that of the Western Powers and, referring to the contentious issues of Gibraltar and Tangier, he suggested that Britain and France had not behaved decently with Spain in the past and that now was the ideal time to correct that and consolidate the friendship between France, Britain and Spain. (16)

Maura's speech was badly received by the French press who described it as a monument of spite and rancour and the opinion of the leader of a party whose pro-German sympathies had long been known. (17) Yet the veteran Conservative leader had something different in mind. He believed that he had made not an anti-Allied speech but a reminder of Spanish claims and a hint to the Allies of the price they would have to pay if they expected Spain to throw in her lot on their side. However, the principal target of his message was neither the Allies nor his own followers, but the Crown. Maura's address was a clear bid for office after eight years of political ostracism. It was a balancing act in which he tried to present himself in a moment of extreme national polarization as the apostle of national salvation. He was presenting himself as the best solution left

in a monarchist camp plagued by petty squabbles and personal rivalries. The gravity of the international conflict and the bankruptcy of the two ruling dynastic parties were leaving the nation defenceless.

Maura's scheme backfired. He hardly pleased anyone. The *Germanophile* press underlined the commitment of the old statesman to neutrality. Nevertheless, those who examined his words carefully soon found flagrant contradictions within it. *La Epoca* asked how it was possible to maintain neutrality and at the same time move closer to the Western camp. *La Correspondencia de España* welcomed the pro-Allied words of the *Caudillo* of a mostly *Germanophile* party but wondered why the Allies should give away Gibraltar and Tangier for nothing. *España* and *El Liberal* coincided in calling the speech a "decoy" in which Maura had sought not to side with anybody but with all and had failed because nobody was with him. (18)

One month later, all the heavy-weights of Republicanism rallied their followers at the same bull-ring. The most popular were the Radical and Reformist leaders Alejandro Lerroux and Melquiades Alvarez, the famous philosopher and novelist Miguel de Unamuno, the editor of the Republican *El País* Roberto Castrovido and the Galician Republican journalist Alvaro de Albornoz. The Socialists declined to take part but expressed their support. It was a clearly emotive gathering with white banners on which the names of all the Spanish vessels sunk by Germany appeared painted in red. Above all it was a spectacle in

which Republicanism and the Allied cause were inextricably linked. All the orators declared that neutrality was not a valid position due to German conduct. Those defending neutrality were accused of opposing progress and attempting to keep the country feeble, backward and decrepit. Only by joining forces with the democracies could Spain become a democracy herself and take an active part in the construction of a new world order. The key moment of the event took place when Melquiades Alvarez virtually gave the Monarchy a final ultimatum: either Alfonso XIII made sure he did not obstruct a more pro-Allied line or the regime would undergo the same fate as those in Greece and Russia. The meeting was closed with the reading of three conclusions: firstly, Spain could no longer remain isolated and indifferent in the face of the international strife; secondly, for the sake of her own interests, Spain's international policy must incline to the side of the Allies; and thirdly, in view of the outrages committed by Germany against her neutrality, Spain must break off diplomatic relations with that country and accept the consequences of a position which Spain was obliged to take in order to defend her dignity. (19)

The pro-Allied gathering seemed to identify the cause of the Allies with that of Republicans and Socialists in Spain. Of course, the outstanding exception was Count Romanones whose mouthpiece *El Diario Universal* called the event an example of mobilization and citizenship. The occasion was not wasted by the pro-German press which accused the Western Powers of encouraging revolution. There were even hints that the British Ambassador

Hardinge's mission in Spain was to organize an insurrection against the regime as his counterpart at Petrograd Buchanan had done a few months earlier. (20) A Conservative and Monarchist like Hardinge was appalled. Since the outbreak of the war he had been embarrassed by the fact that the forces against the regime were also the most supportive and friendly towards the Entente. After the pro-Allied gathering he feared that Republicans were using the debate on Spanish neutrality as a pretext for an attack on the throne. In early June he wrote:

"It would be very unfortunate if the sympathies of our friends on the extreme left should succeed in identifying the Allied governments and their cause with the domestic aims of Republicanism...We are in danger of losing the good will of many influential classes and politicians now well disposed to us if the Germans can succeed in persuading them that our victory will imply the triumph here as in Russia of those forces of Socialism and anarchy...to counteract that effect I have published a letter in La Epoca...". (21)

In that article, named "A Diplomatist friendly to the Allies", Hardinge did his best to dispel any idea that the Allies were behind subversion and insurrection in Spain. His message was crystal clear. The British diplomat pointed out that of the eleven countries fighting as Allies seven were monarchies. So it was wrong to identify the Allied cause with that of Republicanism. It was nonsense to present the British Monarch and

his government as fanatical Republicans. Moreover, it would not be to the Allies' advantage to promote a revolution in Spain which might well end up in a civil war. The chief service that Spain rendered to the Western Powers was the sale of her products, especially minerals. A revolutionary strike and the ensuing closing of the mines at Peñarroya or Río Tinto would therefore be the last thing that the Entente would wish to happen. The conclusion was that they wanted an orderly and prosperous Spain and not one torn apart by internal strife.(22) One month later and in line with the intention of presenting a moderate image in Spain the British suspended their financial aid to the left-wing magazine *España*. The magazine would be rescued by the French who did not share the political scruples of their allies.

The international problem probably gave Alhucemas more than one sleepless night. The hostility between German and Allied supporters was getting out of hand. After the Republican gathering, the Prime Minister decided to ban any future public demonstration in which the war was to be discussed. Yet the German submarines continued their criminal activities. In late May two more Spanish vessels, *Patricio* and *Erega*, were sunk near Spanish waters. There were clashes outside the German consulate in Saragossa. The fatal blow to the government, however, came from a different quarter: the military barracks.

A few weeks before the fall of the Romanones administration, the Minister of War, General Luque, had ordered

the Captain General of Barcelona, General Echague, to take measures to ensure the dissolution of the *Juntas de Defensa*. Echague subsequently reported that he had successfully completed his task. In fact, the officers' trade unions, although officially dissolved, continued their activities clandestinely and probably with the knowledge of a sympathetic Echague. The Spanish ruling class in general and King Alfonso in particular were terrified by the outcome of the Russian Revolution. The state of shock in which the Monarch found himself in the spring of 1917 was perfectly revealed in his conversations with foreign diplomats. Over and over Alfonso warned the British and French Ambassadors of the dangers looming in the future if the revolution in Russia was not nipped in the bud. He was particularly devastated by the fact that the Tsar had been deserted by the nobility and the imperial army.(23) Observing the increasing polarization and radicalization of the country, the last thing that Alfonso could permit was the existence of military trade unions whose leaders talked about ending royal favouritism and cleansing the army. The image of the Russian Soviets was also present in his mind. So in this state of frenzied panic the King put pressure on his new Minister of War, General Aguilera, to make sure that once and for all the *Juntas* were disbanded. Romanones confirmed Alfonso's concern in his memoirs: "*His Majesty had a real obsession with the Juntas and, badly advised, believed that with energetic measures such as arrests and court martials the problem could be solved. A docile Aguilera, lacking political expertise, was prepared to carry out his orders to the last detail.*"(24)

They could hardly have suspected the degree of organization and solidarity that the *Juntas* had attained. Confronting them head on was to prove a mistake. Such would be the impact of the officers' rebellion on a discontented and troubled society, that the international issue which had dominated the agenda for the last year, overshadowed by the domestic situation, was now left aside and would not re-emerge with intensity until the summer of 1918. The seeds of polarization planted during the Romanones cabinet finally germinated. The crisis of hegemony of a moribund and discredited political system could no longer be concealed. The thoroughly eroded Canovite edifice began to crumble.

On 25 May Colonel Benito Márquez and the other leaders of the Central *Junta* at Barcelona were summoned by General Alfau and ordered to disband the movement in twenty-four hours. When the following day they refused, an unhappy Alfau was left with no alternative but to arrest them for insubordination. Immediately a new Provisional *Junta* was set up in Barcelona and officers in all the peninsular garrisons, in a symbolic act of solidarity with the leading *Junteros* at Barcelona, presented themselves to their Commanders for imprisonment. A hesitant Alfau was recalled to Madrid and replaced as Captain General of Catalonia by the more energetic General José Marina. Yet the fuse of rebellion had been ignited and its fire could not be extinguished. (25) The ruthless determination and immense strength of the *Junteros* were formidable. The local *Juntas* at Valladolid and Saragossa cabled Barcelona enquiring whether they should

detain the train carrying Marina to his destination. Then when Marina arrived in Barcelona on 30 May he found himself totally isolated in a hostile atmosphere where no-one was prepared to obey his orders. According to Márquez these were to shoot the leaders of the rebellion.(26) An increasingly worried King had simultaneously sent his friend and confidant the Commandant of Artillery Foronda to Barcelona on a conciliatory mission to calm the situation. The press in Madrid still had hardly any idea of what was occurring in the Catalan capital.

The first day of June 1917 was later hailed by army officers as a glorious page in modern history and regarded by Márquez as the moment which could have seen the beginning of a new Spain.(27) Events were to prove that it represented in the long-term a decisive step towards the military dictatorship which seized power in September 1923. On 1 June the *Junteros* delivered a devastating blow to the authority of the government when they circulated two manifestos. The first was a long and tedious exposition of the aims of the *Juntas*. They argued in regenerationist rhetoric that the military problem was just a part of the greater problem affecting the nation. They accused the ruling oligarchy of having only served the interests of the big *caciques* and of leading Spain with its misgovernment to moral decline and economic ruin. They insisted they were not moved by political leanings or objectives. According to the *Junteros*, in the army there were followers of nearly all the political parties and equally there were neutralists and interventionists, *Francophiles* and *Germanophiles*. Yet as a united body representing

the corps, the *Juntas de Defensa* were above parties and divisions and their aim was simply to work for the regeneration of the country.(28) The desire for change, renovation and the cleansing of politics was shared by most Spaniards. Thus the manifesto was bound to be welcomed in all political quarters but those of the governing elites. There was however a latent danger. The army was indicating its rejection of politics and once more taking over the role of defender of the 'sacred values' of the nation. Nevertheless, it was still too early to tell in June 1917 which side the army would take, that of reform and democratization or that of regeneration from above and authoritarianism.

More shocking was the second manifesto. In all but name it was an ultimatum. The language was extremely respectful and marked throughout by allusions to patriotism and to the sacrifices undergone by the army. Yet, according to the statement, discontent in the armed corps could no longer be contained. That discontent sprang from three sources: firstly, moral reasons due to internal dissatisfaction and poor military organization; secondly, professional motives produced by the lack of material and equipment; and thirdly, economic hardship caused by the officers' low pay. Additionally, there existed much favouritism and injustice in the selection and promotion procedure. The officers had therefore been forced to create the *Juntas de Defensa* to seek redress for all their grievances. The response of the authorities had been to meet the fairness of their demands with the arrest of their leaders. Before resorting to other methods, the *Juntas* gave the government a twelve hour

deadline to release those in prison who should then be allowed to return to their posts, to give guarantees of no future reprisals and to recognize the existence of the *Juntas* by the approval of their statutes. They promised that they did not have political objectives but there were blatant threats that unless that their conditions were promptly met the cabinet would be faced by a military insurrection. (29)

The ultimatum of 1 June amounted to a full-scale coup, a *pronunciamiento*. In fact, the proof that this was no bluff is that there was a coup organized for the following day. The Regional *Juntas* had received instructions from the Central Junta at Barcelona to take over the Military Governorships and main army headquarters of their regions on 2 June at 3 p.m. Command would then be offered to the two most Senior Generals, and, if no General accepted, two Senior Colonels would be left in charge. (30) There was a rumour that Lerroux, always keen on fishing in troubled waters, was organizing a force to storm the prison and release the *Junteros*. Moreover, the Captain General Marina had already realized that the *Juntas*, despite all their regenerationist language, were not an anti-Monarchist movement, let alone revolutionary, but just a product of military discontent. If well treated and their demands satisfied, then their potential threat could be diffused. So in an abrupt about-face the Captain General of Catalonia became their spokesman and had little difficulty in convincing a bewildered Alhucemas to decree the release of the leading *Junteros*.

The officers' victory had been complete. Confronted with the threat of a *pronunciamiento*, the political elites backed down. The authority of the Liberal cabinet and of the political system had been shattered. There was a clumsy attempt to cover up. The news spread by the government indicated total normality. Nothing had taken place in Barcelona. It was all reduced to a purely military matter which had been successfully resolved by General Marina with the release of certain officers in that garrison.(31) It was all useless. *La Correspondencia Militar*, which had become the *Juntas'* mouthpiece, could not be silenced. Whereas Alhucemas, the Minister of Interior, Julio Burrell, and the Minister of War, General Aguilera, continued to insist that nothing extraordinary was happening, editorials in that newspaper boasted about the glorious feat achieved by the officers and described it as a death warrant for the still existing "Empire of Oligarchy and Caciquismo".(32) The dimension of the government's shameful defeat was common knowledge on 5 June when *La Epoca* published the ultimatum of 1 June.

The ball was rolling and could not be halted. The *Junteros* leaders and their trade unions were functioning although the cabinet still claimed that they did not exist. Their confidence was such that Colonel Márquez after being released from prison had declared that they did not owe their freedom to anybody but themselves.(33) When they insisted on their statutes being recognized and Marina agreed without consultation, it was a staggering blow to the remaining prestige of the administration. Alhucemas had been prepared to negotiate and

gradually accept parts of the statutes, but not to be told by a General in Barcelona what he should do. Marina's position was backed by the King who had already realized that the *Juntas* far from being a threat could be manipulated. In fact, this was not the first time that Alfonso XIII had chosen to side with his officers rather than with his politicians. The conflict of 1905, which started with the vandalizing of two Catalanist newspapers by members of the garrison at Barcelona and ended with the passing of the infamous Law of Jurisdictions, had already fully revealed the inclinations of the Monarch. He had been brought up as a Soldier King and had always found himself more comfortable among officers than among politicians. Events in Russia also helped persuade him that the future of the Crown largely rested on the support of the army. Thus on 9 June the Marquis of Alhucemas presented the resignation of his government.

The crisis of the government represented the beginning of the supremacy of the army in decision making. It was a practice which would continue until its logical conclusion in September 1923 with the proclamation of a military dictatorship. In the short term it brought about the end of a united Liberal party.

After twenty-four hours of consultation with all the main dynastic personalities, the King decided to call back Alhucemas and ask him to remain in power. Nevertheless, the Marquis confirmed his resignation. Romanones described the dilemma that the government had to face. On the one hand, to

fight against the army would be rash, but, alternatively, to submit to its demands was an unequivocal sign of weakness and subordination.(34) The Count neglected to add that he had sent a letter to Alhucemas stating his resolution to veto any government that acted to endanger the sovereignty of civil authority.(35) It is difficult to predict what the Marquis would have done, but probably he would have attempted to negotiate with the officers. Before the fall of his government he had already approved the first article of their statutes and had nothing to lose by adopting a gradual approach. The damage to his authority had already been done and the best solution would have been to promise the officers recognition of their statutes but gain some time in the bargaining process so as to save face. But Alhucemas had been deprived of that option when it was rejected by Count Romanones, still leader of the Liberal party.

Many Liberals were infuriated by Romanones' behaviour. The very same Romanones, who was so meticulous about the preservation of civil authority and thus provoked the fall of the Alhucemas administration, did not waste time informing the new Prime Minister, the Conservative Dato, of his total support although the latter had pledged to recognize the *Juntas'* statutes.(36) To add insult to injury, *La Correspondencia Militar* argued that the officers were not to blame for the fall of the government. They had nothing in particular against the Alhucemas cabinet and if anyone had caused its collapse it was Romanones, who one day had become the staunchest defender of the constitution to justify his lack of support for the cabinet, and

the next had forgotten all about it and decided to back Dato. (37)

Romanones' move looked to many Liberals like a stab in the back. They felt that an end should be put to the Count's chicanery. The internal differences within the Liberal party were no surprise to anyone. Romanones had always known that not being in charge of a Liberal government was a risk to his leadership. In 1913 he had plotted with the King and leading Conservative figures to avoid being replaced by a rival Liberal administration. The Counts' scheme in 1913 had brought about the end of the leadership of Maura and the constitution of a cabinet headed by Eduardo Dato which led to the split of the Conservative party between *Mauristas* and *Idóneos*. In that way, the *Turno* could be re-created with him still in control of his party and Dato heading the other dynastic formation. Romanones' move in June 1917 seemed a replay of that carried out in 1913. Yet passions were now running high. The Count had concealed from many of his colleagues his pro-Allied policies and placed Spain on the brink of entering the war. Since April 1917 he had been continually creating trouble for the government. His resignation statement and his contribution to the interventionist gathering had not been forgotten. Therefore more than a few Liberals regarded Romanones' stance during the June crisis as almost an act of treason.

Realizing that internal dissent kept growing and that a challenge to his position was about to take place, the resourceful Count tried a risky manoeuvre. He voluntarily

resigned the leadership. Yet far from quitting the post, his real object was to test whether he still retained the esteem and allegiance of the majority of his party and to force those who were working to undermine his authority to call off their offensive or to show their hand before they were sufficiently prepared. Thus on 23 June a beleaguered Romanones wrote to the two Presidents of both chambers of Parliament and senior members of the Liberal party, Miguel Villanueva and Alejandro Groizard, announcing his decision to give up the leadership of the Liberal party. He stressed in that letter that it had been an honour to preside over the party, but the time for renovation had arrived. In order to avoid splits or divisions he was willing to sacrifice his post and recommended the establishment of a Directorate to take over. (38)

The last thing that the Count had in mind was to pack up and go. His move had been a pre-emptive strike before losing more ground and support. Hidden within the unselfish and generous language of his letter was the suggestion that he was prepared to continue in his job if that was the decision of the party. Thus he was not withdrawing his candidacy for the post of Liberal leader, he was just forcing the hand of his rivals. And indeed, they did not waste time. Villanueva and Groizard quickly rejected the idea of a Directorate and began to lobby the party to accept the Marquis of Alhucemas as leader. On 27 June Romanones' counter-attack began in earnest when after receiving a letter signed by Groizard and Villanueva asking for his endorsement of Alhucemas' bid for leadership, he refused to give it. The excuse

put forward by the Count was extremely weak and could barely disguise his real motive--his intention to cling to power at any price. In fact, Romanones simply alleged that having observed that many of his former friends and collaborators, without any kind of explanation, had rushed to join the Alhucemas camp and thus backed the initiative of Villanueva and Groizard, he could not surrender his position until the "secret" discrepancies with his former supporters had been resolved.(39)

With this attitude Romanones contributed decisively to the split in the party. During the following days the spectacle presented by the Liberal notables and fully covered by the national press was pitiful. It was a grotesque show in which they exchanged insults and blamed each other for the chaotic situation. An undisputed mastery in the art of factionalism and squabbling was displayed. Romanones was accused of being behind contraband interests and on the pay-roll of foreign powers. Alhucemas was described as a mediocrity in politics who was trying to use his former leader as scapegoat for the blatant mistakes of his administration.(40) The majority of the Liberal barons such as Villanueva, Alcalá Zamora and Santiago Alba showed remarkable zeal in the way in which they threw themselves into the contest in favour of Alhucemas. It was evident to them, as faction leaders, that the weak Marquis would be much easier to manipulate than the maverick Count.

In early July two rival Liberal Assemblies took place. One was organized by those still loyal to the leadership of

Romanones and rallied 63 Senators and 55 Deputies. The other backed Alhucemas and was supported by 99 Senators and 135 Deputies. The Liberal party was dead.(41) The crisis of that political group revealed the bankruptcy and decline of the whole system. The country was divided by the international question, tormented by the *Crisis de Subsistencias* and faced with the unresolved Catalan, labour and military issues. At the same time, the artificiality and hollowness of the *Turno* was being revealed in full by the disintegration of the Liberal party. Spain was desperately searching for solutions and the party responded with a sad display of mean rivalries and old-fashioned disputes. It was a pathetic struggle between discredited politicians squabbling over influence and patronage. Now both dynastic parties had suffered internal schisms. The *Turno Pacífico* was doomed.

5.2.- The offensive against the regime:

The military rebellion of 1 June, 1917 had marked a decisive moment in the history of the constitutional Monarchy. This was the moment when all the forces of revolution and reaction in the country exploded.(1) The latent tensions in Restoration society could no longer be contained and came to the surface. The First World War, by bringing about socio-economic changes, political mobilization and ideological awareness, had thus accelerated the process of disintegration of the outdated Canovite settlement.

On the one hand, there were the Crown and the governing

classes. The first fighting to preserve both authority and throne; the second struggling to maintain the monopoly of power for the agrarian-based ruling oligarchy. On the other hand, there was the challenge put forward by all those left out of the *Turno Pacífico* who sought to change the political alignment. The most important were the following: the *Mauristas* as the main group on the right of the political spectrum representing the Catholic and Conservative middle classes; the Catalan *Lliga Regionalista* or the party of the industrial bourgeoisie; Republican groups who stood for the commercial and progressive middle classes and the petty bourgeoisie; and the working classes forming part of either the Socialist UGT-PSOE or the Anarcho-Syndicalist CNT. Finally, there was the army organized into *Juntas de Defensa*. It was evident to everybody that the stance taken by the military would be crucial. A coalition of political forces counting on the neutrality, if not the active support, of the officers would certainly produce the collapse of the ruling order. Therefore the energies of both government and opposition were from the very beginning largely devoted to wooing the officers to their cause.

The success of the military disobedience effectively initiated the subordination of the political life of the nation to the requirements of the officers. In June 1917 Márquez and his colleagues became the *de facto* rulers of the country.(2) Yet their anti-oligarchical language, lack of political connections and insistence that they had no ambitions to govern raised the hopes of all those opposed to the ruling system. They saw it as the signal to step up their activities. Anarchy and indiscipline

appeared to be the order of the day. The regime seemed on the point of collapse. The number of strikes rose dramatically: building workers in Bilbao and Saragossa, dockers and miners in Cartagena, bakers in San Sebastián, metal workers in Vitoria. The example of the officers was soon imitated by others. The corporatist revolt spread to the bureaucracy and the civil service where *Juntas* began to be set up overnight. They were followed by similar organizations of Non-Commissioned officers who announced their solidarity with their officers but stressed their determination to seek redress for their economic grievances and to obtain the fulfilment of past promises of promotion. Otherwise they warned that discipline could be broken and chiefs and officers would be held responsible.(3) The moderate liberal newspaper *El Heraldo de Madrid* described the situation in apocalyptic terms as final evidence that the revolution had begun in Spain and warned that the governing elites were still feigning blindness and deafness but the revolution was unstoppable.(4)

Political groups did not waste the opportunity to cash in on the existing political vacuum. Antonio Maura declared that the importance of the manifesto issued by the *Juntas* on 1 June was understood by every citizen but the "blind and deaf men" who ruled the country with the misguided support of the Monarch.(5) Republicans and Socialists believed that the long-expected revolution was around the corner. On 5 June they agreed to establish a provisional government formed by Alejandro Lerroux for the Radicals, Melquiades Alvarez for the Reformists, Pablo

Iglesias for the Socialist Party and Largo Caballero for the UGT. The acting chairman was Melquiades Alvarez who had no difficulty in convincing the others that their objective ought to be the summoning of a Constituent Cortes which would accomplish a peaceful political revolution. The masses should be restrained and only called out to take part in a general strike should the army try to forestall their plans through a coup.(6) Misgivings about the possible attitude of the army were clearly expressed by the Madrid branch of the PSOE. On 8 June it issued a note blaming the regime for the present situation and warning the government to defend the prerogatives of civil power.(7) Yet in general, confidence was very high. Pablo Iglesias wrote that the army had shown by its defiance that it no longer supported the regime and therefore that the struggle of others was justified.(8) On 9 June the Regionalist leader, Francesc Cambó and his loyal lieutenant, the Deputy for Vich Raimón de Abadal, wrote to the government demanding in the name of constitutional legality the immediate opening of the Cortés. The same day Cambó declared in *La Veu de Catalunya* that the *Juntas'* demands were just and that it was sad for a country when only those prepared to use force could obtain redress for their grievances. The Catalan leader also hinted that he was prepared to work within the framework of a Federal Republic.

The confirmation of the crisis of authority of the regime came with the resignation of Alhucemas on 9 June. Two days later the King decided to entrust the Conservative leader, Eduardo Dato, with the task of forming a new government. This

solution was not well received. In theory, Alfonso XIII was just abiding by the constitution. Yet these were not normal times. Amidst social unrest, military revolt and the spread of discontent to civilian sectors, the King had opted for the continuity of the *Turno* fiction as if nothing was happening. There was a clear desire everywhere for the political renovation of the country and the Head of State responded by closing his eyes to the blinding reality. Furthermore, the return of Dato with nearly the same cabinet which had proved its incompetence two years earlier was bound to be regarded as a blatant challenge to public opinion.

The Monarch's decision was viewed by the left as an indication that the regime was beyond any possibility of reform. Revolution was not only desirable but inevitable. The left-wing press agreed on their assessment of the crisis. *El Liberal* and *El País* noted that the King could change politicians but not the underlying reality. *El Socialista* pointed out that the crisis of the regime was a fact. The moment had arrived for Republicans and Socialists to bring down the Monarchy. In similar terms *España* suggested that the King had failed to respond to the warning given to him in the bull-ring and therefore the throne was about to follow the same fate as those in Greece and Russia. Even the normally austere Melquiades Alvarez declared: "*We are seeing the success of a military rebellion...such a gap exists between society and state that the healthy elements of society welcome the stance of the Juntas. This is the natural product of the existing oligarchical regime...If Spain wants to be saved, people*

and army have to co-operate in bringing about a revolution whose main objective must be the creation of a new regime whose legitimacy must rest on the will of the nation...".(9)

The journals of the Right, with the obvious exception of *La Epoca*, mouthpiece of the Conservative party, were critical of the Monarch's solution. Both *El Imparcial* and *ABC* expressed their disbelief that at such a critical moment the King had not sought to assemble new men and instead had relied on a figure of the past like Dato. The Catholic *El Debate* spoke of royal blindness and warned that Spain might well be watching the last chapter of a decrepit political order. The *Mauristas* were outraged. It was rumoured that Maura was so confident of his return to power that he had already drawn up his list of Ministers. On learning that Dato and not he had been appointed Prime Minister, the veteran statesman declared that he wanted to be freed from all future responsibilities. The country was asking for a complete change and the Crown had unfortunately responded by giving a vote of confidence to the "causes of the evil".(10) The royal decision was a bombshell in *Maurista* circles. During the first days of June *La Acción* had been recommending prudence and patience, but once Dato took over, the *Maurista* newspaper agreed with the others that the King, by backing the farce of the *Turno*, had taken a step which amounted to suicide. Demonstrations of *Mauristas* took place outside of the Palace. The Monarch was insulted at the *Maurista* circle in Madrid where one of the most exasperated militants, Francisco Salcedo Bermejillo, destroyed a portrait of the King. The anti-monarchist reaction among

Mauristas was such that in an editorial *El Socialista* wondered whether Maura and his followers were prepared now to abandon the Monarchy. (11)

The moment of political vacuum and social mobilization seemed to pave the way to a successful conclusion of the existing political status quo. Francesc Cambó and his colleagues at the *Lliga Regionalista* emerged amidst the reigning chaos as the leading force to bring about that goal and co-ordinate the disparate interests of the pro-renovation forces so as to create a political alternative to the *Turno*. The party of the Catalan industrial bourgeoisie was anything but revolutionary. The objective was to channel and direct the overwhelming discontent to form a powerful coalition with which to wrest political power from the ruling agrarian and financial oligarchy. It did not necessarily seek the destruction of the Monarchy, but rather a substantial realignment of politics. In fact, Cambó orchestrated an offensive whose ultimate end was to carry out a political revolution in order to pre-empt a deeper social revolt. He regarded the blind maintenance of the discredited Canovite political framework as the gravest danger for a peaceful transition to a modern democratic order. The Catalan leader would even claim that to become a revolutionary was the most conservative thing to do. In fact, his plans were not that different from Maura's idea of a "Revolution from above" or Melquiades Alvarez's calls for the democratization of the regime. (12)

The Catalanist offensive which rapidly won the support of Republicans and Socialists began with the publication on 14 June in Barcelona of a manifesto to the country signed by all the *Lliga's* Deputies and Senators. In that document they argued that Spain was not ruled by real political parties. Elections were a fiction. The results were made in Madrid by those appointed by the Monarch. The Regionalists added that the situation had changed. Hitherto political crises had always been resolved at the Royal Palace but the impact of the army's indiscipline had put an end to the continuity of that sham. The government, faced with an ultimatum, had backed down and conceded defeat. In any democratic country a *pronunciamiento* of that kind would have been received with revulsion and hostility. In Spain, on the contrary, the *Juntas* had found sympathy since their inception. This was because they represented sincerity in the midst of so many fictions and deceits. After this general analysis, the Catalanists concluded that the nation was going through a key moment in history. The solution to the crisis had to be based on total constitutional reform following federalist lines. They called on public opinion to abandon passivity so that real political parties with mass support could satisfy the demands of the electorate.

Cambó then undertook an intensive campaign of mobilization travelling to the capital and meeting the leaders of nearly all the political groups. When the Minister of Interior refused to open the Cortes, his lieutenant Abadal called for a gathering of all the Catalan Senators and Deputies at the City

Hall in Barcelona on 5 July to discuss what urgent measures should be adopted to solve the chaotic situation of the country. Republicans and Socialists threw their support behind the *Lliga's* move. They had confirmed on 16 June their determination to collaborate in the overthrowing of the ruling order. Notwithstanding all their revolutionary language, they were reformists who abhorred violent solutions and lacked any real plan to put in practice. Thus Cambó's initiative was accepted enthusiastically as it presented them with the possibility of continuing their activity against the regime in co-operation with others, without the need to resort to more forceful methods.

The meeting of 5 July represented an outstanding victory for the *Lliga*, now the undisputed group in charge of the pro-renovation forces. The outcome both showed the supremacy of the Catalanists and constituted an open challenge to the authority of the government. The success was total as fifty-nine out of sixty parliamentarians attended the gathering, although thirteen Monarchists soon withdrew. Three motions were presented. One proposed by the Monarchists was abandoned. Another put forward by Francesc Maciá, the colourful retired Colonel of the army close to separatist positions, was also dropped. The third, subscribed by Regionalists, Liberals, Republicans and Reformists was voted by unanimity. In fact, it was merely an endorsement of the tactful approach devised by the *Lliga*. The motion underlined the desire felt in Catalonia for Home Rule which could be extended to other regions and concluded by demanding the immediate opening of parliament in the form of a Constituent

Assembly which would deal with the organization of the state and with military and socio-economic questions. In the event of another refusal from the government, all Spanish parliamentarians were summoned to attend an Assembly in Barcelona on 19 July. (13) The *Lliga* had achieved what it desired. The federalist principle had been accepted and the form of the regime was left for a Constituent Assembly to decide. Cambó wrote in his memoirs: "*The others were a bunch of fools, lacking organization or ideas. From the first moment, I had them eating out of the palm of my hand*". (14) Yet to be certain of victory, Cambó knew he needed the participation of *Mauristas* and *Juntas*. Without them, his initiative could easily be interpreted as revolutionary or separatist.

Despite all their efforts, Cambó and his partners failed to win the backing of the *Juntas*. The insurrection of the officers had stirred all those seeking to challenge the political status quo. They were obviously taken in by the regenerationist language with which the *Junteros* adorned their declarations. Events were to show that appreciation was mistaken. The *Juntas'* movement was above all an outburst in defence of the corporative interests of the army. Economic and structural demands had priority, the rest was merely rhetoric. The army certainly did not feel any particular affection for the governing elites. On the contrary, they believed they had been let down by the ruling politicians. Suffering from low pay and an unfair system of promotion, they saw themselves as the "poor relation" of the Power Bloc. Thus they sought to improve their situation.

Nevertheless, they were never a movement directed against the Monarchy. Theirs had been a revolution without revolutionaries. (15) The Spanish army had always interpreted its mission in society as the last bulwark in defence of the sacred values of the nation. Values which were constantly threatened by those endeavouring to break up the country or to disrupt public order. Hence Catalanists and Leftists had been the army's historical enemies. It was therefore unthinkable that, even despite all their organized protest, officers would be prepared to join forces with them to overthrow the regime. Only a blunt and clumsy response by the government would force them to adopt that position. An editorial on 9 June in *El Ejército Español* was eloquent on the point. It warned both Republicans and Socialists not to use flattery in an attempt to win over the army for their political aims. The spread of the corporatist movement to the Non-Commissioned officers and fear that ordinary soldiers could get involved as well confirmed the anti-revolutionary stance of the officers. Pamphlets such as those entitled *Soldados* and signed by the Catalan Republican Marcelino Domingo calling on the troops to follow the example of their officers and set up their own *Juntas* only served to enforce the anti-Republicanism of the army. (16)

There was however in the summer of 1917 a strong possibility that bourgeoisie, proletariat and army might join forces. This possibility was to a large extent dependent upon the response of Antonio Maura. He could have become the link between the deputies and the armed services. As a deeply conservative and

catholic politician and staunch critic of the political system, Maura could have been the guarantee that the Assembly movement was neither threatening the unity of the country nor endangering law and order. In fact, Maura and the *Maurista* movement saw themselves in the summer of 1917 in the privileged position of determining the destiny of the country. Their political group could have tipped the balance towards one side or another. Yet even when many *Mauristas* were eager to join others in the task of overthrowing Dato and the despised *Turno*, the opposition of their leader was to be total. Gabriel Maura wrote that if at this crucial moment his father had adopted a different line, a considerable part of the Right would have been prepared to abandon the Monarchy. Indeed, it does not seem an exaggeration to contend that the degree of rejection of the ruling order had reached such levels in 1917 that even the traditionally Monarchist Catholic middle classes would have been prepared to support any moderate solution to get rid of the artificial Canovite formula.(17) Maura's agreement was sought both by the *Juntas* and the Assembly but his response to all the approaches was characterized not only by absolute refusal but even by contempt. In fact, notwithstanding all his passionate attacks on the *turno*, the old Conservative leader was a devout Monarchist who rejected any position which might endanger the Throne. He regarded himself as a visionary, a type of national saviour and not as a revolutionary leader who might assist others to put in practice any illegal manoeuvre. In 1917 he presented himself as a Monarchist bulwark against the threats of military rebellion and civil revolution. He kept waiting for a signal that never

came from the King. His passivity not only benefited the government but also contributed to destroy *Maurismo* as a renovating force.(18)

The *Juntas* did not welcome the Dato administration. It represented the continuity of that oligarchy which they had so criticised. Lacking political contacts and certain of their strength they looked for someone to represent their interests in the political arena. In their eyes nobody could fill that role better than Antonio Maura, a decent right-wing politician with charisma and real mass following who since 1913 had become one of the leading voices calling for the dignification of political methods and the end of oligarchical rule. As early as 6 June 1917, two Captains of *Los Cazadores de Estella* wrote to Maura suggesting that he was the man that the nation needed at that critical moment. They offered him their total support and maintained that the garrison in Barcelona was not breaking discipline, but acting with real patriotism seeking to save Spain.(19) Thereafter Gustavo Peyrá, the Catalan *Maurista* well known for his hatred of the *Lliga*, became the mediator between the *Juntas de Defensa* and Maura. Peyrá, a leading exponent of right-wing *Maurismo*, kept his chief informed about the officers' resolutions and tried continually to persuade him to seize power with their aid. On 20 June Peyrá informed him that he had established contact with Márquez and another leading *Juntero* who had expressed their discontent with Dato and guaranteed the unity and determination of the officers to back a new administration headed by Maura. Two days later Gabriel Maura communicated to his

father, then resting in the summer resort of Solozarno, that he had met Peyrá who had confirmed that the *Juntas* were almost exercising a dictatorship in the country and were pressing the Crown for a Maura solution. If 'The Chief' had finally taken a decision he should inform him as soon as possible by sending him a note or a letter to the Hotel Roma in Madrid under the code-name of Pepe.(20)

Maura was a liberal above all. He believed in the constitutional order and the supremacy of civil government. The last thing he had in mind was to become the representative of a military lobby. Thus he wrote to Peyrá making crystal-clear his opposition to any initiative unless this was offered to him through the legally established channels. He added that his own philosophy barred him from adopting their proposed strategy to gain power. Maura was still hoping for a last minute call from the Palace but he was not prepared to apply pressure himself or let others do so.(21) Peyrá kept insisting that the *Juntas*, although disillusioned by Maura's attitude, still appreciated his patriotic stand and believed he was the right politician to lead the destinies of the country. He tried to convince Maura by suggesting that, in the hands of the *Turno* politicians, the country was on the verge of disaster. Peyrá argued that the officers were neither rebels nor anti-monarchists, they just loathed Dato and the oligarchy as much as the *Mauristas* did. They did not want to get involved in politics but as good patriots they wanted Spain to be ruled by a honest politician like Maura. Peyrá also warned that if a military dictatorship had not been

established yet it was only due to the lack of a General with enough prestige to take over.(22) All was in vain. Maura informed his son Gabriel that he refused to have any contact or even discussion with the *Junteros*. He described the *Juntas* as 'a monstrous freak of ancient depravity' ("engendro monstruoso de añeja depravación") and mentioned that he had declined to receive a messenger from the Central *Junta* at Barcelona who had been left waiting under heavy rain.(23)

At the same time, there was immense pressure from other leading *Mauristas* to convince their leader to throw in his lot with the Assembly. His refusal would be decisive in paralysing many of his followers who regarded Cambó's initiative as the practical example of the very same revolution from above preached by Maura.

Maura's sons, Miguel and Gabriel, kept their father well informed of the events in the country. They drew a picture of unrest, chaos and disintegration. Spain was being torn apart and her future was in the hands of a clumsy Dato. Miguel, in particular, insisted that his father should join others like Cambó who were working for solutions to end the intolerable situation.(24) With the organization of the Assembly in July, Maura was besieged by an impressive number of requests for advice as well as arguments in favour of Cambó's alternative as the only valid and peaceful solution for the renovation of politics. On 4 July the *Maurista* Centre at Chamberí in Madrid wrote to their leader. They believed that power could no longer remain in such

incompetent hands as Dato's. They wanted to know Maura's position. They also indicated that if *Maurismo* found itself without guidance at such a crucial stage, the energy and strength of the movement would inevitably fade away. Alfonso Nadal, an influential Catalanist, wrote twice on behalf of Cambó to Maura advocating the attendance of *Mauristas* at the gathering of Deputies at Barcelona. On 6 July, Nadal sent a copy of previous correspondence between himself and Cambó in which the latter argued that Catalan public opinion was united behind the Assembly as it represented the most significant attempt to modernize political life. On 11 July he referred to a past meeting with the leading *Maurista* Angel Ossorio in which both had fully agreed that for important reasons the *Mauristas* should take part in the Assembly. For instance, there was the danger that revolutionary elements could take advantage of the current military indiscipline or that Republicans could give the Assembly a more Leftist character. Thus the *Mauristas* agreed with Cambó that all the 'healthy' members of the Right should be present to balance that threat. Ossorio himself wrote to Maura confessing that he was filled with pessimism and arguing that the *Mauristas* should collaborate with the Catalan leader in providing an appropriate leadership for the Assembly. On 10 and 11 July Cambó sent Gabriel Maura a copy of the conclusions reached on 5 July and invited him to be in Barcelona with the other Deputies. Cambó begged him to re-consider the significance of the moment and stressed that the presence of *Mauristas* would prove that his initiative was neither exclusive nor seditious. (25)

Maura's response was similar to that given to the *Juntas*. He refused to associate either himself or any of his followers with any subversive scheme. On 6 July he told his son Gabriel that he was neither prepared to join an initiative which was not openly sanctioned by the Crown nor to cooperate with those political forces that in 1909 had subscribed to the Maura no! campaign. He described the Assembly as a "*depressing symptom, a Zoco Profesional (' Professional Flea market')* which now tries to constitute itself into a Cortes and from which only hypocrisy and shame can be expected".(26) Thus the veteran leader showed his commitment to old-fashioned legalism. He believed that the best policy to adopt was one of caution and prudence. Consequently his plan was to remain seated on the fence waiting for the final disintegration of the *Turno* in expectation that the King, faced with a revolutionary avalanche, would then have to resort to his services. In the meantime he endeavoured to cool the ardent impetuosity of his followers. Ironically Maura did not realize that by this attitude he was undermining the strength of his movement while doing a great service to the existing governing elites.

Maura's advice was therefore for calm and passivity. On 7 July in his reply to the *Maurista* Centre at Chamberí he suggested that the current events were merely proof of what he had been preaching for years. He claimed that nothing had occurred that would make him change his mind about abandoning his passivity. A few days later he wrote to Ossorio recognizing that public opinion had sufficient motives to want to put an end to

the disastrous status quo. However, he was not going to support any subversive strategy and would not advise anyone to do so. The same argument was repeated continually to all those seeking his advice. Maura continued to point out that he was not surprised that those who wanted to change the ruling system and found the legal paths closed might turn to alternative routes. But his position was clear. His record and political philosophy vetoed his attendance at the gathering of Deputies at Barcelona. Simultaneously Gabriel Maura informed Cambó's lieutenant Abadal that in spite of the fact that they held many common views he had to decline the invitation to take part in the Assembly as he could not join something deemed illegal by the government.(27)

Maura's opposition to the Assembly helped to isolate this initiative from the *Juntas* and clearly played into the hands of those seeking the maintenance of the status quo. On 10 July Peyrá confirmed that where Cambó, Lerroux and Marcelino Domingo were, the officers would not be.(28) Five days later, a satisfied *La Epoca* published a statement in which the *Junteros* confirmed their refusal to intervene in politics and their determination to obey the orders of the government. Yet Dato could not ignore that he was walking a tight-rope.

On taking office, the Conservative administration had to contemplate the prospect of the existing order falling apart. It was not clear whether Dato was the right man for the job of saving the regime from collapse. Unlike Maura, known for his forceful style and personal charisma, Dato was regarded as a grey

and dull politician, a compromiser and a Court lackey and therefore not the ideal person to take tough decisions at a difficult moment. Yet he was to prove more resourceful than others gave him credit for. He tried to maintain his usual easy-going image and allowed his Minister of Interior and right-hand man, José Sánchez Guerra, to personify the ugly face of the government. The Dato-Sánchez Guerra partnership could not ignore the threat posed by a possible collaboration of bourgeoisie, proletariat and army. The government's main objective would therefore be to prevent at any price the sealing of that alliance. The strategy was very simple. All sorts of methods and measures, no matter how despicable they might be, would be undertaken in order to set the different groups against each other. On the one hand, a variety of concessions would be granted to appease the *Juntas* and win them over as the main bulwark of the established order. On the other, any behaviour, from coercion to deceit, was to be admissible as long as it led to the isolation and discredit of the parliamentary forces. (29)

After the requisite promises to maintain strict neutrality and devote special attention to national defence and economic matters, Dato's first real acts in power sought to please the *Juntas*. Thus he rapidly approved their statutes and thereafter carried through some reprisals demanded by the officers. Among others, two former Ministers of War and Generals close to the Monarch's entourage such as His Majesty's Master of Horse, the Marquis of Viana, were sent to the reserve. However the *Juntas* continued with their anti-oligarchical language. On

25 June they issued a manifesto in which the ruling oligarchy was blamed for all the evils of the country. The military re-affirmed their apolitical character but they also confirmed their determination to regenerate the nation.(30) The following day *El Liberal* published an interview with General Alfau, the former Captain General of Catalonia, which constituted a serious blow to the prestige of the Crown. Alfau revealed that the order given to him to dissolve the *Juntas* had been signed by the Minister of War General Aguilera without the previous approval or knowledge of the cabinet. Hence he was hinting that the decision had been taken as a result of pressure brought to bear on Aguilera by the King. Alfau declared that he was entirely in favour of the *Juntas* as they were working with the objective of destroying the centres of corruption and would not stop until the health of the nation had been restored.

The Prime Minister did not delay his response. That same day he ordered the suspension of constitutional guarantees and introduced tight censorship banning the publication of news regarding fundamental issues such as *Juntas*, movements of troops, strikes, exports, neutrality or international events. The country was thus not to be informed of anything which might be embarrassing for the government. On 2 July a Royal Decree increased the defence budget to provide salary increases of 25 cents daily for the troops in the peninsula and 15 cents for those in Africa. The King's Military Household was re-organized with the introduction of a limit of four years tenure for any officer and the dismissal of some of its members.(31) The

government was going out of its way to win the favour of the *Junteros*. The extremes to which Dato was prepared to go reached scandalous levels. It was made public on 10 July that, behind the back of his Minister of War, General Fernando Primo de Rivera, the Prime Minister had sent a letter via the Civil Governor of Barcelona, Leopoldo Matos, to the Central *Junta*. Dato enquired about their demands and promised to meet them through Royal Decrees, asked for the names of the Generals who should go to the reserve and, if they were not happy with Primo de Rivera whether they would be willing to accept a civilian as Minister of War. The officers replied that they had already made clear many times what objectives they had and which Generals should be sent to the reserve. They also stated that they did not mind who was Minister of War as long as that person fulfilled his duty. As soon as news of the manoeuvre became public a wave of contempt and derision ensued. Dato denied everything but it was confirmed by the *Juntas*. General Primo de Rivera wrote to the Prime Minister expressing his discomfort and his readiness to resign. A scapegoat had to be found and Governor Matos accepted the role. He travelled to Madrid and explained to the Minister that it had all been his own initiative. Primo de Rivera did not resign and the affair was rapidly covered up. (32) Dato tried to put a brave face on what was a staggering surrender of the prerogatives of a civil government and a shameful exercise in flattery and appeasement of the army. He was aware that an impressive grouping of political forces were mounting an offensive to overthrow the political system. If he were to succeed in crushing that challenge he needed to be able to rely on the repressive forces

of the state. He was prepared to pay the price even if this meant damaging the prestige of the government. His scheme paid off. The officers turned down by Maura, who obviously did not share Dato's disregard for civil authority, pledged on 15 July to back the administration.

The introduction of censorship and the suspension of constitutional guarantees initiated the government's move to face any revolutionary threat. The government justified those measures arguing that they were necessary steps to prevent agitators from attacking the fundamental pillars of the state and portraying Spain abroad as a country disrupted by chaos and anarchy.(33) The Minister of Interior issued instructions to the Civil Governors prompting them to be aware of any subversive movement. Lists should be drawn up of the leading suspicious characters in every province so that Governors could act with energy and arrest them when the moment to strike arrived.(34) It became evident, after the meeting of Catalan parliamentarians on 5 July, that the main danger came from that quarter. Two days later a delegation from Barcelona formed by the Republican Giner de los Ríos, the Carlist Marquis of Minarao and the Regionalist Abadal travelled to Madrid and presented the conclusions of that meeting. Dato responded the following morning accusing the Catalan representatives of organizing a seditious movement. He declared that only the government with the backing of the Crown was entitled to summon, suspend or dissolve the Cortes. He concluded his statement by appealing to the wisdom and patriotism of the parliamentarians to renounce their plans failing which the government was prepared

to act with composure but with resolution.(35)

Dato's approach was typical of his style of compromise. He tried to be firm and conciliatory at the same time. His accusation that the parliamentarians demands were illegal and seditious was certainly accurate. However he had treated in a very different way the also illegal, and probably more violent, revolt of the officers. Dato's stance seemed a confirmation of Cambó's words that in Spain only those who were backed by force could find redress for their grievances.

Government and parliamentarians were engaged in a test of wills with neither side prepared to back down. On 12 July the latter published an article protesting at the response of the government to their demands. They pointed out that it was ironical that those who were appealing to public opinion and constitutional formalities were at the same time imposing unprecedented censorship to prevent opinion from being freely expressed. By such behaviour the government had made a fiction of the constitution and the Cortes. Dato again answered in his traditional style. He suggested that the parliamentarians were abandoning the courtesy and moderation that should regulate the relations between men of honour and stressed the government's determination not to allow gatherings which could disrupt public order. Once more he appealed to their patriotism and advised them to call off the Assembly.(36)

The general atmosphere between the meeting of 5 July

and the gathering of Deputies in Barcelona two weeks later was frantic. Different witnesses noted that no other event in living history had raised such high hopes and expectations. *El Herald de Madrid* confessed that despite its traditional opposition to the Catalanist moves, this time they had devised an initiative which should be followed by the rest of Spain. (37) Francesc Cambó was the soul of the entire enterprise. In a moment marked by meetings, visits, speeches and trips he seemed to be in charge of everything. (38) On 10 July he wrote to Colonel Márquez, the Chairman of the Central *Junta* at Barcelona, in an attempt to dispel the ghost of separatism. He emphatically denied that Catalonia was seeking independence. That would be a terrible mistake which would only lead to the region becoming a French department. In fact, the Catalan leader claimed that Catalonia, the only region in the country to get rid of the electoral sham orchestrated by the ruling oligarchy, had the mission to lead Spain in this critical moment. Thus they shared the same objective pursued by the army, namely the construction of a greater Spain. (39) His appeal went unheard. Márquez later recognized that the officers had made a mistake by not throwing their support behind the Assembly. Traditional prejudices from an institution dominated by Andalusian and Castillian officers made them believe it was an anti-monarchist and separatist initiative. (40)

Cambó was more successful in winning over the proletariat. The Socialists were delighted and Pablo Iglesias was offered a post in the future provisional government which would

be formed to organize free general elections for a Constituent Cortes. The National Committee of the party voted favourably.(41) However, the reception was much colder in Anarcho-Syndicalist quarters. The CNT rightly considered Cambó's initiative to be a manoeuvre to stave off a revolution from below. On 17 July, they reluctantly agreed to collaborate with the others. Yet the programme published in *Solidaridad Obrera* which included demands such as the abolition of diplomacy and customs barriers and power for the Trade Unions to veto any law passed by parliament, revealed how far they were ideologically from the ideas of the other political forces.(42)

The government was not prepared to let Cambó and his partners proceed with their scheme unhindered. The governmental reaction fluctuated between panic and defiance. Defiance would become more dominant when it was confirmed that neither the *Mauristas* nor the army were to join the opposition. Any method was permissible to discredit the Assembly. A campaign of misinformation, harassment and threats was carried out without interruption. Censorship was rigorously applied. Catalanist and Republican newspapers such as *El Progreso*, *La Veu de Catalunya*, *La Lucha* and *La Publicidad* were banned. Republicans and Regionalists in turn resorted to changing the names of the journals and the town of publication, issuing clandestine editions and distributing leaflets and pamphlets in the streets. Incendiary pamphlets, purporting to emanate from the reformists, were falsified by the government and handed out by *agents provocateurs* in order to frighten the Catalan middle classes. By

contrast Republican and Regionalist pamphlets stressed the seriousness of the movement and insisted on people behaving with calm, discipline and composure so as to persuade the bourgeoisie that the movement was responsible. Cambó even argued that the authorities should fulfil their duty to crush a movement which was seditious. However, history would not forgive them if they were instead putting down an initiative which was backed by public opinion and sought the regeneration of Spain.(43)

The government managed to erect a *cordon sanitaire* between Catalonia and the rest of the peninsula. The Catalan initiative was isolated and portrayed as a separatist plot. Cambó was described as its architect and traditional enemies of the Monarchy like Lerroux and Iglesias as his accomplices. Sometimes the opposite view was promulgated. The revolutionaries had gained the upper hand and the Catalanists were collaborating in exchange for the independence of their region. Other practices employed by the government were the bribery of Deputies, the threat to suspend the Cortes on 17 July and thereby remove the political immunity of its members, the close surveillance of leading Republican and Catalanist politicians and the reinforcement of the local garrisons with fresh troops. On the eve of the crucial date the national press was forced to report that the Assembly was a farce. Everything was under control and the situation was limited to a mere police matter.(44) The cabinet was divided between those who, like Sánchez Guerra, advocated the use of tough measures and others, such as the Minister of Justice, the Catholic and moderate Andalusian Manuel Burgos y Mazo, who

believed that the best tactic was to let it pass off as of little consequence. It was rumoured that Dato had threatened to send all the Deputies to Fernando Poo and told General Marina that no bullet should be spared when the order to fire was given.(45)

In the meantime the Monarch had not remained silent. The Russian and Greek examples and the revolutionary atmosphere would not allow him to be at ease. After his U-turn during the *Juntas* affair, he began to speak in public about the patriotism of the officers. They were soon received and flattered by the King.(46) The most senior officer, General Weyler, was sent on a tour around the peninsula to inform the *Junteros* of the readiness of Alfonso XIII to support them and meet all their demands.(47) The King often sent his aides-de camp to the *Gran Peña* of Madrid, the officers' social club in the capital, to ascertain the moods and impressions of the army. On 28 June he asked them not to take steps against the new Minister of War, Fernando Primo de Rivera, who had not been particularly welcomed by them and due to his old age was dubbed "the mummy".(48) Ensuring the loyalty of the army was essential for the security of the Throne yet the danger was not entirely deflected as long as the political offensive remained in earnest. The King was aware of the crisis of legitimacy of the ruling political system. Thus he intended to find solutions behind the back of his own government. In public he continued to back Dato but the Sovereign's confidence in his ministers had a limit, and this was the salvation of the dynasty. If necessary they could be sacrificed should the survival of the Monarchy require it. Thus

Alfonso's plan was to approach the moderate elements in the opposition and offer concessions in order to detach them from their more revolutionary partners.

On 28 June the King met Azcárate, the aged Republican President of the Institute of Social Reforms who with Melquiades Alvarez led the Reformist party. He tried to win his agreement to making the Reformists desist from their revolutionary intentions. Alfonso XIII even suggested he was willing to pass by Royal Decree some of the fundamental demands of the trade unions. But Azcárate was of little help. He did not have enough influence or power to change the line adopted by his party. The Reformists were now bound with the other Republican groups. "*It was too late for that and for everything*". The King was devastated. Talking to his friend, the engineer Domingo de Orueta, he claimed that he had seriously thought about abdicating the Throne but the Royal family, in particular the Queen Mother, had compelled him to renounce the idea which was firmly rooted in his mind. (49)

The King's second choice was to approach the Catalan Regionalists. There he proved to be more successful. What emerged from the secret conversations between Monarch and Catalanists has to be regarded as crucial if the events of 1917 are examined carefully. In fact, the King shared some common concerns with Cambó. Both were deeply worried that the situation could get out of control and were therefore anxious to have room to manoeuvre. On 12 July Alfonso XIII met Alfonso Nadal, one of Cambó's trusted

lieutenants. The Monarch disclosed that he was sure that the *Mauristas* would not attend the gathering at Barcelona. He also revealed that he was prepared to grant the Catalanists some concessions including two or three portfolios in a new coalition government if the latter gave up the idea of convoking the Assembly. The King confessed that he was not pleased with the way in which Dato was conducting affairs. He complained he was not being fully briefed about what was going on. He described the political situation as "*a fetid pond*" and recognized that should the Assembly take place it would probably be better if the Right was well represented, otherwise the Left could control the agenda.(50) A few days later, probably at the request of the King, a meeting was arranged between several officers, Cambó and two priests. Márquez later wrote how he met Cambó for lunch at the *Convento Pompeya* in Barcelona. They were accompanied by two other officers, the Captains Herrero and Villar, and two priests, Fathers Planas and Ruperto, who represented the Monarch. Father Ruperto is described by Márquez as a mysterious character who lived in luxury in a room with two telephones. Ruperto announced that all sorts of concessions could be made as long as the Assembly never took place. Cambó responded that a cancellation was not feasible at this late stage. Then Ruperto arrived at a plan that could please everyone. The Assembly would be held not at the Town Hall but at a secret location. There the Deputies should be able to pass their resolutions while the Civil Governor was trying to find them. By using censorship the government could later claim that the meeting had never taken place while the parliamentarians could argue the opposite.(51) It is extremely

suspicious that the actual course of the Assembly seemed to follow that scheme. It appeared to bear out the allegations of the Socialist Andrés Saborit that every single detail of that meeting had been worked out in advance by Cambó and the Monarch. (52) The government was apparently at no time aware of what was being plotted behind its back. The Conservative cabinet would never have agreed to resign and give way to a Coalition government in which the Catalanists were well represented.

On the morning of 19 July Barcelona was a city occupied by a hostile army. There were 30,000 soldiers patrolling the streets and four warships in the harbour. Catalanist and Republican manifestos had been published calling for restraint and warning the people not to follow any provocative slogans which would be spread by agent provocateurs. Shops were to remain closed between 3 and 6 p.m. (53) The whole affair started in a ludicrous and absurd manner and was to end in the same way. Yet it is impossible to deny the far-reaching consequences and transcendence of the event. Indeed some of the vicissitudes were worthy of a thriller. It began with several taxi chases during which the Deputies were tailed by the police. Once the followers had been lost they secretly met to discuss the agenda of the day at the home of Bertrand i Musitu, one of the *Lliga's* leading politicians. Then the parliamentarians convened for lunch at the *Casino del Parque* whose restaurant had been hired under the pretext of being for a wedding party and from there they walked to the *Palacio del Gobernador del Parque de la Ciudadela*. There was a total of fifty-five Deputies and thirteen Senators,

forty-six of them from Catalonia. The Assembly was presided over by the Radical Giner de los Ríos and the Regionalist Abadal. The ceremony was symbolically initiated by shouts of *Viva Catalunya!* from the Spanish Deputies to which their Catalan counterparts responded with *Viva España!*. A proposition previously discussed and accepted by all the groups was passed. That motion described the government as an affront to parliament, a provocation to Spain and Catalonia and an obstacle to the renovation of the country. It noted that unless the crisis initiated with the military revolt of 1 June led to a thorough reform of the political life of the country that initiative would become a mere display of indiscipline. It concluded by demanding the summoning of a Constituent Cortes after General Elections organized by a national government representing the will of the nation. Three sub-committees were created: one to study constitutional reform and municipal autonomy, the second to deal with the issues of national defence, education and administration of justice and the last to examine socio-economic problems. At that moment, the Assembly was broken up by the appearance of the police commanded by Governor Matos. When the president of the Assembly Abadal answered that he would not order the dissolution of the gathering and would yield only to force, Matos symbolically arrested them by placing his hand on the shoulder of every parliamentarian. They were released from custody outside the building. (54)

The whole affair appeared to have closely followed the script worked out by Father Ruperto, the enigmatic priest who, according to Márquez, spoke on behalf of the King. To confirm

that view, a few hours later, a buoyant Sánchez Guerra informed the journalists in Madrid that the Assembly did not have time to pass any resolution. The timely intervention of the Governor had prevented the adoption and transmission of any resolutions and had broken up the gathering before it had time to transact any business.(55) A cheerful and confident Dato told the British Ambassador that the Catalan movement had been suppressed and in a fashion which would render it ridiculous. The Prime Minister added that no arrest was intended as it might arouse public sympathy for the Assembly or make the parliamentarians heroes. The aim of the government had been achieved and that was to prevent the reformers from meeting in order that they would become objects not so much of sympathy as of ridicule. According to the Conservative leader: *"The bubble of the Barcelona revolution had been pricked as soon as its leaders saw the government was in earnest...now the plan is to dissolve the present Cortes in August and organize elections in September to give a good working majority to my party"*.(56)He was soon to regret his words.

Gustavo Peyrá was one of the few who believed that the government had gained the upper hand. He wrote to his chief Maura suggesting that if anybody could claim victory this was the government. Peyrá observed that the Assembly had been a charade. Governor Matos had been aware of the conclusions of the Assembly hours before the parliamentarians gathered. The Catalan *Maurista* also pointed out that the officers were tired of all the recent events: first, the disclosure of Matos' deal with the *Juntas* and

the ensuing denial of the government and then the "hide and seek" game of the Assembly.(57) The *Maurista* newspaper *La Acción*, probably using Peyrá's account, declared that what others had regarded as an historical day had actually been an "hysterical day". That journal begged that no more ridiculous actions like those should ever take place. Everything had developed according to a script with Regionalists and Republicans eager to see the event cancelled and Dato now able to claim that he was a national hero. *La Acción* warned that while the Deputies were easily overcome by a simple touch on the shoulder, something else was going to be needed to overcome the nation.(58)

The government was soon to lose the battle for public opinion. If its objective had been to discredit the Assembly and disrupt its activities, it actually achieved the opposite effect. The prestige of the cabinet sank even lower and the position of the parliamentarians gained widespread support. It is possible, as the Socialist Saborit claims, that Cambó had arranged the affair with the Monarch through Father Ruperto so that events did not get out of control.(59) That plan would not necessarily conflict with the objectives of the *Lliga*. The Regionalists wanted a Constituent Assembly to change the political structure of the country peacefully, not a storming of the Bastille.(60) Yet the transcendence and importance of the Assembly cannot be denied. It constituted the most important attempt in the history of the Restoration Monarchy to carry out a political modernization and genuine democratization of the system. A variety of forces embracing the industrial bourgeoisie, the

commercial and professional middle classes, the petty bourgeoisie and the urban proletariat momentarily came together to try to put an end to the monopoly of power enjoyed by the financial and landowning oligarchy.(61) It was designed to reflect the new socio-economic reality brought about by the Great War. Such an initiative was welcomed due to the general conviction that the movement was a protest against the oligarchy and nepotism which had long held sway in high places. It was an overt proof that the old system compounded of private dishonesty and public make-believe was intolerable.

Until early August Cambó's initiative was gaining daily in strength while the government's strategy backfired. Dato and Sánchez Guerra overplayed their hand. They kept denying that the parliamentarians had time to pass any resolutions but the press was preparing to praise the Assembly as the beginning of the awakening of Spain. As soon as the Deputies returned to their places of origin and despite the tight censorship the truth began to come out. For instance, the maverick Deputy for Almadén which had attended the Assembly, Cánovas Cervantes, was also editor of the newspaper *La Tribuna*. In a front page article on 21 July that journal accused the government of lying. All the national press, with the exception of *La Epoca* and *ABC*, described the version put forward by the government as final proof of the bankruptcy, falseness, chicanery and lack of morality of a group of professional politicians who had to resort to deceit and misinformation to hide the real facts. Even *La Acción* changed its line dramatically and in tune with the other newspapers called

Sánchez Guerra a liar. The *Maurista* newspaper argued that the government was desperately trying to cling to power by using and abusing the censorship. Enough was enough. How low was "*Dato el equilibrado*" prepared to sink?. Spain had had enough of deceits.(62) On 26 July virtually all the national press decided to boycott the official news and signed a document calling for the end of the arbitrary censorship and the abuse of governmental prerogatives. A few days later, a no longer cheerful Sánchez Guerra met a delegation of the press and announced that he was prepared to lift censorship. Yet the administration could not take the risk of allowing total and unrestricted freedom of expression. Thus in what can be regarded as an exercise in cynicism and effrontery, the Minister of Interior added: "*Now you gentlemen will be your own censors while I limit myself to the role of supervising your judgement*". Unsurprisingly, the experiment did not work and strict censorship was re-imposed in early August.(63)

Simultaneously, the parliamentarians had continued their campaign. On 21 July the Regionalists published a statement in which they confirmed that the Assembly did take place despite all the government's provocations and called on other Spanish Deputies to join an initiative which was designed to build a new Spain. This was followed by a meeting of all the political groups on 27 July. They declared themselves pleased with the welcome that the Assembly had in the country. Deputies distributed themselves between the three sub-committees--Socio-economic, constitutional and administrative--appointed by the Assembly and

announced their determination to report with their conclusions at a new meeting to be held in Oviedo on 16 August.(64)

More threatening for the survival of the government was the impact that the Assembly had on *Mauristas* and *Juntas*. Many leading *Mauristas* considered that the parliamentarians' programme coincided with their own ideas and, believing they should take part in the next meeting at Oviedo, increased their pressure on Maura.

As early as 21 July Cesar Silió, a veteran Catalan *Maurista*, provided 'The Chief' with information that contradicted that offered by Peyrá. He alleged that the version of the Assembly given by the government was "fantastic". Important conclusions had been passed and practically all Catalonia supported the initiative.(65) A few days later Gabriel Maura concurred with that view. He added that even the officers were for a Constituent Cortes and a national government. In fact, the only factor that damaged the image of the Assembly was the people who had taken part.(66) More resolute were the positions adopted by Maura's other son Miguel and by Angel Ossorio. Miguel stated his conviction that the Assembly had been a total success and a defeat for the government. He agreed with Cambó that the country was in favour of this kind of peaceful revolution which was indeed necessary to avoid a social insurrection. Miguel bitterly commented:

"It is difficult and even dangerous not to attend a second

meeting of the Assembly. It is going to appear as if, having attacked the Turno for years, we Mauristas are going to make possible its survival with our abstention".(67)

On 7 August, Ossorio expressed a similar view. He wrote to Maura arguing that the latter's abstentionism had given a major boost to the *Turno*. Ossorio insisted that their presence was needed as their collaboration in the sub-committees would represent the end of the system. He also pointed out:

"This is the moment to choose between on the one hand, the Assembly and those fighting against the existing state of affairs and on the other, the Turno, the King and the oligarchies. It is besides incongruous that after preaching the urgency of change, we are fearful at the moment of truth...The assembly is thus the best means to end the status quo. There are only two other solutions: a Maura administration or a revolution. The first is not forthcoming and the second is becoming each day more desirable.(68)

Maura was still reluctant to act. He continued preaching calm and caution. He recognized that the Parliamentarians had passed conclusions which were also pursued by the *Mauristas*, but he was utterly opposed to political schemes which counted on the active support of anti-monarchist elements and could thus endanger the survival of the Crown. He still scornfully described the Assembly as the '*Parlamento Codorniu'*'.

It is not clear whether Maura meant that the Assembly was a parallel parliament when he gave it the name of the famous sparkling wine produced in Barcelona or if he was being more subtle and implied that the Assembly was all "bubbles".(68) After the events of 19 July it was doubtful whether Maura's old-fashioned legalism could contain for long the calls for action from some of his more restless supporters. The situation had reached such a climax that it was difficult to believe that the Catholic middle classes would continue to reject an initiative which in the safe hands of the Catalan industrial bourgeoisie could free Spain from the despised and obsolete grip of the landowning oligarchy. In reply to Ossorio an increasingly lonely Maura stated that he would never lose his faith in Monarchy and legality. It was therefore impossible for him to collaborate in a movement which could lead to the ousting of the Monarch and which besides included many political groups which had been fighting him for years under the slogan *Maura No!*. Yet he realized that his position was becoming isolated even within his own movement. So he was prepared to give up and go. "*If the Assembly succeeds and then puts in practice some of the ideas preached by me for so many years I have no objection to getting out of the way*".(69)

The government was receiving equally menacing signals from the officers' quarters. There were rumours that Colonel Márquez was losing prestige among his fellow *Junteros*. The others had not been pleased at the knowledge that he had secret meetings with Cambó.(70) Nevertheless, the anti-oligarchical rhetoric of

the *Juntas* continued in earnest. In early August Father Planas was sent to Santander where the Monarch was on holiday to deliver a document in which the officers stated their position. Once more they underlined that they were behind Crown and country. They described the *Turno* parties as a collection of ambitious, incompetent intriguers who had brought the country to the verge of irreversible ruin. They encouraged the King to head the revolution desired by Spain. New men and new methods based on morality, equity and justice were needed. They supported the idea of a Constituent Cortes after General Elections had been held under a National Government. They even had a list of possible men who could form part of that cabinet. The post of Prime Minister was left blank for the King to select. General Marvá, a military man who according to Saborit was liked by the working classes, was suggested as possible Minister of Interior as guarantee of the purity of the suffrage; a relatively obscure General Borbón was to be in charge of War; Cambó was to take over Public Works; Santiago Alba, the Foreign Office; Urzaiz, the ostracized former Chancellor under the Romanones cabinet, was to return to his former post; Melquiades Alvarez, was to go to Justice, and two intellectuals, Ramón y Cajal and Torres Quevedo, were to be in charge of Education and Labour respectively.(71)

The Dato cabinet panicked. The *Juntas*, despite all their assurances of backing the ruling order, had not abandoned their attacks on the *Turno*. Furthermore, they were becoming more and more involved in politics. The programme endorsed by them was extremely close to that of the Assembly. Both rejected the

existing status quo and demanded the formation of a National Government to summon a Constituent Cortes. The list of possible ministers included only two dynastic politicians. One of them, Santiago Alba, was on the Left of the *Turno*, and the other, Urzaiz, had been fired from his post and since become one of the most outstanding critics. Francesc Cambó and Melquiades Alvarez, two leading personalities behind the Assembly initiative, were incorporated in the government. The others were either officers or else had no political connections. On 1 August the Socialist journal published sensational news. Romanones' approach to the PSOE to form a coalition government had been rebuffed. The desperation of the dynastic leaders had reached a fantastic level.

The government was running out of time and could not permit the celebration of a second meeting of the parliamentarians to be held in Oviedo on 16 August. The prospect of a political gathering in which the bourgeoisie, middle classes and proletariat could offer a political settlement which basically satisfied the desires of *Mauristas* and officers was becoming a nightmare for Dato and his friends. The last ditch stand would be a frontal attack on the weakest point of the opposition: the proletariat. The plan was to provoke the labour movement into an ill-timed strike so as to scare the bourgeoisie and use the army to quell the disturbances. Dato took a risky gamble which was to pay off.

A transport strike which began on 19 July in Valencia

coinciding with the Assembly in Barcelona would provide the administration with the lever by which the formidable alliance organized against it could be cracked. The struggle between railworkers and *La Compañía del Norte* had been going on since the summer of 1916. In July of that year the former had obtained an important victory, but all tended to indicate that the company was biding its time and waiting for the right moment to extract its revenge. In April 1917 *El Socialista* began to accuse the company of not fulfilling the terms of the settlement and seeking to provoke a new clash with its employees.(72) The transport strike of July 1917 gave the company its opportunity to settle old scores. In the polarized atmosphere of the summer of 1917 the dispute soon degenerated into a violent confrontation. It achieved paralysis of 70% of transport in Valencia and dockers joined in solidarity. On 21 July the Captain General of that region, General Tovar, declared a state of war. A few days later the situation had been normalized but at the price of two dead, several wounded and many arrests. General Tovar, eager to soothe matters, released all the prisoners and was willing to negotiate with the workers but *La Compañía del Norte* refused to re-hire thirty-six workers of the local branch of the Railways Union sacked during the conflict. The government had found an issue which could lead to its showdown with the labour movement. Soon the conflict began to get out of control. On 2 August the National Railway Trade Union announced that unless those employees laid off were allowed to return to their posts all its militants would strike on 10 August. The company did not back down and the trade union had to fulfil its threat. Furthermore,

this was the poorly timed moment in which the leaders of the UGT and the PSOE decided to link that offensive to the General Strike which had been planned since March.

The General Strike initiated on 13 August was a disaster right from the start. Stoppage was only a success in the industrial centres of Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa and Asturias. It had little if any impact on Central, Western and Southern Spain with the exception of mining concerns like Río Tinto, Cartagena, Peñarroya and Linares-La Carolina. Some railway companies even continued operating although the strike was a total success in all the mining areas. The revolution thus remained a purely urban revolt confined to Madrid and a few industrial spots in the North and the East and was barely noticed in the rest of the country. There was hardly any response in the two Castilles and Extremadura, with the exception of Santander, and in Andalusia it was basically limited to parts of Granada, Huelva, Córdoba and Seville. It failed to establish any links with the countryside and therefore facilitated the task of the authorities in putting it down. The Catholic trade unions published a manifesto condemning the movement and expressing their readiness to continue working and young monarchists volunteered their assistance to run the public services and act as honorary policemen. The final key factor that sealed the fate of the General Strike was the fact that the army remained united and loyal to the government and did not leave any crack through which the revolutionaries could bring the regime down. So the events of March in Petrograd would not be repeated in Spain. A

State of War was quickly declared and the army placed in charge of public order.

The workers managed during the first day to bring Madrid to a standstill. Bricklayers, bakers and printers responded as one man to the calls to strike. Pickets made sure that shops and bars remained closed. The following days pitched battles ensued when strikers tried to halt transport in the capital. Trams were heavily protected by troops. Workers threw stones and were answered by volleys of bullets. Machine guns were used against demonstrators in the proletarian districts of Cuatro Caminos, Ventas and La Guindalera. It was a merciless slaughter which left dozens of casualties even though women and children often acted as shields for the workers. On the night of 14 August the police arrested the Strike Committee in the house of a Socialist couple, José Ortega and Juana Sanabria, at 12, *Calle del Desengaño* (Disillusion street) A second Strike Committee was also captured the following day. The movement was deprived of leadership. By 16 August the revolt was over in the capital. Nevertheless, a mutiny in the *Cárcel Modelo*, the local prison, was crushed bloodily. Suspiciously enough, seven leading militants were among the casualties. Witnesses would say later that they had been executed once the mutiny had been put down. Catalonia with thirty-seven dead registered the highest number of casualties. There the strike had been effectively organized by the Anarcho-Syndicalists. Stoppage was total in the capital and in neighbouring towns. Unlike the UGT, the CNT militants were willing to use more violent tactics. Thus barricades were soon

put up and snipers harassed the activities of the soldiers. The latter responded with appalling ferocity. Some quarters of Barcelona were only taken after days of street fighting and shootings and in places like Sabadell the workers' headquarters were reduced to rubble by artillery fire. On 16 August the journalist and Republican Deputy Marcelino Domingo was arrested. By then the CNT leadership had also been captured or was in hiding. Another place with a high level of casualties was Bilbao. With moderate Socialists like the journalist and efficient orator Indalecio Prieto in charge there, the workers conducted an essentially non-violent protest. Yet they were met by fierce brutality with soldiers firing upon the population at random. In the mines of Río Tinto ten workers were gunned down by the troops. There were also violent clashes in the province of Alicante. In Yecla three people, including a Socialist councillor, were killed. In other provinces like Valencia, Guipúzcoa and Saragossa the toll was lower. By 18 August the government could boast that the revolution had been crushed. The moment of panic was over. It was time for speeches, medals and rewards. The leaders of the revolutionary movement had been captured, were in hiding or had fled abroad. The miners in Asturias were able to hold out on their own for seventeen more days. It was useless and they had finally to surrender. The working class leaders had to conclude that they could not match the repressive might of the state. The official figures released by the authorities confirmed a total of 71 dead, two hundred wounded and 2000 arrested. The reality was probably two or three times those numbers.(73)

An analysis of the failure of the revolutionary movement of August 1917 reveals some important facts: firstly, the initiative during the events belonged all the time to the government which by means of provocation and deceit managed to outmanoeuvre the labour movement; secondly, the internal contradictions of the basically moderate Socialist organization which was pushed by circumstances to lead a revolution became glaring; and thirdly, the final decision to go ahead with the revolutionary strike was encouraged by the overconfidence of the Socialist leadership which believed that both bourgeoisie and army would be behind their initiative .

The Dato cabinet used and abused a social conflict to break the always uneasy alliance between bourgeoisie and proletariat and to win the *Juntas* for the cause of law and order. There had existed a pending threat of a General Strike since March 1917, but the Socialist leadership only very reluctantly, and after exhausting all the alternatives, decided to play that card in August. In fact, whereas the government tried from a very early stage to spread the feeling of paranoia and fear, the Socialists were more than willing to follow the leadership of Republicans and Regionalists.

In June a Provisional Committee had been set up by Republicans and Socialists. In the event of launching a General Strike to overthrow the regime, plans had been made to divide the leadership geographically. A sick Pablo Iglesias, seconded by some leading Socialists--Julián Besteiro, Francisco Largo

Caballero, Andrés Saborit and Manuel Cordero--was to be in charge of Madrid, Castille and Vizcaya. The Reformist Melquiades Alvarez backed by the leaders of the Asturian Socialist miners, Teodomiro Menéndez and Manuel LLaneza and the Anarcho-Syndicalists Eleuterio Quintanilla and José María Martínez was to lead the movement in Asturias and León; and finally the Radical Alejandro Lerroxx supported by the CNT leadership was to organize matters in Catalonia, Valencia and Andalusia.(74) Those plans had rapidly been put on ice when Cambó came up with his initiative. Most Republicans and Socialists were delighted to back the peaceful political revolution envisaged by the Catalan leader. At the same time, the government was busy spreading rumours that a railway strike and a revolution were imminent and giving orders to the local authorities to take opportune measures such as the surveillance and arrest of the leading suspicious elements.(75)

By the time of the Assembly, all the revolutionary initiatives had been postponed. A Strike Committee had been formed by Largo Caballero and Daniel Anguiano for the UGT and Julián Besteiro, Andrés Saborit and the only leading woman in the Socialist movement, Virginia González for the PSOE.(76) Its mission was limited to the mobilization of the working class but only if the Assembly was repressed and the parliamentarians arrested. Thus the outbreak of the transport strike in Valencia came as a total and unwelcome surprise to them. They certainly had nothing to do with it.

The origins of that affair remains highly

controversial. There are two hypotheses. First, it was instigated by *agents provocateurs* under the instructions of the government. Blame is placed on the Secretary of the Railworkers Trade Union, Ramón Cordoncillo, who was a relative of the Conservative Deputy and Editor of the *Juntas'* mouthpiece, *La Correspondencia Militar*, Julio Amado. It has been suggested that he provoked the Valencia railway workers into taking precipitate action. Certainly, his role during the August events was more than suspicious. He was accused of not following instructions and permitting several railways to continue operating. Cordoncillo was later expelled from the Socialist ranks. The second explanation seems more likely. Félix Azzati, a local leading Republican with Jacobin leanings, feeling overconfident that the regime was about to fall influenced the railway workers to make their move. When Azzati arrived in Barcelona he was reprimanded by Pablo Iglesias and Melquiades Alvarez.(77) Whether *agents provocateurs* or local Republicans were behind the July transport strike in Valencia has not been proved. Nevertheless, the importance of that dispute cannot be questioned. It was the first step towards the General Strike in August and its inconvenient start.(78)

If the role of the government in July remains obscure, there is hardly any doubt that it provoked the revolutionary events of August.(79) The Socialists were outmanoeuvred and outwitted by a besieged and discredited cabinet. Daniel Anguiano, member of the Strike Committee and President of the Railways' Trade Union, would declare one year later:

Who could benefit from a General Strike then?...We did not want it...We were prepared to accept all kinds of compromises...We intended to avoid it until the last moment ...but Dato wanted to discredit the labour movement and to justify the repression of a General Strike which he himself was provoking so as to consolidate his position in power, obtain the decree of dissolution of Cortes and maintain the fiction of the Turno...".(80)

Largo Caballero, the influential Trade Unionist leader and also member of the Strike Committee, added:

"The General Strike did not take place because we wanted it but because of the attitude of the government towards the railworkers. Our strategy was to avoid a conflict....We had kept all the administrations informed of our plans and resolutions since May 1916...".(81)

There is sufficient documentary evidence to show that the Socialist leaders tried to halt the tide of events until the last minute but they would discover that the intransigence of the *Compañía del Norte* was not only upheld but inspired by the government. The tragedy was that the inability of the Socialists to control the situation allowed the government to regain the initiative which it had lost in July and set an agenda that ended in a bloodbath. Unlike the Bolsheviks in Russia, who, at almost the same time, realizing that the opportune moment to launch their offensive had not yet arrived, managed to hold back the

masses, the Spanish Socialists let themselves be dragged forward by the course of events. Lenin's party would re-emerge three months later stronger than ever. By contrast, In Spain the Dato administration, presented with the chance to nip the insurrection in the bud before it was too late, did not hesitate. With its total control of censorship the government could spread all sorts of rumours and fantasies and even claim to be the saviour of public order.(82)

Initially a compromise seemed to be within reach. Viscount Eza, the aged landowner in charge of Public Works, seemed to be working for a conciliation. When he met for first the time a workers' delegation presided over by Daniel Anguiano, Eza had declared that he would not allow the company to carry out reprisals or dismissals. That was the critical moment at which the Minister of Interior Sánchez Guerra stepped in, backed the intransigence of the company, made any agreement impossible and thereby let the dispute slide towards its inevitable final clash. The railworkers, pressed by the UGT, were prepared to postpone the strike scheduled for 10 August to allow time to find a compromise. *La Compañía del Norte* agreed to meet the trade union representatives but refused to discuss the question of the re-employment of the sacked workers which was in fact the basic cause of the dispute. Furthermore, the government accused the workers of breaking off the dialogue by postponing the strike but not cancelling it altogether. That essentially amounted to an ultimatum: the government demanded that the Railworkers Trade Union surrender unconditionally or otherwise fulfil its threat

and launch the strike on the scheduled date of 10 August. As late as 9 August the Trade Union had expressed its willingness to accept the dismissal of its militants if the company was prepared to give an explanation. The workers could not concede more. It was all in vain. Guerra and Dato had made up their minds. They were prepared to "take on the strike". Two days before the launching of the strike had become inevitable, the Minister of Interior was already giving instructions as if he knew for certain it was to take place. (83)

Until it was banned on 12 August *El Socialista* repeatedly argued that the Railworkers were being pushed against their will to strike. *La Tribuna* commented on the situation on 10 August as follows:

"We regret a government which is provoking with its attitude a serious social conflict. This is the same government that when faced by the powerful (a clear allusion to the Juntas) showed its weakness. The workers have fled from the strike and the government has thrown them into it".

The railworkers could not back down and decided to go ahead with the strike. It was a difficult choice that was finally taken by a majority vote of just one. The decision forced the hand of the PSOE and UGT National Executives. For solidarity they decided to bring forward the date of the General Strike so it would coincide with that of the railworkers. Surprisingly the

opposition came from Pablo Iglesias himself who from his sickbed argued that the Socialists should carry out a solidarity action but not a revolutionary strike. Yet for once his advice went unheard. The Socialists believed that if the railworkers went ahead on their own, their organization so painfully built up would be destroyed and the whole Socialist labour movement would suffer the consequences.(84)

Their decision played into the hands of the government. Once the strike began it was easy for Sánchez Guerra, in control of the media, to describe the Socialist leaders as blood-thirsty revolutionaries or even at the moment of their arrest to present them in a ridiculous fashion. The Minister of the Interior spread the news that some had been found under beds and others in a wardrobe. Thousands of pesetas and much foreign currency had been discovered among their belongings. Nothing could be further from the truth. Yet any means were admissible for Dato and Guerra to discredit their enemies.(85)

At such a historical moment the Socialists failed to become the hegemonic force among all those fighting against the regime. They were caught in the middle of two parallel offensives. On the one hand, the UGT had had an alliance with the CNT since July 1916, and on the other, they were collaborating with Republicans and Regionalists in the Assembly. The former alliance definitely had a more radical and revolutionary character than the latter. The Socialist leaders vacillated as they felt more comfortable supporting the parliamentarians than

co-operating with the Anarcho-Syndicalists. Nevertheless, they could not forget that the pact with the CNT was a response to pressures from below. Thus a breach with the CNT as a result of the extreme moderation of the Socialists could cause a significant loss of militants flooding to the more revolutionary rival organization.

The Socialists believed that their duty was to help the bourgeoisie carry out its revolution. According to the Socialists, a backward country like Spain did not have the necessary conditions for a Socialist take-over. Hence they were to limit themselves to backing the middle classes' objective to set up a modern democratic republic with an advanced programme of social reforms to satisfy the workers. Consoled by a Marxian vision of inevitable historical stages, they were resigned to the fact that for some time the prominent role had to be played by the capitalist bourgeoisie.(86) As late as 2 August, a jubilant Pablo Iglesias was writing in *El Socialista* that all the important social forces in the country---bourgeoisie, middle classes, intelligentsia and proletariat---concurred in demanding the overthrow of the regime and the establishment of a democratic republic.(87)

During the summer of 1917 differences between the two workers' organizations became evident. Whereas the CNT envisioned an heroic insurrection in which the proletariat with the aid of bombs and pistols would topple the regime in one or two days of street fighting, the UGT was planning a massive, solidly

organized strike movement and working beyond purely trade union level conducting negotiations with the other parties.(88) Suspicion and mistrust between Socialists and Anarcho-Syndicalists were never totally overcome. The former kept advising restraint and the latter favouring action. Angel Pestaña, the Leonese watchmaker and leading member of the Catalan branch of the CNT, noted how since March 1917 his organization had been working feverishly for an uprising spending every last peseta in acquiring weapons, while the Socialists did not want to hear anything about it. Then in July Pablo Iglesias infuriated the Syndicalists when during his visit to Barcelona to attend the Assembly he tried to cool down their revolutionary intentions. Iglesias even told them: "*For you, manual workers, it is easy to defend violent methods, but for us, intellectuals, it is different*". The old PSOE leader could not have been very successful as another "manual worker", Largo Caballero, was sent to Barcelona four days later on a mission to persuade the CNT to call off any hasty move. According to Pestaña, Largo defended with dignity the Socialist position, but his face could not hide his fear. Largo had met clandestinely a group of fully armed Syndicalists at Valvidriera, in the mountains outside the Catalan capital. The Socialist Councillor used to bureaucratic tasks and to meeting people in his office had to put up for several hours with revolutionaries who did not cease brandishing their weapons and shouting anti-UGT slogans.(89) For the UGT-PSOE leadership in Madrid the *Lliga* was an important partner in the political revolution to topple the system. For the Catalan CNT, however, the *Lliga*, representing the interests of the industrial

bourgeoisie, was the enemy. It was thus not surprising that they were more than reluctant to collaborate with the Regionalists and to subordinate their activities to someone like Lerrox whom they quite rightly regarded as a demagogue without any ideological convictions.

The unresolved transport dispute was a devastating shock for the Socialists. They were no longer merely seconding the other political forces but had been suddenly pushed by circumstances into leading the offensive. It was to be a baptism of fire as a leading force in opposition.(90) It was a role for which they were not prepared. They were moderate, prudent and reformist politicians and trade unionists transformed overnight into revolutionaries. The ideological contradictions of the Spanish Marxists were to cost dear all the revolutionary hopes of their nation. They felt caught in the vanguard of an insurrectionary process which was not of their own making and were afraid to assume the role of protagonists. In the end they chose the worst of both worlds. Trapped between the moderation of their parliamentarian partners and the impulsiveness of Syndicalists and some Republicans, they backed an intermediate solution. They realized that a sudden ill-timed General Strike could lead to an abrupt end of all the revolutionary illusions and yet they did not halt that process. They tried to please both radicals and moderates. They accepted leadership of the revolution but at the same time attempted to make it as peaceful as possible and to limit its goals to the political programme voted by the parliamentarians.

Once more the man in charge of drawing up the manifesto-programme for the General Strike was the revisionist Julián Besteiro. The document was remarkable for its moderation. It was an appeal to both workers and the nation. It was simply a political statement with no mention of any social demands. The proletariat had endured months of harassment and injustices with fortitude but the dogmatic position of the administration in the railways dispute pushed the workers to an unwanted strike. It was clearly stressed that it was not only the labour movement but also the *Juntas* and Assembly that had demanded the political transformation of the regime as the only solution to regenerate the country. Apart from its anti-monarchist tone, the objectives sought by the Socialists were exactly the same as those of the Assembly--namely, the creation of a provisional government to celebrate fair and clean elections for a Constituent Cortes. The manifesto was accompanied by a series of instructions in which workers were told to avoid clashes with the authorities and to greet soldiers as fellow working men.(91)

Thus the Spanish Marxists went out of their way to make sure the bourgeoisie did not become alarmed by their action. In fact, the final goal was to facilitate a conquest of power by the liberal bourgeoisie.(92) Social and economic reforms were therefore ignored and the programme of the bourgeoisie accepted. It was a political and, as far as the Socialists could control it, a peaceful movement. There was obviously no way in which they could supervise the propaganda and the activities of the Anarcho-Syndicalists and some Republicans whose violent rhetoric

often clashed with the Socialist plans.(93)

" A peaceful strike, but political, we do not deny that. We could not leave the workers' organizations abandoned and defenceless with each one pursuing different goals...We were therefore forced to lead them in a General Strike...

...when we declared the strike our objectives were those of the Assembly of parliamentarians...and it never had the violent character of the Juntas when an ultimatum of 12 hours was given....

....our ideal was to change the regime, but our desire was to make it possible through peaceful means..."(94)

"...the manifesto and the instructions given by the Strike Committee were all peaceful...advising the workers not to resort to violence...in the meantime the Minister of the Interior was lying to the public and turning the army against the people...

...What did the proletariat ask in August?...Just what the Juntas had demanded on 1 June but in a more peaceful way: a Constituent Cortes and a government to represent the will of the country..."(95)

"...I carried weapons and ammunition to Bilbao. But when I heard the instructions, those like me who had carried weapons and ammunition, made sure that where the weapons had been stored, ammunition could not be found and then used by elements who later could not be controlled..." 96)

Some of the statements made later by the members of the Strike Committee were astonishing. The August movement had been after all a revolutionary attempt. It had been a serious bid to overthrow the oligarchy by illegal and extra-constitutional means.(97) It is difficult to see however how a revolution would succeed if the revolutionaries lack weapons. Indeed many witnesses would later describe the August days as a shooting gallery in which the troops had fired relentlessly on the unarmed crowds.(98)

The Socialists' historical record shows that traditionally they had always been against any kind of revolutionary adventures. The events of August 1917 constituted a departure from their normal cautious position. They starved their followers of weapons not only to assure the bourgeoisie of their moderate intentions but also because they were totally convinced that they were bound to succeed. They believed that their initiative could not fail as it seemed to have the support of the bourgeoisie and at least the neutrality of the officers. Had the *Juntas* and Assembly not expressed their willingness to overthrow the corrupt ruling governing elites and regenerate Spain?. Once the government had made a solution for the railways conflict impossible and the railworkers had voted for strike action, the Socialist leadership cast away its usual prudence and, blinded by the regenerationist atmosphere of 1917, had decided to declare a General Strike. They believed that it was their necessary contribution to the political renovation of the country. A contribution which would be welcomed by the others.

The mastermind of the operation, Julián Besteiro, would latter comment bitterly:

"...If we had thought that there was no possibility of victory we would not have voted for the strike. There could not be victory in a General Strike with a political character if there was not a section of the bourgeoisie prepared to take over, or if the army was united against the people and ready to crush the rebellion...

...the act of 1 June had an inevitable impact...It represented a moment of jubilation...We were naive enough to believe the revolution had already been accomplished...".(99)

The labour movement in Spain paid dearly for the optimism and excessive confidence of its leaders. They were carried away by their own dreams.(100) Their ideological subordination to the bourgeoisie and their misinterpretation of the officers' attitude would strike a deadly blow against all the revolutionary illusions. It also put an end to the dream of a united workers' movement. The moderate Socialist leadership decided to abandon revolutionary activity and return to reformist and legalist tactics. The CNT re-affirmed its a-political leanings and its reliance on direct action.

Hopes that the army would refuse to defend the regime quickly disappeared. The peasant soldiers obeyed the orders of their officers who in turn ignored all their anti-oligarchical

language of the previous two months and followed the instructions of their Generals. The military response was if anything shocking in its unexpected brutality. The army acted once more as the praetorian guardian of the regime, the last bulwark of law and order. General Echague, the Captain General of Madrid, drowned workers' protests in blood and transformed the mutiny at the *Cárcel modelo* into a massacre.(101) In Barcelona, the city of origin of the *Juntas*, the officers did not hesitate to obey the orders of General Marina. Artillery was often used to subdue the revolutionary zeal of the Anarcho-Syndicalists. In order to prevent sniper fire, Marina commanded that windows and shutters should remain open and soldiers instructed to shoot at those houses which had not complied.(102) Despite Socialist efforts to stage a peaceful movement in Bilbao, General Souza was no more merciful there. He announced that all those caught with weapons would be summarily executed and that soldiers would respond to any aggression in kind. Strikers were unfairly blamed for an unfortunate accident: the derailment of a train which caused many casualties. Reprisals were savage. The city was occupied by troops who for days kept shooting at any moving target. Children and elderly people were the main victims of the indiscriminate slaughter.(103) Yet first prize for violent repression went to General Burguete in Asturias. Burguete hitherto had been regarded as an intelligent and sophisticated officer. On the first day of the strike he had already published a manifesto promising to fight the revolutionaries to the death. Burguete encouraged the use of a train, nicknamed the "Train of death", to patrol the province. From its windows, soldiers shot at random on the

unarmed and terrorised population. In a new manifesto on 17 August he described as "wild beasts" those miners still resisting in the mountains and vowed to hunt them down. Hundreds were tortured and many shot, but he fulfilled his promise.(104)

Right-wing *Mauristas* quickly abandoned their opposition to the government and declared that the duty of every good citizen was to fight those encouraging social disorder. Some of them volunteered to act as honorary policemen.(105) With a few exceptions, Republicans adopted a passive role. Melquiades Alvarez collaborated with the Socialists in Asturias and even gave shelter to Manuel Llaneza, the miners' leader whose life was in serious danger if captured by General Burguete's troops.(106) Lerroux confirmed his moral bankruptcy and his ability to disappear as soon as trouble arose. He met in his hide-out a CNT delegation who informed him of the fighting behind the barricades in the streets. He was horrified when they asked him for weapons to continue the struggle. The CNT then sought to collaborate with Marcelino Domingo and the separatist Francesc Maciá. Lerroux stayed in hiding to see whether the revolution was successful. If so, he would demand to become President of the Republic. When it became clear that the authorities had gained the upper hand, the Radical leader bribed a police superintendent and fled to France.(107)

The attitude of the industrial bourgeoisie towards the revolutionary movement was ambivalent. Cambó and his friends were not happy with a move which could well mean that the initiative

was slipping from their grasp. For the *Lliga*, the Assembly had always been an exercise in high politics in which the proletariat had to play a subordinate role. The *Lliga* was not necessarily anti-monarchist. On the contrary, it was happy to seek a political accommodation within the regime. The objective was simply to end once and for all the monopoly of government enjoyed by the centralist landowning oligarchy and definitely not to subvert the social order. In that scheme, the proletariat was one more bargaining factor with which to persuade the King to accept the Assembly programme. The August revolution could endanger all that. It is more than obvious that the *Lliga* was not enthusiastic about the prospect of trigger-happy Anarchists taking to the streets in Barcelona. However, disowning an initiative which was being made on its behalf would have been a political error. If the revolution did succeed Cambó would have become the leader of the moderate forces in the new political order. He was aware of what was being prepared and would not have wasted time in demanding his share of the spoils.(108) The strategy to follow was to wait for the evolution of events without making any specific commitments. Thus the Catalanists hastened to make clear that they had nothing to do with the strike, but, expecting to collect the fruits if successful, they did not condemn it either. The Catalan bourgeoisie had behaved very differently during the Tragic Week of 1909 when its newspaper, *La Veu de Catalunya*, had even encouraged the citizens to inform the police about the leading agitators. During the first moments of confusion there were rumours that the Assembly was throwing in its lot with the strike and was delegating Lerroux to co-ordinate the offensive.

That was rapidly denied in a statement signed by the leading Republican and Catalanist politicians on 14 August. Yet in that document blame for the grave situation was put down to the government's refusal to pay attention to the demands of public opinion. That attitude had provoked the violent protest of the people.(109) The following day Cambó's lieutenant, Abadal, wrote in *La Veu* that it was ridiculous to accuse the *Lliga* of being behind the General Strike. On 16 August, all the Catalanist leaders appeared before a judge to deny any allegations that they were involved in the revolution.(109) The Strike had been virtually crushed and therefore it was time for Cambó to make statements on behalf of law and order.

The August revolution was purely a domestic affair. No foreign state was involved in its preparation. Yet the Allies were accused of being behind the events in order to push Spain into the war on their side. Almost all Republicans and Socialists strongly supported the Allied cause and had the General Strike succeeded the nation would probably have moved closer to the Western Powers. Nevertheless, at no time were they encouraged or financially backed to overthrow the regime. On the contrary, extremely conservative diplomats like the British Ambassador, Arthur Hardinge, continually went out of their way to prove their good intentions to the Dato administration.

As the situation became more and more radicalized, Hardinge avoided seeing any of the representatives of the left but was informed by the Portuguese Ambassador, who obviously did

not share his scruples, of the strides made by the revolutionary movement. He regretted that his Portuguese colleague seemed to be in personal sympathy with them. Yet in conversation both agreed that Lerroux was unprincipled and venal and Melquiades Alvarez was a well-meaning idealist who after a revolution would be swept away by mobs and military tyrants.(110) The Western Powers were the main foreign investors in Spain. They owned many of the economic resources of the nation, particularly mines, and were the main recipients of Catalan and Basque industrial production. Thus they preferred the existing status quo to the prospect of economic disruption and social turmoil which might be produced by a revolution staged by the pro-Allied forces in Spain. Furthermore, the example of Russia, torn apart by political militancy and military chaos after the fall of Tsarism, persuaded the British and French governments not to encourage initiatives which could lead to similar situations. It is difficult to believe that the French and British governments were conspiring against their own profits and shareholders. They had nothing to gain from civil disturbance in Spain. That was the message that Hardinge tried to pass to his hosts on several occasions with little success. Following his reports, twice in July the British cabinet stated in parliament that it was not its policy to force Spain or any other neutral country into the war.(111) Simultaneously, Hardinge was being advised by E.A.Unthorff, manager of the London and Westminster Bank, that gold was entering Spain but only due to profitable financial circumstances produced by the war. He denied categorically that the gold was being introduced to support civil unrest.(112)

In fact, fear and paranoia that the Western Entente was behind a revolution gripped the Spanish rulers. The *Germanophile* press did not waste time in exploiting the situation and spread rumours that unrest was being caused by foreign gold. Its alleged objective was to blackmail Spain into the war by threatening her with domestic revolution if she continued to remain neutral. There existed all sorts of rumours, mostly unfounded, that Catalanists, Socialists and Republicans were in close contact with their French counterparts so as to launch a revolution in Spain. The Embassy at Paris was continually bombarded with instructions from the Spanish government to put pressure on the French government to end the unfriendly press campaign being conducted there. Leon y Castillo confirmed the hostility of certain newspapers towards the Spanish regime, but also noted that it was not officially sanctioned by the French administration whose publications were behaving with courtesy and moderation. It was absurd to demand that the French government silence those newspapers which in fact were only showing their support for those in Spain who were the most ardent friends of the Entente. Castillo suggested that the Spanish Socialist Fabra Ribas, a former member of the PSOE's National Executive now resident in Paris, could be at the centre of the intrigue and vowed to keep him under surveillance. (113) The paranoia sometimes appeared ridiculous. For instance, Dato commented that the railworkers were floating on French money., travelling everywhere by car and drinking champagne. (114)

The revolutionary events in the summer of 1917

constituted a serious setback for the Allied diplomatic campaign in Spain. Rumours and suspicions that the Entente Powers were working to produce disturbances which might thereby force the nation to enter the war on their side were real enough. Hardinge even met Dato and his Foreign Minister, the Marquis of Lema, and offered his services for investigating the truth of any such stories.(115) It was to no avail. A known Allied supporter like Lema even suggested that his former pro-Entente position had been rendered very difficult as a consequence of the existing incidents. Additionally, the Monarch, who since the events in Russia in March had been shifting towards the German camp, now thought his worst fears confirmed. On several occasions he declared that British and French radicals were behind the revolutionary conspiracies in his country.(116)

During the General Strike the Minister of Interior through his tight control of the press tried to hint that foreign agents were behind the unrest. Sánchez Guerra could thus present the government not only as the defender of law and order but also as the saviour of a nation under attack from an international conspiracy.(117) The calumny that the members of the Strike Committee had been found with millions in foreign currency was believed in many quarters, not least among many officers and provincial authorities. Some, like the Civil governor of Huelva, Eusebio de Salas, or the notorious General Burguete in Asturias, proclaimed that foreign gold was behind the disturbances.(118) Many believed that it was better to shoot workers in Spain than to dig trenches in France. Thus they did not hesitate to repress

the strike with extreme brutality.(119)

The Spanish authorities could never prove that the Western Powers had any link whatsoever with the events of that summer. *La Acción* tried to present as proof of their complicity some editorials in French left-wing newspapers like *La Victorie* and *L'humanite* which regretted the failure of the revolution and argued that those who had taken part were the pro-Allied forces in Spain.(120) This did not prove anything which was not already known. Republicans and Socialists had always backed the Allied cause and it was not a secret that a Republican regime dominated by them sooner or later would side with the Entente in the European conflict. Furthermore, it was normal for the French left to side with its Spanish counterparts. Yet this was far from showing any involvement of the Western governments at an official level. In fact, only one diplomat, Monsieur Gilliard, the French Consul at Coruña, was expelled from Spain and even he was allowed to return when the French government guaranteed that those "revolutionaries" who had escaped to France, in particular Lerrox and Maciá, would remain away from the border.(121)

The damage to the Allied image within Spanish ruling circles was done despite the lack of evidence. The King himself could not restrain his temper and when he met the French Ambassador the first time after the crushing of the General Strike accused France of supplying gold and encouraging the revolutionary movement in Spain. Taken by surprise the Ambassador Geoffray replied with dignity in a country of 40 million people

there might be a certain number of persons who would be willing to participate in revolutionary plots against Spain but that was not a proof of the complicity of the French government.(122) The Central Powers had won an important propaganda coup. More than ever, they could now claim to be the true friends of Spain and her Monarchy. Thus for almost one more year they would be able to carry on undisturbed with their subversive activities against the allies both in the peninsula and in Morocco.

5.3.-The end of the *Turno Pacífico*:

The collapse of the General Strike constituted the failure of democratization from below. Yet if the Canovite system resisted that attack, its governing elites would no longer be able to put the clock back. The events of August exposed clearly the moral and ideological bankruptcy of *Turno* politics. The first ever political initiative led and co-ordinated by the Socialists heralded the arrival of mass politics and social mobilization. The old-fashioned Liberalism of elites and notables represented by the dynastic parties was inevitably broken. Their permanence in power henceforth merely rested on the goodwill of the repressive forces of the state. The army had stopped the revolution but who was going to stop the army?.

The victory of the Conservative government would be short-lived. Dato was soon to realize that he was living on borrowed time. Quashing the General Strike had offered a temporary respite to his cabinet. Yet once the revolutionary

spasm of August was over, the government found itself back with the situation of July: isolated, discredited and loathed by nearly all the social and political forces of the country.

All the attempts made by the Dato administration to link the Assembly with the revolutionary movement failed. The bourgeoisie under the leadership of Cambó returned to the attack. The Catalan leader's objective was to re-organize the Assembly in order to put his political revolution into practice. On 30 August he declared to *El Heraldo de Madrid* that the General Strike had been a foolish action which had only served to delay and obstruct the offensive mounted in July. He denied having supported or encouraged the movement and even added that a General Strike was an old-fashioned political method which was always bound to lead to failure. Cambó was seeking to distance himself from his "embarrassing" and now defeated partners on the left and also stress the moderation and seriousness of his alternative. The Catalan leader was singled out by Dato and his ministers as the mastermind of the anti-governmental offensive and the main political threat to their continuity in office. From the Conservative organ *La Epoca*, Cambó and his plans were continually criticized when not ridiculed. His initiative was described as a recipe for civil war and he was portrayed as a skilful but unprincipled politician who had tried to exploit the unsophisticated working classes. Now that they were no longer of any use to him, they alleged that he cynically called the August events a foolish thing and dubbed as fools the very people who he had encouraged to strike. 1 Cambó retorted by calling the

Turno "an orthopaedic device" and starting a tour throughout Northern Spain. There he met members of the Basque Nationalist party and Melquiades Alvarez. He also made contact with the leaders of the Liberal party Alhucemas, Romanones and Alba.(2) On 27 September he wrote to Maura and tried to persuade the veteran statesman once more to join forces with him. Cambó suggested that both were working for the same ends. He insisted that a radical change from above was urgent. If the King kept relying on the discredited dynastic parties, it would not be long before a real revolution, different from the "grotesque adventure" of August, would take place. Cambó added that the situation was so grave that it imposed duties upon all of them, but particularly on someone with the charisma and prestige of Antonio Maura. A disaster would occur if they remained passive and Dato obtained the decree of dissolution of the Cortes with which to call new elections and continue with the political fiction.(3)

As in July, Cambó's appeal to the veteran Conservative leader went unheard. Maura's orthodox legalism and reluctance to take an active stand was one of the strongest assets of the government. He agreed with Cambó on the need to reform the system from above, but refused once more to endorse any project which could endanger the safety of the regime. He continued to present himself as the only dynastic leader with a real mass following in the country who could offer a popular solution in a moment of political and military unrest. It was short-sightedness or naivety on Maura's part not to realize that, although he loyally

distanced himself and his movement from any active renovating tendency in the country, the Monarch was not prepared to back him against the dynastic parties, all the more so since Maura, as a result of his own refusal, was not an alternative who could count on the support of either the *Juntas* or the Assembly. Moreover, the King, always jealous of his central and paramount position in the state, was happier to deal with people like Dato or Romanones than with Maura. The latter's strong personality and style made him much more difficult to manipulate. On 4 October he confided to the foreign Minister Marquis of Lema: "*With Maura there will arrive a moment in which it will be he or the Monarchy. I had enough of him after what he did in 1909 and 1913*".(4) The only pleasure left to Maura was to see the fulfilment of his prediction that the *Turno* was about to crumble. He had chosen, however, the position of passive spectator rather than that of a leading protagonist. The information he received in September from his sons Gabriel and Miguel, during his holiday at the village of Solozarno in Santander, seemed to confirm his prophecy. The conclusion they drew was that Dato's days in power were numbered. The Prime Minister was a political corpse who was doomed to fall as soon as the State of War was lifted and the constitutional guarantees restored. They noted that Dato was still working to fix the next general elections and had even offered a safe seat in Tenerife to Delgado Barreto, the right-wing editor of *La Acción*, in exchange for a truce. Barreto had naturally declined. Both brothers pointed out that the government was isolated and despised by everyone, Liberals, Republicans and *Juntas*. The officers' anger with the cabinet kept

growing. They were tired of economic shortages and fed up with the moral bankruptcy of the Dato administration.(5)

In fact, the main threat to the existence of the government came from military quarters. Their crucial role in August suppressing the revolt had placed the officers in a privileged position. Dato was aware that the military issue was still a thorn in the flesh. His strategy was to continue with his policy of appeasement and flattery in order to deflect the attacks coming from that sector. His objective was to win a substantial number of the officers over so that once the army was divided it would be politically harmless.(6) It did not work. Soon the *Juntas* discovered that the popularity they had enjoyed in June had evaporated after the brutal repression of the August movement. To add insult to injury, they realized that they had been used by the government to put down a rebellion which it had itself provoked. The officers turned their anger on the administration.

By unleashing the might of the army against the workers, Dato was unconsciously sealing the fate of his government and of the constitutional Monarchy. The Prime Minister was the first to be shocked by the ferocity displayed by the troops. The armed services normally loathed the idea of being called out to police the streets. Yet once they had been given the task they did not want to be told how to do their job. For them putting down a revolt was just a military operation in which the workers were treated as enemies who deserved no mercy. On 12

August the Captain General of Madrid, General Echague, had already advised the Prime Minister that his soldiers would obey orders. The General also hinted that the job would be accomplished to its final consequences and without political interference.

The members of the government were appalled by the number of casualties. They were oligarchical politicians who, although eager to cling to power by any means, were not particularly blood-thirsty. Dato appeared as a panic-stricken leader who was responsible for the fact that the army was out of control massacring people in the streets. The members of the Strike Committee were captured and threatened with immediate execution. For weeks, they were held incommunicado before being told that they would be tried by a military court. Additionally, in flagrant violation of the constitution and by orders of the Captain General of Barcelona, General Marina, the Parliamentary Deputy Marcelino Domingo was arrested. The publication of his pamphlet appealing to the troops to join the workers had aroused the anger of the officers. He suffered all sorts of physical and verbal abuse and only the personal intervention of Colonel Márquez, who rushed to the military barracks, saved him from death. Finally, for his own safety, Domingo was sent to a prison-ship and placed under the custody of the navy. Dato was either too weak or too frightened to stand up to the officers. He had to condone their actions while at the same time dealing with the growing protests of the politicians. Romanones himself wrote to Dato regarding the Domingo affair and demanding respect for the

constitution. The Speaker of Congress Villanueva defended with praiseworthy energy the rights of Marcelino Domingo and won the support of several influential Deputies. According to the law, a member of parliament could only be tried by the Supreme Court. Dato tried to evade the question and Marcelino Domingo was not finally released without charges until October.(7)

The officers were furious when they saw that they had apparently been pawns in the hands of the government. On 21 August, as a reward for past services, seventy-one million pesetas were granted to increase defence expenditure.(8) It was not enough to appease them. They returned to their anti-oligarchical and regenerationist rhetoric. The Central Junta at Barcelona issued a document on 7 September to all the members in the provinces. The operation of putting down the rebellion was praised but strong words were reserved for the Dato Ministry whose lack of foresight had turned a peaceful strike into a revolutionary movement. In a clear allusion to the government, they suggested that certain malicious politicians were trying to blame the army for the subsequent repression in order to build a wall between armed services and people. Therefore to clean up their image and demonstrate their benevolence, they demanded from the government the lifting of martial law, the re-establishment of constitutional guarantees and the acceptance of responsibility for the repression, Finally in what amounted to a dire warning, they stated that it was their duty to intervene more actively in politics so as to impose justice and morality upon politicians.(9 In fact, the decision to take a more active role

in politics was nothing new. The novelty was that for the first time they recognized it officially. The *Juntas* had reached important conclusions before being interrupted by the outbreak of the General Strike. On 9 August they had decided to act against those Generals considered enemies of their organization. Eight were singled out: Alfau, Luque, Figueras, Aguilera, Primo de Rivera, Carbó, Bazán and Riera. The following day they introduced first and second class sanctions to deal with them. Second class sanctions applied to the first four Generals who were blacklisted and no officer would consent to be their assistant. First class sanctions would apply to the last four Generals who would be given respectful advice to change their methods and practices. Then on 11 August the *Juntas* concluded the need to have at least one representative in each region to stand for Deputy or Senator in the next General Elections. In September this process of increasing intervention and protagonism was stepped up. On 14 September they re-affirmed their goal of maintaining the system of promotion by strict seniority. Three days later a crucial decision was taken. This concluded that it was the officers' duty to intervene more actively in politics to impose upon the politicians the principles of morality and justice. The *Juntas* also decided to send letters with their resolutions to the Prime Minister, the Speakers of both chambers, the leaders of the political minorities, the Ministers of Interior and War, the most important newspapers and if necessary to the Monarch. On 21 September an overwhelming majority of *Junteros* endorsed that conclusion and General Marina was designated as their representative to mediate with

politicians.(10)

The confirmation of the *Juntas'* entry into the political arena was a shattering blow for the government's hopes of normalization. A disaster was looming for the constitutional system. The officers had voted for their direct involvement in politics. For the next six years no politician would be able to push the army back and restore civilian supremacy. Although denied by Dato when interviewed by the press, the officers had plunged the country into a deep crisis with no apparent solution. The Prime Minister rushed to San Sebastián to see the King. He managed to convince the Monarch that with caution and concessions the army's threat could be diffused. Thus a smiling Dato told the journalists that everything was under control. He had the confidence of the King and his purpose was to stay in office and celebrate local and general elections in November 1917 and January 1918 respectively. He cynically added that if the population was not happy with his conduct of government they would vote against the government--as if nobody knew that elections were fixed by the Minister of Interior. Back in Madrid, Dato met General Marina and confronted him with the fact that he was supported by the Monarchy. Then a statement was released for the press. Dato, in his most flagrant display of hypocrisy and flattery to date, stated that the army was a patriotic and disciplined institution always prepared to fulfil its duty and obey the laws. It was therefore understandable that the officers should be annoyed by the unfounded rumours and fantasies of recent days.(11)

The government was making a gross miscalculation if it was trying to please the officers by flattery and distortion of the reality. The officers had intercepted a cable from Sánchez Guerra to the Civil Governors advising them to let the *Juntas* carry on with their activities. In the meantime they were to find out the names and political tendencies of their members until the moment arrived to turn against them. (12) The *Junteros* became more determined than ever to overthrow the Dato cabinet. Furthermore, the strategy of flattery did not produce the expected results any more. On the contrary, it only provoked disgust among the officer corps. (13)

The government was to become a victim of its own game of misinformation. Insisting that everything was normal and obviously well informed by Marina of the wishes of the *Juntas*, there was no way in which the state of emergency could be maintained. Thus on 7 October the State of War was lifted and thereafter constitutional guarantees were restored. Immediately an avalanche of criticism came from all quarters. It was a deafening clamour against the administration without parallel in the history of the Restoration Monarchy.

On 29 September the trial began against those accused of having led the revolutionary movement in August. On 4 October, the four members of the Strike Committee were found guilty of rebellion and sentenced to life imprisonment. Three other militants were sentenced to eight years and one day, two others to two years, four months and one day, and the only two women were

acquitted. The occasion was used by Julián Besteiro, who spoke on behalf of himself and the three other accused, to blame the government for provoking the General Strike. One of the military lawyers, the Captain of Infantry Julio Mangada, pursued that line of defence and found himself facing fifteen days under arrest.(14) After almost two months of suspension, *El Socialista* returned to the streets on 9 October and continually hammered home the view that the strike in August was not what the Socialists had wanted but what the government had forced them to do. A resolution was adopted to work for the amnesty of their comrades in prison and to concentrate on the next local elections in which the four members of the Strike Committee would be standing for councillors in Madrid. On 25 October, the Socialists voted unanimously to end all participation in official bodies as long as Dato remained in power. That measure had been adopted before against Maura in 1909 after the Catalan " Tragic Week". Now, for a second time an essentially reformist organization vetoed a politician and broke all channels with the state.(15)

In October Cambó re-affirmed his position as leader of the anti-*Turno* offensive. He was once more the engine behind the organization of the second meeting of the Assembly. Seventy-seven parliamentarians met on 15 October in Madrid. The government, unable to ban it now due to the restoration of constitutional guarantees that obviously included the freedom of association, had to watch the show from the sidelines. The Assembly's sub-committee for constitutional reform presented its conclusions which were dully approved. Those initiatives if put into practice

could represent a real transformation of the political structure of the country and the establishment of a genuine Constitutional Monarchy. They significantly limited the prerogatives of governments and of the Monarchy itself. Article 17 which enabled an administration to suspend constitutional guarantees was to be reformed. It was agreed that the suspension of the constitution should not exceed fifteen days and within that period parliament should be consulted. It was also decided that the Cortes was to remain open at least between 1 October and 31 December of every year. The principle of shared sovereignty between Monarchy and parliament was to be reformed as well. Emphasis was placed on the fact that sovereignty lay with the Cortes, the only body entitled to pass laws. The Monarch would be allowed to veto a bill but, if the next Cortes was to pass that bill again it would automatically become law. Moreover, the King would no longer appoint members of the Senate. Henceforth all Senators would be elected through a corporate franchise among representatives of the economic life of the nation. Finally, regional autonomy would be recognized as a natural and basic foundation of the state and not regarded as an obstacle to national unity. The parliamentarians again demanded the creation of a national government which would hold clean elections for a Constituent Cortes. (16)

The programme of the Assembly was a personal triumph for Cambó and the bourgeoisie. It was essentially a recognition of the federal aspirations of the *Lliga* and amounted to a profound but moderate political reform. The Catalan leader

continued his crusade to overthrow the government and clear the way for his initiative. On 22 October he declared in *El Heraldó de Madrid* that the Conservative administration had to go since it lacked moral authority, economic plans or valid ideas for post-war reconstruction. The next government ought to be the product of the country's will and not of a dynastic faction. The following day in a speech at the *Centro Autonomista de Dependientes* ('Autonomist Centre of Clerks') in Barcelona, Cambó kept up the pressure. He argued that the ruling oligarchies had bankrupted the country. The *Juntas* did not create the crisis in June but only made it public knowledge. According to Cambó, in any democratic state such indiscipline would not have been tolerated but the fact that in Spain it found the support and encouragement of the population revealed the crisis of authority of the political system. No remedies had been undertaken to solve the evils complained of, instead the government had resorted to condemning the Assembly which was working for a peaceful solution. The Dato cabinet had then sown discord and intrigue in order to provoke a General Strike which the army had to crush with violence and consequently led to the inevitable confrontation between people and army. Thus, concluded Cambó, the *Turno* was morally dead and should not continue any longer. Public interest required a complete change of the system with new men representing genuine sectors of public opinion in charge of a government of coalition. Then and only then the military and other problems could be solved. 17)

The *Mauristas* were no less forthright in their attacks.

La Acción noted that Dato had hitherto managed to retain the confidence of the Crown only by imposing silence on public opinion and following a campaign of deceit and misinformation. He had united workers, bourgeoisie and army in common opposition to a collapsing political order. Dato was portrayed as the most cynical and unprincipled politician of the *Turno* group. He was a man who still tried to cling to the fiction that everything was normal when it was glaringly obvious that everybody was against him and what he stood for. Claiming to speak for the only remaining healthy monarchist sector in the country, the *Maurista* organ warned the King of the dangers ahead if he granted the decree of dissolution to the government. In an editorial called "From the people to the King", *La Acción* claimed that it was the duty of loyal monarchists to tell Alfonso that it would be a step towards national catastrophe if the old politics of *caciquismo* prevailed once more against the will of the entire nation. Thus the Monarch should act while he still had time rather than recognize too late that he had been badly advised and even deceived by those who did not permit others to inform the Crown of the real desires of the nation.(18)

On 21 October Maura himself broke his perennial silence. In what was a bitter onslaught against the system and display of his liberal principles, the old Conservative leader stated publicly his opposition to the government for the first time since August. He accused the Dato Ministry of having placed civilian supremacy in the gutter by bowing to the demands of the *Juntas*. According to Maura, the crisis of authority and prestige

was worsening daily. In a clear allusion to Dato's insistence that his government enjoyed the confidence of the Monarch, Maura added: "*It is sad to see these blind politicians taking refuge in proofs of royal confidence which they were never short of, while distancing themselves from what they really need, the support of the people. It is a foolish attempt to associate the Crown with the vile interests of a faction*".(19) Two days later, *La Acción*, feeling fewer scruples than Maura in supporting the initiatives of the army, encouraged the officers to take the final step and force the government out of office.

Simultaneously, the *Juntas* were lambasting the government at will. On 8 October their leader, Colonel Márquez, wrote to the Minister of War, General Fernando Primo de Rivera. With no effort at subtlety, he harshly attacked the actions of the cabinet in response to the August disturbances. Márquez suggested that the carelessness shown during those days inevitably gave the impression that the government had been deliberately encouraging the conflict with a view to letting it reach a head and then suppressing it with a severity that was bound to influence the popularity of the army among the people.(20) On 17 October Primo de Rivera, alleging health problems, resigned and was replaced by Marina, the General most favoured by the *Juntas*. In fact, this was another instance of Dato trying to please the officers. Primo de Rivera had refused to bow to the *Juntas'* demands to remove the Military Governor of Valencia, General Carbó, one of those blacklisted. Under pressure from the government to comply, he had preferred to resign. Dato's

move did not pay off. *El Ejército Español* and *La Correspondencia Militar*, the two main military newspapers, called his action "a disgusting act of servility". They concluded that the old General had given his fellow ministers a lesson in honesty and honour, and warned that Dato was making a new mistake by trying to seek shelter behind the prestige of General Marina.(21) The ex-Minister was to prove his loyalty two days later when he declared his total support for Dato and his belief that he should continue in power. Primo pointed out that he had the backing of twenty-two Generals who all agreed that the *Juntas* had made a terrible error when they decided to intervene in politics and deviated from their original worthy objectives. Rather naively Primo de Rivera stated that Dato should be allowed to fix the new elections or otherwise the mob would be the new ruler of Spain.(22) *La Correspondencia Militar* replied that the *Juntas* were not political and did not support any particular party but as patriots the officers had the duty and right to oppose the system of oligarchs and caciques which was embodied in the existing administration. On 24 October in an interview with *El Heraldo de Madrid*, Márquez made a devastating criticism of the government. The Colonel once more wrapped up his arguments in regenerationist rhetoric. He stressed that the *Juntas* were only moved by patriotism and therefore had no interest in politics. Márquez claimed that any political offer made to them by right-wing or left-wing groups had always been rejected. He pointed out that the hardships suffered by the population were shared by the army and so they identified with the popular clamour for radical solutions. More suggestive and alarming for

the government was that Márquez confirmed in the last part of his statement that, although the *Juntas* were not willing to step into the political arena, their monarchist character implied that nobody should be surprised if they looked to the Crown for redress.(23)

Not even after the "Tragic Week" in 1909 had the echoes of discontent and opposition to a monarchist administration had reached such scandalous levels. All sectors of public opinion were in total agreement. From the left-wing *El Socialista*, *España* and *El Liberal* to the Catholic *El Debate*, the military *La Correspondencia Militar* and the *Maurista La Acción*, all concurred not only that the position of the government was untenable, but also that the *Turno Pacífico* had to be replaced by a new political formula.(24) The Dato cabinet was totally isolated and fighting against everyone. This state of irreversible crisis was also confirmed by the attitude of the leaders of the Liberal party. Like rats escaping from a sinking ship, they were already distancing themselves from a doomed system and talking as if they had always been part of the regenerationist movement in Spain. Santiago Alba was busy drawing up a programme which he claimed to be of economic reconstruction and political cleansing. The ex-Chancellor suggested that his plan sought to appeal both to Socialists and Regionalists.(25) The Marquis of Alhucemas was declaring that the *Turno* did not exist anymore.(26) Even Count Romanones, probably the best living example of a professional politician associated with the *Turno*, was arguing that a new order based on new political practices had to be created. A

bewildered *La Epoca* wondered how it could be possible that Romanones was now also a regenerationist.(27) On the front page of its edition of 26 October, *La Acción* called for a miracle and presented a cartoon of a huge broom sweeping away Dato, Sánchez Guerra and Romanones, the representatives of the old order.

The miracle did happen. There had been rumours since 23 October that the *Juntas* were planning to deliver a final message to the Monarch. It finally arrived on the night of 26 October and, shattering Dato's last hopes that the army could be divided, was drawn up by the Infantry but signed unanimously by all the Corps. It was irrefutably the ultimate proof of the strength of the army and consolidated its position as power-broker in the state. The main points were as follows:

"The Infantry has come to the conclusion that the procedure of government has not changed nor has any new spirit been observed which might direct the country towards the progress which is required for it to achieve the state of preparedness and defence now made necessary by the approaching end of the war in Europe...

...Furthermore, morality, justice, equity and respect for the law are neither respected nor observed, nor can any hope be entertained that in its future acts this government may be inspired by such considerations, since the party politicians have neither expressed regret nor shown any intention of mending their ways. On the contrary, they have adopted a stance in opposition to the Juntas de Defensa

whose action should have served as a regenerative force for them to employ. Instead this government regards them as a hostile force to be exterminated by any means, from violence to calumny, passing through the whole range of insidious allegations, enticements and bribery more appropriate to Byzantine politicians than to men who aspire to rule the destinies of free people...

...The Infantry deems it advisable respectfully to bring these dangers to the notice of His Majesty.(28)

It represented a death warrant for the government. Gustavo Peyrá wrote to Maura: "*If Dato had been waiting for the bayonets to speak in order to leave office, he has now the awaited signal*".(29) The message amounted to an ultimatum. The King was very respectfully urged to act upon their document within a deadline of seventy-two hours. The army demanded the creation of a national government which would respect the vote. That could be ensured by entrusting, the post of Minister of Interior, to a neutral person, untainted by the business of electoral falsification. In return, the officers would guarantee to the Crown that no Constituent Cortes could challenge the dynasty because in such an event, it would automatically be dissolved by them. The King could not fail to pay heed to the army's wishes. The following day he notified his Prime Minister that he had to consult other politicians in order to solve the pending crisis. It was a diplomatic way of letting him know that his services were no longer needed.

According to Hardinge, Dato believed that he could survive the political crisis. As late as 25 October he had expressed his intention to stay in office, dissolve the Cortes and hold new elections. (30) The Conservative leader relied on the support of the Monarch until the last moment. He must have realized the increasing political isolation of his government; nevertheless, he believed that he possessed some important assets which, if used carefully, could guarantee his survival. The dangerous situation of the summer had been successfully defused. The labour movement had suffered an important set-back and the *Lliga* had failed to enlist the support of the Catholic and Conservative middle classes who followed Maura. There were many hostile forces in the country but they were not co-ordinating their actions. Furthermore, the Monarch could not forget that his throne had probably been saved by the existing government. On several occasions the King had shown his gratitude and trust. In early October, Alfonso had advised Dato of his readiness to grant a decree of dissolution of the Cortes which would permit him to manipulate fresh elections in his own interests. The Prime Minister had preferred to wait and see the dangers that the new gathering of parliamentarians represented. The Monarch had made very clear his refusal to have Maura back in power. (31) The new resolutions passed by the Assembly were not likely to have pleased the King especially since their implementation would mean a curtailment of the royal prerogatives. Then on 20 October Alfonso sent a cable to Dato on his saint's day encouraging him to carry on with his good work. 31)

The main danger was posed by the *Juntas*. The government, however, had hopes that the military could be divided and the faction which followed Márquez isolated.(33) Some voices of dissent had begun to be heard within the armed services. A certain Colonel Moratinos from Barcelona had issued a statement criticizing the growing involvement of officers in politics.(34) Yet if Dato had relied on his strategy to divide the army and on the King's confidence, his hopes were to be dashed. The army closed ranks, court-martialled Moratinos and approved the ultimatum to be submitted to the Monarch. Alfonso was not prepared to take the suicidal step of supporting a loyal politician against the whole country and the army. Dato therefore had to go. The King frankly admitted to the Italian Ambassador, Count Bonin, that he had no alternative but to act in the way desired by the army as the future of the dynasty depended on the maintenance of military goodwill.(35) It was not the first time that he had dismissed faithful servants for cynical motives.(36)

The fall of the Conservative government on 27 October initiated a crisis which due to its length and final outcome would be crucial in the evolution of the constitutional Monarchy. Confusion, uncertainty and doubts about the future were the order of the day.(37)All the main dynastic politicians, with the exception of Dato, agreed that an era had come to an end. With the Liberal party broken, and the Conservatives forced out of office, the political formula of the *Turno Pacífico*, foundation of the established order since 1875, had to be abandoned.

The existing governing elites had to resolve a series of difficulties in order to retain control of the apparatus of the state. Firstly, although following separate routes, the programmes of both Assembly and *Juntas* were remarkably similar. They echoed the desires of the country by demanding political renovation and a thorough change of methods. They opposed the survival of the dynastic factions at the centre of the decision-making. Except for *Maurismo*, those factions were all artificially based and lacked a real ideological programme with which to mobilize parts of the electorate. Natalio Rivas, a former minister and influential personality in the Liberal party, commented that there was no way that the *Turno* men could accept free elections as they would be wiped out of existence.(38) Secondly, it was unlikely that the different monarchist groups could shelve their internal disputes and agree to work together. Factionalism was a symptom and not a cause of the crisis. Thirdly, whatever political solution came out of the existing crisis would have to deal with the fact that the army had become politicized and would not be easily persuaded to give up its privileged position. Maura himself acknowledged that fact when he pointed out that the new government ought fully to restore civilian supremacy or otherwise responsibility would have to be handed over to those who would not let others govern.(39)

As emerged during the following day, the solution pursued by the throne was to find someone who could manage to put together a monarchist coalition which would attract the backing of the *Juntas* and win over the moderate sectors of the Assembly

represented by Catalan Regionalists and Reformists.(40) Alfonso first entrusted the Conservative Joaquín Sánchez de Toca with that task. A member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Spain and of several sugar companies, former minister in 1902 and Speaker of the Senate in 1914, Sánchez de Toca represented the soft and paternalist side of the Conservative party. He attempted to form a coalition with members of all the dynastic groups, the Reformists and the Regionalists. He was opposed to a Constituent Assembly or indeed to any constitutional reform but declared himself in favour of granting an amnesty to all those imprisoned for the events of August. The only person willing to support Toca was Romanones. For the parliamentarians it was not enough, and the monarchists declined. His own fellow Conservatives were infuriated. Sánchez Guerra believed that the amnesty was a manoeuvre of Romanones which he described as an infamy.(41) It was then the turn of the Marquis of Alhucemas, the leader with the largest minority in Congress. He did not fare much better. His overtures were also rejected by Cambó and Melquiades Alvarez and he had to decline.

On the fifth day of the crisis Alfonso finally resorted to the services of Antonio Maura. By 2 November he too had declined. The edition of *La Acción* for that day gave a full explanation of the unsuccessful steps taken by the veteran leader. In fact, there was very little that was original in Maura's plan. He had also rejected any possibility of constitutional changes and instead had concentrated on forming a strong coalition with men drawn from all the factions. The

Marquis of Lema was to continue at the Foreign Office, Juan de la Cierva, a hard-liner who had been his former Minister of Interior in 1909 and was now emerging as the man defending the interests of the *Juntas*, was to be Minister of War, a *Germanophile* Liberal, Alcalá Zamora, would be in charge of Education, and González Hontoria, an Allied sympathizer belonging to the Liberal-Romanonista faction, would be in Justice. An obscure officer, Admiral Ferrándiz, would take over the Navy department, three leading *Mauristas*, Goicoechea, Ossorio and the economist Flores de Lemus, would be in charge of Interior, Public Works and the Treasury respectively. Finally, Maura thought of appointing Cambó, Alhucemas and the Reformist Azcárate as Ministers without portfolio. His scheme was rejected by nearly everyone. Support came only from Romanones and Azcárate. Melquiades Alvarez made it clear that Azcárate was speaking on a personal basis and not representing his party. The proud Maura had gone begging, cap in hand, to the different dynastic groups. The enlightened politician who had preached for years a revolution from above and vilified the country's leaders since 1909 had ended up by turning up at the their doorsteps. It is no wonder he was rebuffed.

As days went by, the atmosphere of despair and confusion among ruling circles grew. On 30 October a crucial event took place. Cambó was summoned to the Palace. That day the Assembly had been convened at the Ateneo of Madrid to discuss the current situation. When news filtered out that the King had called for Cambó, the parliamentarians cheered. They thought that

the victory of their plan was within reach. The Catalan leader made a triumphal speech in which he claimed that the signal that the principles of 19 July had been successful had finally arrived. However after his meeting with the Monarch, Cambó declared to the press that he had told Alfonso that the only possible solution to the crisis was the creation of a wide coalition to replace the discredited *Turno* of two artificial parties and to appoint a neutral person as Minister of Interior to ensure a fair election. The Catalan leader was swiftly moving away from the positions held by the others. Constitutional reform was no longer one of his demands. He was giving the Crown a valid way out.

After Maura's abortive attempt to create a coalition, Alhucemas was entrusted with the task again. Two days later he had been successful. The government crisis had lasted a record eight days but was at least temporarily over. The new government was to be formed by :

Prime Minister:	Marquis of Alhucemas (Liberal-Democrat)
Foreign Office:	Marquis of Alhucemas.
Interior:	Viscount Matamala (neutral)
Treasury:	Juan Ventosa (<i>Lliga Regionalista</i>)
Education:	Felipe Rodés (Left Catalanist)
War:	Juan de la Cierva (Leader of his own right-wing Conservative faction)
Justice:	Joaquín Fernández Prida (<i>Maurista</i>)
Navy:	Amalio Gimeno (Liberal-Romanonista)
Public Works:	Niceto Alcalá Zamora (Liberal-independent)

The outcome of the October crisis was a victory for the Crown, Catalan industrial bourgeoisie and *Juntas*. In the long-term, the losers were the traditional governing elites and all those forces pushing for democratization. It was a warning of what would take place six years later when Miguel Primo de Rivera, Captain General of Catalonia, established a military dictatorship. This time the constitutional practices had been conserved but the Liberal Monarchy was in tatters. The King had preserved his privileged position in the political order. Alfonso's advantage was that neither the Catalan bourgeoisie nor the *Juntas* were anti-monarchist per se. The King had pushed for a solution in which the ambitions of both were satisfied and in exchange they had forgotten all their demands for constitutional reform. The officers' recently acquired political role was confirmed by the presence of Juan de la Cierva in the cabinet. Cierva, *cacique* of Murcia and a man of shady reputation and authoritarian manners, had accepted what Maura had refused: to be the officers' political voice. Cierva clearly did not have the charisma nor the following which Maura possessed and all to which he could aspire, at least for the time being, was to be in charge of the War Department. Yet from the first moment he was to make clear his particular status in the cabinet as a minister appointed personally by the Monarch and counting on the support of the *Juntas*.(42) The Regionalists' strength had been confirmed by the presence for the first time of two of their men in a central government. Cambó had refused to join personally the government but had placed his friend Juan Ventosa at the head of the Treasury. Moreover, to disguise his manoeuvre, the *Lliga*

leader had persuaded Felipe Rodés, a left-wing Catalanist with Republican leanings, to accept the Education portfolio. Their plan to achieve Catalanist hegemony in Madrid had been successfully completed. Politics could no longer be made without their support.

The *Lliga's* manoeuvre was a shock to the other parliamentarians. The Regionalists had deserted them and joined forces with the hated governing oligarchy. Melquiades Alvarez himself had been approached by Alhucemas and, when the latter had refused to endorse the Assembly programme, he declined to join the government. His surprise was total, when Cambó, seated next to him when Alhucemas made his offer, had swiftly accepted. Cambó's switching of allegiance was rightly regarded as a betrayal by the left. His move had been decisive in saving the regime and dashing all hopes for political democratization.(43) Cambó's sudden about-face in November 1917, abandoning the progressive forces for an alliance with the oligarchy in Madrid, was in fact a defence of his class interests. After the August revolt, the bourgeoisie was scared.(44) The situation could get out of control. Having to choose between its hostility to the established ruling oligarchies and its fear of the working class, the bourgeoisie, followed the trend historically adopted since 1848. Namely, using the proletariat as a travelling companion to put more pressure on the ruling class, but once the power of the latter had been broken, seeking an accommodation with it in order to become part of the new ruling bloc. When Dato was toppled, Cambó held out as long as he thought it wise. He knew he had a

good hand and played it well. But as the government crisis continued, he became worried that the stakes were too high. There was the risk that not only would the *Turno* parties be swept away but also that in consequence, either a military dictatorship or a period of anarchy could destroy his initiative. He felt that it was time to abandon the game and settle for what he considered to be an acceptable outcome. Cambó's mistake was to refuse to play the role of Kerensky when there was no Spanish Lenin to render that role dangerous.

Melquiades Alvarez on behalf of the other members of the Assembly stated that he could neither join nor support a solution which did not make its central objective the political renovation of the country by means of a Constituent Cortes. He could see that the presence of La Cierva in a coalition cabinet was a guarantee that a profound transformation would not happen. Cambó's Machiavellian approach to the whole crisis was then revealed in full. He had created the Assembly and he also killed it as soon as his basic goals had been achieved. The hegemony of both dynastic parties embodied in the *Turno* had been destroyed. Catalan Regionalism was at the centre of decision-making with two portfolios which included the Treasury. The Interior was in the hands of a neutral person. Cambó soon tried to justify his move and even accused his former partners in the Assembly of having been behind a far-reaching revolutionary process all the time. He professed himself as zealous as ever for political reform. He declared that he was happy with the creation of a coalition cabinet which put an end to the *Turno*. Cambó added that any

ordinary Cortes, freely elected, was as competent as a Constituent Assembly to deal with constitutional reforms as with any other subject. (45) Cambó seemed to be arguing that political realignment would come but not in one go. His gradualist and opportunist approach could not fail to arouse the suspicions of the left. Regardless of all the rhetoric his disloyalty to the Assembly was an evident fact. The settlement of the 1917 crisis had given a breathing spell to the Monarchy in a moment of despair and possible deadlock while a thorough political reform had been delayed if not finally abandoned. It was no wonder that Cambó's manoeuvre appeared to the other parties of the left as a betrayal for the sake of two seats in the Alhucemas ministry. They declared that the new coalition cabinet looked like a patchwork contrivance put together to tide over the existing crisis.

6.- The last year of the war: Governments of Monarchist

Coalition:

The year 1917 revealed that Spain was plunged into a deep crisis that was irreversible. A process of events began to bring a near-feudal political structure into contact with the economic and political realities. That movement had begun and could not be reversed. As the country was coming to terms with the changes brought about by the war, demands increased for new men and new practices to take over. Yet the crisis of the system was to continue as the old discredited governing classes were still strong enough to prevent the triumph of the democratic forces. Antonio Gramsci, the political thinker and General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party until his arrest in 1926 has defined that situation as 'organic crisis of the state'.(1)

The ruling *Turno Pacífico* had been left behind by the times, but the incorporation of the Catalan bourgeoisie gave a new lease of life to the regime. For the last year of the war the monarchist factions ended up cobbling together "Salvation Governments" or coalitions fighting for survival and continuity but paying lip service to the idea of change. They temporarily halted the downfall of the ruling order but could not solve the crisis. Lacking clear-cut ideological principles and riddled by factionalism, they found it impossible to agree on a common agenda. They would be bogged down by problems of legitimacy and credibility from the outset and failed miserably to tackle the serious economic and social problems confronting the nation.

Problems would multiply on all fronts, and a population already suffering grinding deprivations became restless.

The Alhucemas cabinet failed miserably. It never managed to put aside its internal quarrels and to co-operate whole-heartedly in the fulfilment of a common programme. The coalition government never really got off the ground, being at most a bad attempt to patch up an unbearable situation. The ministers never worked as a team but followed different directions while the socio-economic crisis worsened by the day. They behaved not as a real government but as a shadow of one.

Public opinion was not enthusiastic about the government of supposed renovation.(2) At best, as in the case of the *Maurista* Angel Ossorio it could be regarded as an uncertainty and given the benefit of the doubt since nothing could be worse than the former Dato administration. The Left rejected it outright and considered it to be an obstacle to the victory of democratic principles. Romanones, who was represented by one minister, called it "a chaotic freak" ('*engendro caótico*').(3) Santiago Alba's response was even more indicative of the increasing factionalism and disintegration of the dynastic parties. He accused Alhucemas of having wasted a precious opportunity to create a modern and radical government which could include leftist representatives. Alba thus stated openly his intention to break with the faction of the Liberal party led by the Marquis of Alhucemas. He left Julio Burrell, a former Minister of Education and one of his closest supporters, to

launch a vicious attack on the government. Burrell wrote that the cabinet was merely a coalition of men who, with the exception of the Catalanists, did not represent anyone. He was in tune with the majority of the country when he pointed out that it was difficult to see how the authoritarian La Cierva could work with the antimilitarist Rodés, the Regionalist Ventosa and Rodés with the Centralist Alcalá Zamora; but above all Burrell wondered how a government containing people like Alhucemas and La Cierva could preside over any political renovation. (4) Thereafter Alba founded his own group, the Liberal Left, which by early 1918 possessed its own organ, *La Libertad*.

Indeed the government could not have offered a more chaotic image than when on its first day in power three different statements were released to the press. One came from La Cierva clarifying the distance that separated him from the others and stressing that his presence was due to the personal insistence of the Monarch. A second statement emanated from the Catalanists claiming their adherence to the principles of the Assembly and their determination to reform the political system; and a final one was delivered by the other ministers declaring that the existing coalition was not a fusion of parties but a transitory union imposed by circumstances upon men of goodwill who aimed at continuing the policy of neutrality, dealing with the urgent socio-economic problems and intended to summon a new parliament without any kind of ministerial interference. From this beginning the new government could not avoid being viewed as a pathetic experiment. It was a marriage of convenience which was doomed to

break up at the first serious setback.(5)

Initially the general impression was that the most serious threat to the survival of the cabinet was represented by the Catalanist ministers. Alhucemas, a clear exponent of political *inmobilismo*, was regarded as Cambó's lackey. The Catalan leader was believed to be the real power, the mastermind pulling the strings behind the scenes. This seemed apparent from his still regenerationist rhetoric. Furthermore, the *Lliga* was making no secret of its plan to extend its political influence beyond the Catalan borders. In December Cambó and the other leaders of Catalan Regionalism initiated a huge propaganda tour throughout Northern Spain, Valencia and even Andalusia. The idea of a peaceful political revolution to be achieved after the creation of a modern conservative formation which could appeal to the national bourgeoisie was still very much on the cards. The neutrality of the administration in the forthcoming elections offered Cambó the golden opportunity of selling his programme to similar groups all over Spain. The *Lliga* would naturally be at the centre of that political initiative. Thus Cambó was bent on immediate general elections.(6) The Cortes were finally dissolved in early January 1918 and elections were summoned for 24 February.

Yet the real danger not only to the government but to constitutional politics came from La Cierva. His goal was to neutralize the *Juntas'* political leanings by the passing of a military reform law tailored to their demands. It raised

salaries, increased employment opportunities and established strict seniority promotions in both war and peace. The main problem affecting the army, that of excess personnel, was deliberately ignored for fear of alienating the officers.(7) The hope was that a satisfied army would not only drop all its regenerationist dreams but would be more than ever willing to serve as the praetorian guard of the Monarchy. La Cierva constantly visited barracks and met officers. He went out of his way to praise the *Juntas* and describe them as a movement born out of patriotism. All their excesses, including vetoes, were condoned by the Minister.(8) In turn he sought to purge the idealist elements from their ranks, in particular Colonel Márquez, and manipulate them to build his own power base. This inevitably hastened the erosion of civil supremacy.

On 26 December *El Imparcial* published an article written by the Conservative Sánchez de Toca. Undoubtedly his words were partly motivated by the role played by the *Juntas* in the fall of the Dato administration. Nevertheless, his message was an accurate and precise attack on the officers' trade unions. He described the *Juntas* as a corrosive element in the army. They were the opposite of what the armed services ought to be. According to Sánchez de Toca, Syndicalism was a basic form of economic struggle which was to be expected and accepted in the working classes but never in the army. Military Syndicalism was merely a source of abuses and authoritarian demands. It was a monstrous usurpation by the armed defenders of the state of the right perhaps appropriate to the unarmed proletariat, the

negation of military discipline and the violation of the soldier's oath to defend the flag. Sánchez de Toca begged the Minister of War to put an end to this situation.

Sánchez de Toca's appeal went unheard. La Cierva had other things on his mind. On the same day that *El Imparcial* issued Sánchez de Toca's article, an isolated Márquez resigned as Chairman of the Central Junta at Barcelona. As an idealist committed to bringing about a real cleansing of politics, Colonel Márquez represented the kind of dangerous officer who had to be eliminated if Cierva wanted to succeed. Through a strategy of rewards and promises the minister had no great difficulty in winning over the officers and eroding the Colonel's position. When the final showdown between the leading *Juntero* and the Murcian *cacique* arrived, Márquez found himself abandoned by his former colleagues and forced to resign. He was replaced by Colonel Echevarría who had been Chairman of the Provisional Central Junta in June 1917. Márquez refused to be silent and on 30 January 1918 *El Mundo* published his version of his clash with the minister. On 13 March he again accused the *Juntas* of having lost all their initial credibility and acting as the spring-board to power for one man, La Cierva. Márquez was court-martialled two days later and expelled from the army in March.(9)

The Alliance between La Cierva and the officers was cemented in January 1918 with the dissolution of the so-called *Unión de las Clases de Tropa* or *Juntas* of NCOs. They had been set up immediately after those of the officers and from the outset

they were regarded by the latter as an embarrassment and potential threat. Their demands were moderate in the extreme but their existence represented a parallel source of power in the barracks that the officers could not tolerate.(10) They found in La Cierva the perfect accomplice to proceed against them. After spreading various unfounded rumours that the *Juntas* of NCOs were preparing a revolution in collaboration with Pablo Iglesias, the government decreed their dissolution. On the morning of 4 January all troops were confined to barracks and the NCOs brought before their commanding officers and given the choice of dismissal or signing a declaration swearing their loyalty to the Monarchy and pledging themselves to break up their *Juntas* and have nothing more to do with such societies in the future. Several hundred who refused were automatically expelled from the army. The Minister had taken precautionary measures such as interrupting telegraphic and telephonic communications all over the country and mobilizing the civil guard.(11) The King and the officers were delighted with the energetic attitude of the Minister of War. The former even noted that the Russian winds could bring nothing good.(12) La Cierva, who could now even claim to be the saviour of the regime, was at the peak of his career. Such an authoritarian and despotic character, backed by the army and counting on the sympathy of the Monarch, was becoming a threat to liberalism in the country.(13)

From late 1917 onwards the social situation worsened. Both cities and countryside were seething with discontent produced by shortages of food and fuel. The *Crisis de*

Subsistencias was causing widespread desperation. From an index of 100 for overall prices in 1914, they had shot up in September 1918 to 161.8 in the cities and 172.8 in the countryside. The price of one kg. of bread had increased 62.1%; that of meat, 78.2%; potatoes, 80%; rice, 50%; sugar, 56.7%; one litre of milk, 40% and a dozen eggs, 85.3%. Salaries were lagging far behind. Over the same period, they had increased by a mere 25.6% and 35.1% for the average male and female worker respectively.(14) In December 1917 the government established a new organisation called the *Comisaría de Subsistencias* with the task of setting quotas for the export of basic products and combatting profiteers and speculators. As in the past, it failed utterly to accomplish anything positive.

Famine, unemployment and misery forced the distressed population to acts of violence and disorder. Throughout 1918 disturbances became a common feature all over the country. They took the form of food riots, demonstrations for cheaper goods and assaults on shops and bakeries which often involved women and children. There were clashes and sporadic rioting in Valencia, Salamanca, Madrid, Santander, La Coruña and Cádiz. In early January a general strike broke out in Málaga and Alicante and in both places several women were shot dead while demanding cheaper food. Women broke into several bakeries in Barcelona where a State of War was subsequently declared. Three people were killed in Noblejas (Ciudad Real) during food riots. The following month there were several casualties in Palma de Majorca due to protests at the lack of charcoal and mutinies and arrests in Barcelona and

Valencia. The atmosphere of chaos and violence continued for the rest of the year but by then the epicentre of the disturbances had shifted from the cities to the Andalusian countryside.(15)

The Socialist movement did not profit from the widespread feeling of gloom and desperation. Disturbances were spontaneous acts of rebellion as the militancy of the masses was left leaderless. *El Socialista* and *España* accurately reported the violent events and accused the government of doing nothing to alleviate the suffering of the people and put an end to the huge profits enjoyed by wheat-growers and ship-owners. However, after the experience of the previous August the Socialist leadership was not prepared to undertake more revolutionary initiatives. A proposal by the CNT on 17 January 1918 jointly to launch a new general strike demanding amnesty was rapidly rebuffed by the Socialists. They claimed that it would only give the government an excuse to postpone the general elections and suspend constitutional guarantees in the country.(16)

The UGT-PSOE emerged demoralized from the experiences of the summer of 1917. Recovery meant for the Spanish Marxists a return to their traditional reformist and political practices. Thus they swiftly confirmed their alliance with the Republicans, organized the electoral campaign and pursued the release of their comrades in prison.(17) The PSOE's Madrid branch voted in favour of selecting the members of the strike committee as candidates for the next local elections.(18) On 25 November a pro-amnesty demonstration gathered 30,000 people in Madrid. Yet the approach

adopted by the Socialists was one of extreme caution. The moderate Julián Besteiro wrote in his prison cell that Pablo Iglesias and editor of *El Socialista*, Mariano García Cortés, were behaving disgracefully in trying to erase the memory of the August strike.(19)

The Bolshevik take-over in Russia was not altogether welcomed by the Spanish Socialists. Totally dominated by their pro-Allied views, they received the news with misgivings. *El Socialista* mentioned it on 9 November 1917 for the first time. It described such a crucial event merely as the triumph of the Maximalist tendency in Russia. The following day the newspaper's attitude was entirely negative. It feared that the Bolshevik Revolution could become an obstacle to the Allied victory:

"We regret the news we have received from Russia. We believe that for the time being the mission of that great country is to devote all its energy to the task of crushing German Imperialism...If the events of today were to give rise to a separate peace, to a desertion from the Western Alliance which is faced with the enemy of all liberties and popular rights, what will then be left of that revolution..."

The Spanish Socialist party clearly sided with the Menshevik position in Russia. They feared and despised the Bolshevik victory. On 29 March 1918 Pablo Iglesias wrote that the "Russian perturbation" would not last long. Comments on the

Russian Revolution totally disappeared from the pages of *El Socialista*. Despite, or perhaps because of, the glaring reality of social distress and a political vacuum in Spain, the Bolshevik example was not only ignored but not even analyzed. Instead the Spanish Marxists concentrated on electoral practices despite the notorious corruption of the Spanish political system and in the international agenda they continued to express their support for the Allied cause. This approach encouraged the creation of an anti-leadership tendency within the Socialist movement. It brought together the neutralist minority and the revolutionary wing of the party around a new journal, *Nuestra Palabra*, founded in the summer of 1918. They organized several pro-Bolshevik meetings from the autumn of 1918. The objective was both to combat the reformist trend within the organization and to reform the rigid orthodoxy and oligarchical structure of the party. *Nuestra Palabra* was to be the cradle of the future Spanish Communist party created when the final split occurred in the spring of 1921.(20)

The CNT did not let the occasion pass. Anarcho-Syndicalism benefited from the growing militancy of the workers and their prevailing rebellious mood to become the leading workers' organization in Spain. It confirmed its supremacy both in the Southern countryside and in the industrial North-East, even making inroads into traditional Socialist strongholds such as Asturias and Vizcaya. Its naturally revolutionary instincts and apolitical leanings were in tune with the wishes of the distressed masses. The CNT certainly paid more

attention to the Russian Revolution than did the UGT.(21) Ironically, unlike the more moderate Syndicalists who showed restraint on receipt of information from Russia, it was the more orthodox Anarchists who could not contain their enthusiasm. Virtually unaware of the role played by the Communist party, the revolution appeared to them as a confirmation of their own vision of revolutionary spontaneity.(22)

The impact of the Russian Revolution was especially formidable in the Andalusian countryside where in May 1918, the hitherto independent Andalusian Regional Confederation of landless labourers--*Federación Regional Andaluza (F.R.A.)*--joined the CNT. The anarchic mood of rebellion had never been extinguished in that region. Working under staggeringly poor living conditions on large estates or *latifundios* and practically at the mercy of semi-feudal landowners, peasants in Southern Spain had a tradition of sporadic uprisings and rebellions that had to be put down with cruelty by the authorities. The instrument of repression was usually the brutal Civil Guard, although at times of greater tension, the army was used. The outbreak of the war in 1914 had found the rural South disorganized and apathetic. The General Strike in August 1917 went almost unnoticed. However, news of the Russian Revolution was to change everything. Knowledge of the Bolshevik victory and the subsequent land expropriation provided the impulse needed to trigger an upheaval in the Spanish countryside. Overnight hundreds of workers' centres sprang up and membership of the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement expanded. The first strikes began

in March of 1918 with Córdoba becoming the epicentre of the movement. Buildings were set on fire, land seized, crops burned and hundreds of enthusiastic Anarchists travelled from village to village spreading news of the Russian Revolution. On 27 October 1918 an Anarcho-Syndicalist Congress was held at Castro del Río (Córdoba) with the task of co-ordinating the revolutionary wave. A minimum programme was approved demanding higher wages, an eight hour working day, expulsion of foreign workers unless there was full employment and the suppression of *destajo* (piecework). The landowners were thunderstruck. Despite the apparent moderation of the demands, if implemented, they represented a real revolution in the countryside. The power of the landowners rested on their knowledge that there was an unlimited reserve of hands that they could exploit at will. Peasants worked from sunrise to sunset for miserable wages. Furthermore, outside workers acting as blackleg labour were often brought from distant areas to put more pressure on the local workers. Thus the rising militancy and organizational activity of the peasantry in 1918 threatened the status quo in the countryside. Naturally, the rural bosses were not prepared to accept their world being turned upside down. A terrible conflict loomed ahead which would reach its climax during the years 1919 and 1920.(23)

Simultaneously, a crucial event was taking place that would lead to the rapid re-construction and expansion of the CNT after 1918. The Catalan Regional branch of the CNT, the *Confederación Regional del Trabajo*, held a Congress at Sants

between 28th June and 1st July 1918. Several fundamental conclusions were passed at the Congress. Workers could have different political leanings but the CRT rejected any form of political activity and instead its members would have to base their struggle on direct action. Much of the appeal and strength of the CRT stemmed from its adoption of industrial unionism in the form of the so-called *Sindicatos Unicos*. The old trade unions were discarded and replaced by new *Sindicatos Unicos* which attempted to include all the workers in a given area working in different jobs but in the same industry. Henceforth the whole labour force would be divided into thirteen industrial activities or *ramos*. The number of strikes would be reduced but at the same time the duration of the conflict would be longer and the strength of the movement bigger. The adoption of the new strategy by the CRT and later by the CNT represented the triumph of the pragmatist Syndicalists Salvador Seguí and Angel Pestaña who now became President of the CRT and editor of *Solidaridad Obrera* respectively. By late 1918 the CNT had 114,000 members with over 70,000 in Catalonia alone. One year later its growth had been remarkable. The national organization could boast more than 700,000 militants, over half of them in Catalonia.(24) Thus in 1918 the CNT laid the foundations which would definitively allow it to replace the UGT as the main movement representing the interests of the working classes. The amalgamation of the proletariat into *Sindicatos Unicos* provided an extremely efficient weapon with which to conduct the social struggle. The bourgeoisie soon realized that the newly re-organized CNT presented a serious threat. In order to safeguard its class

interests, it would seek the destruction of the *Sindicatos Unicos*. Years of violence and terror were forthcoming.

While social distress, economic dissatisfaction and ideological militancy were emerging into the open, the political deadlock in the state was becoming a reality. Both the local and the general elections in November 1917 and February 1918 confirmed that trend. No political force could really draw solace from the results. Those groups representing public opinion made some consistent advances in the large towns but *caciquismo* reigned supreme over rural Spain where elections were actually won.

In the local elections of November 1917, *Mauristas* and the Republican-Socialist alliance triumphed in Madrid. A similar process was seen in the major cities. In Barcelona Regionalists and Republicans swept away the dynastic competition. Yet in the countryside, official candidates were returned. Almost all the newspapers claimed that the results, especially those in the capital, indicated the erosion and decline of the *Turno* parties and the consolidation of alternative forces both on the Right and the Left of the political arena.(25) Public opinion was gradually turning against the bulwarks of the Restoration system. It was impossible to defeat them in the countryside but an overwhelming swing in the cities could prove enough to bring the regime down.(26)

The General Election of 24 February 1918, heralded as

the gateway to political renovation, proved to be disappointing. Hopes that it would be conducted without official manipulation were soon dashed. The Minister of Interior, the apolitical Viscount Matamala, was the guarantor of a clean vote. He certainly did not intervene in the results and even issued a statement ordering the Civil Governors to take measures against electoral cheating and corruption. If Matamala fulfilled his task, the same could not be said of his deputies. They were busy fixing the elections in the traditional way to benefit Alhucemas' Liberals, Dato's Conservatives and La Cierva's friends. Count Romanones, an old expert in these practices, complained to Alhucemas until virtually the eve of the ballot of all sorts of manoeuvres which favoured Conservative or *Ciervista* candidates to the detriment of his followers.(27) Clearly, if Romanones' political friends suffered from unfair treatment and even persecution, electoral manipulation was certain to be more acute in the case of Republicans or Socialists. The elections of February 1918 were falsified but nevertheless, the fact that they were organized by a coalition government in the presence of a neutral at the Ministry of Interior limited to a certain extent the fixing of the results and encouraged more competition than in the past. Yet if the government relaxed its pressure on the provinces, they remained essentially under the control of the *caciques* who had no intention of withdrawing to allow a free vote. Their activities together with the break up of the dynastic parties only contributed to produce a new parliament more fragmented and ungovernable than those returned in the past.

The final results confirmed the tendency already indicated in the local elections of November 1917: the overwhelming supremacy of the dynastic groups in rural Spain and a certain advance of democracy in the large cities. Furthermore, it brought to light the final disintegration and factionalism of the monarchists. The Liberal party was the clear winner, but its representation was divided between 94 followers of Alhucemas, 40 of Romanones, 25 of Alba and 10 who were friends of two other independent Liberal leaders, the *Germanophile* editor of *El Día* and current Minister of Public Works, Alcalá Zamora, and the former Minister and editor of *El Imparcial*, Rafael Gasset. The Liberal party was damaged beyond repair. The Conservative party presented a similar picture. There were in the new Cortes, 94 *Datistas*, 29 *Mauristas* and 25 *Ciervistas*. The Catalan Regionalists won a majority in their region with 20 Deputies but the strategy of creating a nationwide coalition did not succeed except in the Basque Country. There were 15 other Spanish Regionalists, seven of them members of the Basque Nationalist Party. Republicans and Reformists did not fare particularly well. They returned 15 and 8 Deputies respectively, slightly less than in 1916. Significantly enough, those like Marcelino Domingo or Azzati who represented radical positions triumphed and those defending more moderate stances such as Lerroux or Melquiades Alvarez failed to be elected. The moral victors were the Socialists whose representation rose from one deputy to six. The four members of the Strike Committee were returned: Julián Besteiro for Madrid, Largo Caballero for Barcelona, Andrés Saborit for Oviedo and Daniel Anguiano for Valencia. (28

Any hope of sweeping renovation was dead and buried. The dynastic groups, totally opposed to any political transformation, were still in control. Most of their representatives owed their seats largely due to the established practices of influence, intrigue and bribery. Yet an important breach with the past had taken place. In earlier elections, the government which dissolved the Cortes always returned with a working majority from the polls. For the first time, in 1918 a parliament was produced in which no party had an absolute majority. The two traditional leading groups appeared to be broken up by internal dissent into a constellation of small factions. They were a mirror of the fragmented Spanish political reality.(29) The era of the two party system was over and in its place a kind of political Tower of Babel emerged. Instability and crisis would be the immediate consequences.

The coalition cabinet lasted only one more month and that would be marked by agony and impotence. The impression of the General Election had not yet faded when the Minister of War took off his mask and began to bully his fellow ministers into accepting his decisions. In a brief period of time, La Cierva, knowing that he counted with the backing of the King and the *Juntas*, began to behave as a dictator who did not have to share the responsibility or his actions with anyone.

At the first cabinet meeting after the General Election, La Cierva already brought about the resignation of the government. He raised the question of continuity of a cabinet

which could not rely on a clear majority in the Cortes. His objective was to get rid of the two Catalanist Ministers who represented the renovationist tendency in the government and could present the most serious objections to his military reform plan. He succeeded when the King requested Alhucemas to remain as Prime Minister and both Catalanists, Rodés and Ventosa were replaced by two Liberals, the former Major of Madrid, Luis Silvela, and a wealthy Catalan manufacturer, the Count Caralt, respectively.(30) A satisfied La Cierva then declared to the press that he could not devote all his energy to satisfying the fair demands of the officers in his forthcoming Bill without a strong government behind him.(31) He then proceeded with his particular agenda.

In early March he presented his military reform Bill. It did not reform anything. On the contrary, it represented a further swelling of the defence budget by the fantastic amount of 92 million pesetas. It deliberately avoided the sensitive subject of a reduction of the number of officers and instead increased the number of active posts by 1714. The proposed pay scale increased salaries for all ranks, rewarding the already comfortable senior officers more than the truly impoverished lower ranks.(32) It was a sop to the *Juntas* in order to win over their members as the Praetorian Guard of the Monarchy. The country was starving and the state was shifting much needed capital to appease the officer corps. Furthermore, showing a total contempt for constitutional formalities and without warning, on 6 March La Cierva introduced his Bill by Royal Decree

alleging that he wanted to avoid any delay in its passage through the recently created parliament. The political establishment was shocked. Most dynastic politicians were prepared to appease the *Juntas* but La Cierva's action amounted almost to armed robbery.(33) The Conservative Sánchez de Toca, a fierce critic of the *Juntas* in the past, wrote in *El Liberal* that they were a monster which was taking over the sovereignty of the state.(34) Romanones and Melquiades Alvarez declared that the political class should unite to prevent the Minister of War from sabotaging civil supremacy.(35) Romanones told the Prime Minister that to yield to pressure at such a moment would be cowardice or submission. Romanones warned that if this occurred he would no longer collaborate with the government and all his friends in the administration would leave office.(36)

The authority of the state was being trampled upon. The officers--with the complicity of one minister--were showing who was the *de facto* power in the country. A delegation from the Central *Junta* in Barcelona had arrived in the capital. There were all sorts of wild rumours. It was said that hot-heads in the army had threatened to go and break Sánchez de Toca's head and to arrest Romanones and take him to the French border.(37) La Cierva himself took on the role of defending the honour of the army. Once more without informing any of the other members of the cabinet, he delivered a statement arguing that Sánchez de Toca's declarations were just a product of "*mean political interests and sad memories of frustrated ambitions*".(38) Alhucemas, realizing that all authority had escaped from his hands, presented the

resignation of his entire cabinet and a unique case in history occurred when all complied except La Cierva who remained at his post. He was acting as a dictator and backed by the army refused to leave his office.(39)

In that chaotic situation all eyes turned to Maura as the man who might save the day. It was believed that he had enough authority and charisma both among officers and politicians to form a new cabinet and restore civil supremacy. Yet as in June 1917, Maura refused to climb to power by dealing with the *Juntas*. In a second lesson of liberal principles, he declined to be in charge of a new government and affirmed that Alhucemas should continue in power and open the Cortes as quickly as possible. Maura declared that if civilian supremacy was not to be respected then those who showed such disrespect should take on the responsibility of government themselves. Asked by journalists if he would support a solution presided over by La Cierva, the veteran statesman answered that to that man he would give "*neither advice, nor support, nor vote*".(40)

A formula that barely concealed the humiliation of civil authority was finally reached. Alhucemas and all the ministers agreed to withdraw their resignations and accepted La Cierva's Royal Decree and in turn the reforms would not be implemented until July after the Chamber had had time to discuss them.(41) The hand of the Monarch was clearly behind this formula. He wanted to please his army above all else. Constitutional guidelines were of secondary importance. Alfonso

had even summoned Romanones to the Palace and told him in strong terms to drop his opposition to La Cierva and his Bill.(42) Thus, the crisis of authority of the political system continued to grow. The demoralized and discredited dynastic politicians once again had to bow before the obstinate pressure of an authoritarian politician who could rely on the backing of both King and army. To add insult to injury, the *Juntas* refused to dissolve themselves although they declared that henceforth they would acquire a technical character as their only concern was the well-being of the services.(43)

La Cierva's position was stronger than ever after the crisis in mid-March. Furthermore, Benito Márquez, the only officer who could have prevented him from manipulating the *Juntas*, was expelled from the army in March 1918. Having won the day on the military issue, he was to display his authoritarianism when faced by civil disorder. Following the emergence of military *Juntas de Defensa* in June 1917, similar bodies had been set up throughout the public sector and the bureaucracy. The corporatist fever that had gripped the country since the summer of 1917 was clear proof of the collapse of authority of the state. Encouraged by the successes of the officers in obtaining economic gains and power, the civil *Juntas* sought to emulate their military counterparts. Yet here they were to run into Cierva's determination to restore authority by forceful means. His ruthless dissolution of the *Juntas* of NCOs in January had already revealed how he was prepared to treat the officers differently from others. On 21 February 1918 the *Juntas* of Postal and

Telegraph workers initiated a passive strike demanding that a grant of three million pesetas be allocated to them without delay in order to meet the cost of increased staff and new material. They enjoyed the solidarity of all the other civil *Juntas* in the bureaucracy. Thus the victorious military subversion supported by La Cierva was bound to conflict with the civil unrest of the civil service.(44)

The ultra-conservative minister took upon himself the task of dealing with them in his usual manner. By two Royal Decrees on 13 and 16 March, the management of the postal and telegraphic services was transferred from the Interior Ministry to the War Office. The militarization of those services was ordered and as with the NCOs the staff were presented with the choice of accepting the dissolution of their *Juntas* or being sacked. As the conflict threatened to spread to other sectors the government dissolved by decree the *Juntas* at the Treasury, Interior and Public Works. Public opinion was on the side of the civil servants. Nearly everybody agreed that the way in which the same cabinet yielded before the army and employed force to deal with others was shameful. Progressive journals warned that the country was heading towards a one-man dictatorship.(45)

Cierva's tough stand backfired. Civil servants en masse abandoned their posts and refused to disband their organizations. The military, lacking trained personnel, were unable to run the services. Chaos was total. Mail was not delivered and communications were brought to a stand-still. In the meantime,

the Prime Minister behind Cierva's back began to pursue a conciliatory solution and initiated talks with the strikers. The Minister of the War who wanted to fight them to the end presented his resignation forcing the fall of the cabinet. On 19 March the Cortes was opened only to be closed a few minutes later when the fall of the government was announced. For some ministers it was debut and farewell.(46)

The situation was as critical if not more so than in October 1917. The gap between Official Spain and Real Spain had widened. There was widespread turmoil in cities and the countryside caused by rampant inflation and food shortages. The strike of the civil service had paralysed the country. The political vacuum seemed insuperable. The *Turno* had been destroyed and the coalition which replaced it had been found wanting. Spain was in chaos and anarchy. Ironically, there was no challenge to the regime from Republicans or Socialists. The former lacked strength and the latter limited its opposition to expressing solidarity with the struggle of the civil servants. But the constitutional system was hanging by a thread. La Cierva had caused three government crises in less than a month. He was now in a position to make his bid for power backed by the resolution of the *Juntas* not to accept anyone else in charge of the War Office. He could offer a political alternative: a cabinet presided over by himself and with leading *Junteros* as ministers as the only solution to bring back law and order by force.(47)

The crisis appeared insoluble. Maura was entrusted with

the formation of a cabinet but he failed to win enough support. Politicians were demoralized. Cambó argued in *La Tribuna* that only a strong Monarchist coalition could work and halt the crisis.(48) Romanones, well aware of what the army was plotting and probably also that his sovereign was half inclined to try La Cierva's experiment, came up with the final solution.(49) It consisted of the Monarch summoning all the main faction leaders to the Palace at the same time. Once there the King made an earnest appeal to them to bury all their differences and work together to solve the existing deadlock. He threatened to abdicate if they could not agree on a common agenda. The idea launched by Cambó in his article and then put into practice by Romanones with the complicity of the Monarch paid off. The following morning the most impressive government in the history of the Restoration Monarchy had been created.(50) The cabinet contained four former Prime Ministers, two party leaders, one ex-minister and former Speaker of the Upper House, and two members of the military, one of whom had recently been Minister of War and had worked alongside the *Juntas*:

Prime Minister:	Antonio Maura (<i>Maurista</i>)
Foreign Office:	Eduardo Dato (Conservative)
Home Office:	Marquis of Alhucemas (Liberal-Democrat)
Public Works:	Francesc Cambó (<i>Lliga Regionalista</i>)
Justice Department:	Count Romanones (Liberal-Romanonista)
Treasury:	González Besada (Conservative).
Education:	Santiago Alba (Left Liberal)
War Office:	General Marina

Admiralty:

Admiral Pidal

The formation of a coalition cabinet of outstanding politicians as a solution to the ministerial crisis caused general rejoicing. It was received with enthusiasm and admiration.(51) A constitutional formula had prevailed over La Cierva's bid for power. Amidst a general feeling of gloom and impotence, the regime had managed to produce what appeared to be the highest model of national authority. However, once the enchantment of the moment had vanished and the artificiality of the flamboyant new administration revealed in full, the Monarchy would begin a downhill path inevitably leading towards a military dictatorship.

It is extremely revealing that Antonio Maura, the man who was supposed to supervise the re-construction of the political order, did not share the optimism of the others. On his very first morning in office he confided to his son Gabriel:

"They kept me away for ten years, years which could have been the most useful of my life, and now I am seized to preside over the whole lot. Let us see how long the charade lasts".(52)

Maura was right. The National Government proved a ramshackle affair. It lasted just long enough to see the end of the war in Europe, but it failed miserably to solve the urgent problems of the country. It fared slightly better than the

previous administration but only because the names of its members could impress public opinion and give a false image of strength and consistency. Also, there was no La Cierva at hand ready to subvert civil supremacy. Yet the record of the so-called *Ministerio de Primateas* would be very poor. In the international field, the desperate maintenance of neutrality despite all the evidence of German aggression looked not unlike impotence and humiliation. In domestic matters, nothing constructive was ever achieved as the government was never able to overcome its internal dissent and personal incompatibilities.

Since the fall of Romanones in April 1917 the domestic crisis and the subsequent collapse of authority had virtually overshadowed the foreign issue which had almost ended the strict neutrality of Spain during the last months of the Count's administration. It re-emerged in 1918 and for a second time threatened to produce the involvement of the nation in the Great War. However, unlike Romanones, eager to side with the Western Powers, the National Government went to shameful and painful extremes to avoid doing so.

The Central Powers benefited from the March Revolution in Russia and then the August events in Spain to consolidate their status as friends of the existing regime. The crisis of the state also helped them increase their particular war on Spanish soil or in her waters to disrupt the Allied interests. The irony of the case was that while Germany was subverting the social order by means of the Anarchist ultra-left, the establishment was

absolutely pro-German; and, Republican and Socialist pro-Entente forces in Spain were let down by the Western Powers, themselves keen on propping up the existing regime.(53) That apparently contradictory situation helped explain the pitiful and weak position of the Spanish administrations when confronting the international question. They found themselves with their hands tied. Crown, Church and Armed forces identified, especially after the fall of the Autocracy in Russia, with the ideological values represented by the Central Powers and despised the principles of democracy and self-determination for which the Allies stood. Thus fighting alongside the Allies from their point of view would be a terrible mistake. It would strengthen the hand of the anti-regime forces in Spain and would lead to the tragic fate which befell Tsarism. They were therefore prepared to turn a blind eye to all the excesses committed or induced by Germany. After all, the sinking of some vessels or a few Anarchist actions would not bring down the fall of the ruling order. Thus, though nominally the defender of order and authority, Germany could go ahead almost with impunity subsidizing ultra-left groups in an attempt to destroy the Spanish commerce intended for the Allies.(54) The fragility, weakness and bankruptcy of the Liberal Monarchy in Spain made it impossible to put into practice a coherent, firm and purposeful foreign policy.

In late 1917 the Western Intelligence Services observed how the Germans were providing vast amounts of money to purchase votes and *caciques* in order to return a friendly Cortes. There were rumours that the Central Powers had approached the *Juntas*

and, in exchange for the future entry of Spain into the war on their side, they had offered to place at their disposal submarines, Zeppelins, aeroplanes, and a vast territorial booty which included Portugal and her colonies, Gibraltar, Tangier, French Morocco and Algeria. A worried Clemenceau suggested that British and French propaganda should combine their propaganda efforts. Britain turned down the proposal as she believed that France was popular only among Catalan, Republican and anticlerical circles.(55) There was the conviction that Spain could not afford to quarrel with the Allies with whom her destiny was linked by reasons of geography and economy. The Allies commanded the supplies of cotton, oil and coal which Spain needed to continue her economic life. Furthermore, until the end of the war Britain believed that the existing regime despite all its inadequacies was the best possible in the circumstances as the alternative was a revolution which could only end in a military dictatorship:

"The end of the present system means revolution, and it is a very long way from being certain that a revolution would place the Republicans or any Liberal element of any kind in power. The present cabinet is the only alternative to a military government...it originated in a crisis caused by the pretensions of the army and the dictatorial airs assumed by its chosen statesman, the then Minister of War, La Cierva, towards whom the King is believed for a moment to have leaned...The most powerful force in the country is the army, representative with the Church of law and order.

It would certainly defeat the Left if the country was thrown into a revolutionary struggle...The Left is practically to a man, as a matter of principle, as strongly pro-Allied as the officers of the army and the men of the official world are for the most part pro-German...We have to pay the penalty of our principles; and perhaps we do not sufficiently realize how such phrases as 'making the world safe for democracy', "final destruction of the poison of militarism", and the like, inevitably alienate the aristocratic and officer class in Spain...".(56)

Faced with aggressive German diplomacy, successive Spanish governments in 1918 offered a sad image of complacency, fear and submission, constantly looking the other way before they were inclined to do anything. Complaints continued to pour into the Spanish Foreign Office about Morocco. The rebel leaders, Raisuli and Abd-el Malek, were openly supplied and advised by German agents with total impunity. Spanish Morocco was regarded in Western Chancelleries as a hot-bed of German intrigue. A colony characterized by incompetence, jobbery and both active and passive pro-Germanism on the part of its authorities.(57) The weakness of the Spanish cabinets was at its worst in relation to the question of German espionage in the peninsula and on the matter of protecting the merchant fleet from submarine attacks.

Violence had always been present in the class struggle especially in Anarchist fiefs, yet it began to acquire a particularly vicious character towards the end of the Great War.

In Barcelona, vessels departing from the port with cargo bound for Allied ports were torpedoed with great accuracy, production was sabotaged, disturbances paralysed the activity in many factories and industrialists began to be victims of attempts on their lives. In January 1918 the killing of José Barret, one of the leading Catalan employers in the metallurgy industry, shocked public opinion. Many Syndicalists were arrested and constitutional guarantees were suspended in Barcelona for over two months. Yet the question of who benefited from the crime remained. An industrialist who was popular among his workers and in whose factory there were no reasons for social conflict had been attacked. One month later the left-wing newspaper *El Parlamentario* accused a former policeman, Guillermo Belles, of being a German agent who had infiltrated Anarchist groups in order to have Barret murdered. Belles had been questioned but released after the personal intervention of Manuel Bravo Portillo, the Chief of Barcelona's political police.(58)

Two months later the recently founded newspaper *El Sol*, which, owing to the intellectual quality of its staff had a large influence on public opinion, published a facsimile of a letter from the First Secretary of the German Embassy, Eberhard von Stohrer, to Miguel Pascual, one of the leading Anarchists in Madrid. It was evidence that the Anarchist leader was receiving money for the printing of revolutionary leaflets. It was an operation which counted on the blessing of the German Ambassador himself, Prince Ratibor. There was no doubt about the veracity of the letter provided by the French Intelligence Services. After

agreeing to being interviewed by *El Sol*, Pascual's revelations were shocking. He described himself as having paid several visits to the German Embassy where he was received by both Secretaries, von Stohrer and Grimm. He had been given instructions to create disturbances, organize revolutionary strikes which were intended to interfere with the export trade to the Allies, and foment attacks of any kind upon Count Romanones when he was in power. Pascual believed that his acceptance of German money did not clash with his own political leanings. He and many like him were more than willing to co-operate with the Germans since both Anarchists and Germans pursued the same goals. Pascual also claimed that he had been the first Anarchist whom the Germans had approached in the capital. They had singled him out soon after the Anarcho-Syndicalist Congress at El Ferrol in April 1915 where he had given a speech in favour of international neutralism. Germany did not have many agents in Madrid as the city was mainly under UGT control, a pro-Allied organization which the Germans had not managed to penetrate. It was very different in Barcelona where many militants including Francisco Roldán, the ex-General Secretary of the CNT, were in their pay. In fact, he had been told many times by von Stohrer to follow the international line followed by the CNT organ, *Solidaridad Obrera*, published in Barcelona. (59) The response of the Alhucemas cabinet, then close to its final collapse, was not only to ignore the offense revealed by the newspaper but also, at the request of Prince Ratibor, to ban the distribution of *El Sol*. By then thousands of copies had already been sold. *El Sol* agreed to publish Ratibor's version a few days later which failed utterly to dispel belief

in German complicity in Anarchist campaigns. Ratibor acknowledged that Pascual had received some payment for his propaganda but only as it was believed that he was a good Spanish patriot. As soon as it was discovered he had revolutionary ideas he had been dismissed. *El Sol* commented that even if the improbable account of the German Ambassador was true, he had abused his diplomatic status since he had financed material against politicians and industrialists of his host country. The government simply chose not to pursue the matter.(60)

Continuous revelations of German infiltration and manipulation of the CNT had an impact upon that organization. In June 1918 Angel Pestaña and a new team of collaborators replaced the former staff, thoroughly discredited by its acceptance of foreign financial aid, to re-organize *Solidaridad Obrera*. The newspaper had been kept afloat by undisclosed income and in turn had been publishing neutralist editorials.(61) On 9 June the newspaper published a crucial article which revealed the close links of German Intelligence with the local authorities. It had been the constant complaint of Western diplomats that the submarines which destroyed the Spanish mercantile marine with such contemptuous disregard for her neutrality were aided in their task by well-informed confederates on shore. In early June the suspicious sinking of the French vessel, *Provence*, near the Spanish North-East coast led to the conclusion that the Port Commandant at the small Catalan town of Palamós had been supplying German spies with timely information on the sailing of ships and particulars of their cargoes. A few days later,

Solidaridad Obrera published two letters written by Manuel Bravo Portillo, Chief of Barcelona's political police, showing that he was guilty of the same offence. The Anarcho-Syndicalist newspaper provided documentary evidence that Bravo Portillo had informed of the movements of the steamer *Joaquín Mumbrú* which had left Barcelona on 20 December and was torpedoed in January near Madeira. The Captain of the German submarine had told the crew of the *Mumbrú* that he was merely following orders from Barcelona. *Solidaridad Obrera* stated that it was providing the information to whoever it might be interested. It appeared that the authorities were not too interested. On 17 June experts found that Bravo Portillo had indeed been the author of the letters and yet he was not lodged in gaol until the night of 20 June giving him with every opportunity to destroy compromising papers. Two accomplices were also arrested: Guillermo Belles, the ex-policeman who had been linked by *El Parlamentario* with the killing of the industrialist Barret, and Royo de San Martín, a morphine addict and gambler. The sudden death of the latter on 29 June aroused suspicions that he had been poisoned.(62)

The consequent investigation produced a startling and incredible story of corruption and depravation. Bravo Portillo's activities had been known to at least two Civil Governors but his good connections in the social world had placed him in an untouchable position. He was married to the daughter of a Vice-Admiral, had served in the past as private secretary to General Weyler, the most senior officer in the army and a well known *Germanophile*, and his brother was a Commandant and leading

Juntero at the local garrison. He had been working for Germany since 1915 under the immediate orders of its two leading agents in the Catalan capital, Albert Honnermann and Friedrich Riggerbergh and receiving a salary of 50 pesetas a day apart from expenses incidental to his services. His task was to provide information leading to the torpedoing of vessels and also to organize disruption in the factories of those industrialists producing material for the Allied war effort. To those ends he made good use of confidants and several members of the police force. One of these, Guillermo Belles, had made contact with some Anarchists working at Barret's concern which produced shells 24 hours a day for the French army. There had been several unsuccessful attempts to launch strikes or to blow up the factory. Belles finally ordered the killing of the industrialist, almost certainly with the consent of Portillo and his German masters. The murder was executed by Anarchist gunmen under the orders of Eduardo Ferrer, the Anarchist President of the CNT's Metallurgic Trade Union and police confidant. Bravo Portillo, who publicly boasted of his energy in defending law and order, distinguished himself in the persecution of Syndicalists who had nothing to do with the killing of Barret. In the Cortes, the Catalan Deputies Francesc Maciá and Marcelino Domingo had denounced in the Cortes Portillo's repressive methods and demanded his removal. Among other acts, he had sent his friend José Ezcurra, a Lieutenant of the Civil Guard, to the Canary Islands to collaborate with the Germans. Portillo together with Royo had been toying with the idea of assassinating the French Ambassador although in the end that proposal had to be abandoned.

The sinister police chief had also been involved in all kinds of illegal practices such as gambling, extortion and blackmail. In fact, gambling brought about his downfall. Portillo could not prevent the discovery by the police of illegal gambling and the arrest of some friends of Royo. Feeling betrayed and fearing for his life, the latter produced the evidence which put them all behind bars.(63)

The arrest of Bravo Portillo revealed the tip of the iceberg which showed the penetration of German Intelligence at all levels of society. The Portillo affair was deliberately covered up by the authorities. Despite the vast amount of evidence against him provided by experts and witnesses, the case was dismissed in what amounted to an scandalous subversion of justice.(64) In early July as the truth of German activities was beginning to come to light, the government hurriedly passed an Espionage Bill which caused public uproar. Owing to its timing and the urgency with which it was introduced, the Bill drawn up by the Foreign Minister Dato appeared to be a concession to the German Embassy which had been under constant attack since Pascual's revelations in March. Its preamble declared that the government had increasing difficulty in maintaining neutrality when it was continually threatened by campaigns which, however respectable in intention, produced lamentable results. The Bill, therefore, forbade under severe penalties:

- 1.- The furnishing to the agents of a foreign power information relating to the neutrality of Spain or of a*

nature to injure any other foreign power. The penalty will be imprisonment or a fine of between 500 and 20,000 pesetas.

2.- The publication or circulation of any news which the government has prohibited as "contrary to the respect due to the neutrality or security of Spain"; or the spreading of news of a nature to alarm Spaniards. The penalty will be imprisonment or a fine of between 500 and 100,000 pesetas.

3.- The insulting or holding up to hatred or contempt the Chief of a foreign state, or a nation, army or diplomatic representative, either by word of mouth or in print or picture. The penalty will be imprisonment or a fine of between 500 and 100,000 pesetas.

The legislation against spies naturally produced a loud chorus of protest. The French Ambassador, Thierry, called it a sweeping and ill-considered measure.⁽⁶⁵⁾ The left-wing pro-Allied press was unanimous in denouncing being put into such a tight jacket. *El Sol* noted that henceforth spies in Spain might be fined 20,000 pesetas, but those who exposed them or their patron would have to pay 100,000 pesetas.⁽⁶⁶⁾ What was even more shocking was the haste and lack of explanations with which Dato presented his new Bill in Parliament almost at the same time that a German espionage network had been discovered in Barcelona. The fact that a well-known Allied supporter like Count Romanones expressed in public his backing for the Bill did not change anything. It was generally regarded as a desperate attempt by the government to gag the free press in order to avoid an

embarrassing situation with Germany. At the moment when the maintenance of strict neutrality was becoming impossible, the government was stubbornly sticking to it. Romanones had been right when he had said that there were neutralities which were fatal. Dato introduced his Bill in the Cortes on 4 July and it was immediately described by Republicans as a betrayal of liberal principles and a violation of the constitution. Without delay, it was put to a vote two days later and made a question of confidence by Maura. The Deputies of the left withdrew from the chamber. (67)

The government was not *Germanophile*. In relative terms, unlike the former cabinet which had as Ministers people like Alcalá Zamora and La Cierva, the current one if anything by its composition seemed to be leaning to the Allies. (68) Yet the spectre of the Russian Revolution made a deep impression on a country like Spain where social revolts due to the *Crisis de Subsistencias* continued unabated, and the attitudes of army and Crown were decisive. Thus the flamboyant National Government would act with a weakness and impotence that in practical terms amounted to an unconditional surrender to Germany's bullying and terrorizing methods. That position was finally confirmed in the summer of 1918 when the indiscriminate German sinking of the merchant fleet reached such levels that it seemed for a while that the government was prepared to stand up to it with honour. It was no longer possible to maintain neutrality with decorum and the moment had arrived to take forceful action. Yet words were not matched by deeds and from the brink of intervention, the

government retreated once more to shameful capitulation.

Throughout 1918 the submarine campaign increasingly threatened the economic life of the nation. Between April 1917 and July 1918, over twenty-five Spanish vessels met the same tragic end as the *San Fulgencio*. On 25 July, the steamer *Ramón de Larriñaga* bringing oil from New York was torpedoed when about to enter Spanish waters. Eight members of its crew were killed. Maura informed his Foreign Minister that "*the limits of Spanish patience have been reached. A resolution has to be adopted without further delay*".(69) On 8 August the Council of Ministers was entirely devoted to the international question. The discussions would last for two days. Romanones was the only one backing a course of tough action. According to the Count, Spain should take advantage of the Allied victories in the continent and seize all the German ships interned in Spanish ports. The military ministers were radically opposed any modification of the position of strict neutrality. Finally, on 10 August a compromise was reached. A new statement would be sent to Germany.(70) Unlike in the past, this time the statement of protest would amount to an ultimatum. It was supposed to be a perfect exercise in both energy and moderation. The government was prepared to stand up to Germany but at the same time was going out of its way to stress its commitment to neutrality and friendship. The statement made clear that, owing to the submarine campaign, over 20% of the merchant fleet had been destroyed and one hundred sailors killed. The situation had gone so far that ships bringing goods exclusively destined for Spanish consumption were being torpedoed

without the slightest pretext to disastrous effect for the material interest of the country. The cabinet had therefore resolved that it had to adopt effective means for ensuring the maintenance of maritime trade and for protecting the lives of the sailors. Consequently, in the event of any fresh torpedoing, it would replace the tonnage sunk by seizing German ships lying in Spanish ports.(71)

At no time had the National Government believed that the statement could lead to a rupture with the Central Powers. The message, despite its strong tone, was constantly accompanied by references to their determination to maintain the most strict neutrality. It stressed that it was a measure imposed upon them by necessity and that it did not imply the definitive appropriation of those vessels. Yet the blunt German response of ignoring the statement and continuing brutal attacks on the Spanish fleet placed the Maura cabinet in the position of having to choose between putting into practice its ultimatum and risking war with Germany or humiliation and retreat.

In the space of ten days after the delivery of the statement, two more Spanish vessels were torpedoed. The German Ambassador's excuse that there had not been enough time to give new instructions to all the submarines might be sincere and yet raised the question of what the old instructions were. Yet Germany, after dictating her terms to Spain for so long would not modify her traditionally bullying approach. She warned that seizure of any of her vessels would immediately be met by rupture

of diplomatic relations and war.(72)

The government panicked as the worst was feared. The *Germanophile* press returned to its insidious attacks. It was suggested that Dato, in collusion with Maura and Romanones, had passed the *Ley de Espionaje* so as to be able to force the entry of the country into the war. There were talks of catastrophe to come if the country was dragged into the conflict. Once more by appealing to slogans of *españolismo*, those newspapers described German atrocities against Spanish ships as justified acts of war and warned that many Spaniards would prefer civil war rather than to be told by "certain powers to defend a flag that was not theirs".(73) Yet they had it all wrong. The Western Powers were far from pushing Spain into the war. In late August, an extremely worried Dato approached the Allied representatives in Spain in order to know what support Spain would receive if she was forced to break off diplomatic relations with Germany.(74) The Spanish Ambassadors at London and Paris initiated discussions on the question while the *Germanophile* Polo de Bernabé, Ambassador at Berlin, resigned.(75) The response from the Western Powers was not the one expected from nations trying to impose their terms on a neutral. As victory was within their reach, the entry of Spain into the war could make little difference. They had maintained a policy of non-interference in Spanish internal affairs and they were not going to modify their behaviour now. Only the United States seemed to encourage a forceful act on the part of Spain. Unlike the French and the British, the Americans had been keen before on forcing the Spanish hand into line by

strong and merciless commercial pressure, refusing her a single bale of cotton or gallon of oil. That proposal was rapidly opposed by the French and British who regarded their industrial and mining concerns in Spain as of paramount importance and therefore advocated a conciliatory approach.(76) Mr. Millard, the US Ambassador at Madrid, published an article in *El Liberal* on 31 August affirming that if Spain wanted to save her honour she would have to break off diplomatic relations with Germany. He argued that the German dirty methods of threats, espionage and control of the press had already been tried in his country and had failed. Mr Millard repeated the same promise that he had made a few days before to Dato. The United States would give all its support and do all in its power to meet the industrial and material needs of Spain.(77)

The French and British responses were not enthusiastic. They were certainly not delighted to see a Spanish move at the last minute which could give her grounds for territorial claims or excessive economic demands. Both agreed that they would be happy to see Spain on their side and were willing to support her financially, industrially and militarily, but they also insisted that they were not prepared to push her into the war. It was for Spain and Spain alone, to decide what course she ought to pursue to safeguard her honour and protect her interests.(78) In fact, there was never a serious risk of Spanish intervention. Neither throne nor army were prepared to let it happen. The former, after the experiences of the previous August in Spain and the revolutionary events in Russia, would stick to neutrality to the

end, never mind the honour of the nation. Moreover, Alfonso believed that the Central Powers would not be defeated and still hoped he could be the arbiter of the peace. The army, aware of the nation's military weakness, was also determined to avoid intervention at any cost. The government of notables would have to swallow its pride and negotiate on the terms dictated by Germany.

On 30 August, in a turbulent cabinet meeting most ministers were prepared to enforce the ultimatum and seize one German vessel. Yet they were stopped by the Minister for the Navy. He hinted that he was speaking on behalf of King and army.(79) A few days later, Dato wrote to Maura confirming that idea: the Monarch had told him that under no circumstances was he prepared to permit a departure from strict neutrality.(80) The energy shown by the Spanish government on 10 August vanished into thin air. The Maura cabinet was left in a ridiculous and humiliating position at precisely the moment that the Allies were about to win the war. It would have been better if they had never voted for a strong measure which was not in their power to enforce. The real victory was for the German diplomacy that could dictate the conditions.(81) Maura and his ministers could only hope to find a solution which might permit them to save face. First, they decided to postpone any drastic action until further reports had confirmed Germany's guilt in the sinking of the Spanish ships. Then, they expressed their willingness to give her more time to warn her submarines. When by 12 October, three more vessels had been sunk, the government finally announced that

seven ships of the German fleet in Spanish ports would soon be seized. The Spanish public's opinion of its government was tinged with sadness, if not ridicule, when it emerged that far from being a show of strength, this amounted almost to an act of charity on the German part. In fact, the seven ships would not be seized but borrowed as soon as the German Embassy decided which ones to lend. (82) To add insult to injury, in the end no German vessel would go to restore the battered Spanish merchant fleet. Before any concrete agreement had been reached, the armistice was signed. One of its clauses was the surrender of the Central Powers' fleet in neutral ports to the Allies. It was the just reward for a shameful and bankrupt foreign policy.

In the domestic sphere, the National Government also performed very poorly. The cabinet never worked as an harmonious body. Its members had been compelled to join forces temporarily by the attitude of the army. As soon as they believed that the situation had been normalized, all the personal jealousies, rivalries and susceptibilities emerged again so that the initial consensus disappeared and the hopes of propping up the constitutional system dashed. In general, the principles which divided them were hollow or imaginary, but the personal interests were very real. The Conservatives were not at ease in the coalition. They were presided over by Maura who had vilified them for years. Moreover, the Conservatives could not be pleased to work alongside people like Alba or Romanones, and particularly Cambó, who appeared to them to have benefited from the peculiar circumstances which they themselves had contributed so much to

create in the summer of 1917. They could not help regarding them as unscrupulous politicians always ready to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. There were also other internal problems such as the personal hostility between Alba and Cambó, the rivalries between the different Liberal leaders and the question of Catalan Regionalism which had not been overcome.(83)

Bearing in mind all the possible sources of conflict, Maura did not promise to embark upon a far-reaching programme. Instead, after solving the dispute with the civil service and re-establishing constitutional guarantees in Barcelona, he declared that his government would deal mainly with four items: the amnesty for political offenses, the army reforms, the reform of procedure in parliament and the budget.(84) The first three issues were rapidly dealt with, but the budget proved to be beyond the grasp of the government.

The debate on the Bill for the reform of the internal regulations of the Spanish parliament began on 26 April and was approved by the Deputies on 8 May. The introduction of the so-called *guillotina* which limited the amount of time to discuss an issue was met by the protests of the left. They argued that there were more important problems of national interest and that the Bill intended to curtail the liberty of the Deputies and hurry through the passage of the Bill for military reforms.(85) The same day the Bill of Amnesty became law and the four Socialist Deputies were released from gaol at Cartagena and allowed to take their seats in the Cortes. One month later and

despite the total opposition of the left the Bill for military reforms was finally passed.

The first cracks in the government of coalition appeared in early June when discussing the role of the Conservative government during the revolutionary events of 1917. On 4 June several Deputies of the left presented a motion approving the conduct of the Speaker Villanueva with regard to his efforts to obtain the release of the arrested Deputy Marcelino Domingo. In reality, the motion was intended to be a vote of censure of the Dato cabinet. It represented, in fact, a question of confidence in the current cabinet in which, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dato was a leading member. It was therefore a clever tactic which gave the ministers the choice of voting down a motion which actually defended the rights of a Deputy and thereby save the coalition or vote for it and bring the government down. In the end, although the government survived, when the motion was rejected by 129 to 18 votes, but its credibility as a united body was undermined. Cambó, Alhucemas and Romanones instructed their followers to vote against the motion but they all made qualified explanations which implied a tacit disapproval of the course followed by the Dato administration in 1917 and insisted that Villanueva, the President of the Chamber, had acted correctly by insisting on the rights of the Deputy Domingo. Alba did not even make the effort and his friends abstained. (86)

During the summer, the March coalition disintegrated.

The Conservatives began to consider that the circumstances which had compelled them to join the government did not exist anymore and expected to return to the pre-June 1917 situation. At the same time, the two up and-coming personalities in the Monarchist camp, Alba and Cambó, had ambitious plans of their own which were bound to clash with the concepts of the "old guard". The budget brought all those differences of opinion to the surface. The Conservative finance minister, González Besada, backed by his leader Dato, planned to pass an unexceptional budget. His main concern was to balance the numbers and curb inflation. He was opposed by Cambó and Alba who wanted to take advantage of the immense wealth which the war had poured into Spain to develop her resources on a larger scale. Unlike Besada's traditional views, Cambó and Alba were keen for the state to take an interventionist and active role in developing the economy and therefore they wanted a budget of thousands of millions of pesetas for the reconstruction of the country. They initially joined forces to fight Besada, but soon quarrelled with each other. Alba wanted to be the leader of a new populist formation on the left of a re-constructed Power Bloc which hopefully would attract support from anti-dynastic groups. Cambó would play a similar role on the Right. Alba seems to have resented the fact that as Minister for Public Works, Cambó had been given the chance to shine that he lacked at Education. In the summer of 1918 the Catalan leader was commonly perceived as the soul of the government. Unlike the other ministers, Cambó was willing to prove his ability as an economist in his department. He thus embarked on a far-reaching programme for the modernisation of the nation's economic

infrastructure. His proposals touched on road building, a mining code, irrigation and afforestation. He also set out in a detailed six-volume survey a railway plan which called upon the state to nationalise and thereafter maintain and develop the Spanish network as well as to assume responsibility for subsidising passenger fares and freight rates. In early September, Cambó travelled on a tour with the King and Queen and in a famous speech at Covadonga he played down his regionalism and instead put forward his vast financial and economic schemes to build up a greater Spain. The Catalan leader had to keep something for his nationalist constituency in Catalonia and he planned to persuade the other ministers to delegate some of their competences in the regional *Mancomunidad*, the administrative body granted by Dato to placate the Regionalists in 1913.(87)

Alba feared that for a second time his rising star could be eclipsed by the success of the *Lliga's* leader. He hesitated between forming a common front with Cambó or fighting him. Finally, he opted for the latter. Thus in August and September, Maura saw himself increasingly isolated as a leader of a government which was collapsing due to its internal quarrels. Firstly, the "modernizers" Cambó and Alba with the backing of Alhucemas were opposing the plans of Besada; and secondly, Alba led an offensive against Cambó's nationalisation plans and intentions of delegating powers to the *Mancomunidad*. Maura had to go out of his way to ensure the survival of the Cabinet. The Conservatives and Cambó, joined by Ventosa who had been appointed Minister of Supply, were threatening to quit.

Alhucemas with the backing of Alba was declaring in the press that he would be prepared to form a government which would include the Socialist Besteiro in charge of Employment. The Prime Minister managed to keep the government afloat by persuading both Cambó to postpone his regionalist demands and Besada to add 400 million to his original budget.(88)

Alba himself inflicted the government a mortal blow in late September. He was aware that the cabinet was disintegrating and hoped to be the first to take advantage of the situation. Thus he demanded 20 million for increases in schoolmasters' wages. In fact, he was simply seeking an excuse to resign and found it when the others denied giving him more than 11 millions.(89) He left office on 2 October. Up until that moment, Maura had managed to maintain the notables' pact alive. Alba's departure inevitably produced a domino effect and in one month the National Government had collapsed. Alba's real intention could not be hidden for long. He rejected any compromise and refused to withdraw his resignation. Yet he agreed not to make public his departure from the administration until the King returned from his summer holiday in San Sebastián a few days later. On 3 October *El Liberal* published Alba's version of the causes of his resignation. The former minister questioned if the country wanted to have a worthy education system or not and accused Maura and Cambó of having torpedoed his initiatives and forced him to quit.

For one month, the spectacle presented by all the

monarchist leaders was pitiful. Alba had opened the door and now all the rivalries and squabbles which had hitherto been kept hidden came to view. Cambó did not waste time in providing a response and on 5 October in *La Veu* he alleged that Alba was an ambitious and unscrupulous politician who had fabricated an artificial crisis to leave office and then had broken his promise not to reveal his resignation. Romanones replaced Alba at Education and Maura himself took over Justice. The solution would not last. A few days later, the Cortes were re-opened and there appeared the sad spectacle of one minister attacking the other and all of them claiming to be the successor of the still existing National Government.(90) Alba spoke against Cambó, Romanones and Maura. According to the ex-Minister of Education, the Count had wanted his portfolio and so had conspired against him. Cambó had tried to introduce his regionalist plans by threats and had found all the time the support of a declining Maura. Alba asked Cambó whether he really believed that his region was oppressed in Spain and if the answer was negative why all his veiled hints that Catalonia would find in France what was denied to her in Spain. In turn, Alba was attacked mercilessly by the others. They accused him of cheating, lying, breaking his promises and working for his own ends and not for those of the country. They had never opposed any of his initiatives. In fact, he had not presented any in all his time at Education. He had only come up with demands for money for the schoolmasters. He had known all the time that what he asked for was impossible. Civil servants and other workers had recently obtained increases of up to 30% and he was demanding raises of 80% for the

schoolmasters.(91

Alba's move did not pay off. He was ridiculed and rebuffed by the Left and did not manage to emerge from the crisis as the leader of a new leftist and populist force.(92) Nevertheless, he had left the government mortally wounded. Maura knowing that fact declared that his cabinet would continue in power just to pass the budget. Spain had been without a budget since 1914. Three days later Dato initiated his particular campaign to claim the empty throne and resigned. In early November, Alhucemas made a speech in the chamber which sounded like his plans for a future government. He quarrelled with Cambó when he denied the need for Catalan autonomy. Even in Restoration Spain it was unusual for two members of the same cabinet to reveal their differences in public. The final blow came the following morning when Besada read out his budget and was opposed by none other than Sánchez Guerra, the second in command of his own Conservative party. It was an illusion to pretend that a government still existed. Maura resigned.(93)

The fall of the National Government virtually coincided with the armistice in Europe. The dynastic parties had spared the country from the ordeals of the war but had not managed to save themselves from political decline. With the demise of the Maura cabinet of 1918, the last great hope of the constitutional Monarchy vanished. The old Conservative leader declared: 'let us see who is now the smart guy who can take power' ("*A ver quien es ahora el guapo que se encarga del poder!* ").(94

7.-Epilogue:

The First World War proved to be a watershed in European history. The outbreak of a conflict of such magnitude produced economic dislocation, social distress and ideological militancy which inevitably eroded the foundations of European Liberalism. Already before 1914, the supremacy of the Liberal governing elites was under threat: economic modernisation, industrialisation, secularisation and other related contemporary phenomena were breaking down and challenging the existing ruling systems based on hierarchical, elitist and clientelist politics. Now the formerly dominant groups were confronted with the uncertainties of popular politics, the often unwelcome prospect of more genuine democracy, and the fast-advancing threat of socialism.(1) Four years of appalling human and material losses intensified the movements of protest which had existed before 1914. Furthermore, to the existing problems of food and fuel shortages, economic dislocation and social distress, were added the plea of displaced national minorities and the revisionist feeling of the losers of the Great War.

The armistice of 1918 did not put an end to the struggle on the continent, it only changed its appearance. The armed conflict was over but a new kind of ideological warfare had just begun. After its success in Russia in November 1917, Bolshevism found a ready audience among the war-weary populations and began to spread westwards, initiating the richest period of revolutionary activity in Europe since 1848. Traditional rulers

soon discovered that it was impossible to put back the clock. Years of misery had brought about political militancy which in turn led to the breakdown of existing forms of elitist politics. The political and social upheaval would be felt throughout the continent, from London to Moscow, opening an era of utopian ferment and class struggle. Nevertheless, the main battlefield had two centres: firstly, the newly born regimes of Central Europe created out of the disintegration of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg Empires which found themselves having to cope with the bitter taste of defeat and the political vacuum left by the forced departure of their rulers. Secondly, there was the case of Southern Europe, where the governing class, whose hegemony had hitherto been based upon electoral falsification and patronage, proved unable to successfully face the arrival of mass politics.

The year 1919 constituted the peak of the revolutionary offensive. This was a moment in which bourgeois Europe seemed about to collapse. In Russia, the Bolshevik forces gained the upper hand in the civil war against the various White armies led by former tsarist officers; in Germany, as the old regime collapsed in November 1918, councils of soldiers and workers were formed in the main cities. In the spring of 1919, a soviet state was set up in Bavaria and during that year there were Communist uprisings against the socialist-led government of the newly created Republic in Berlin and in other capitals. In Hungary, the revolutionary forces also seized power in March 1919. In Italy, peasants occupied the land and not only in the South, but even in places in the North and Centre where it had never happened

before. During 1919, internal committees which had been created in industrial centres in Italy during the war were turned into 'Factory Councils' whose objective was to take over the means of production at the workplace, fulfilling simultaneously the economic role of direct workers' management of the plant and the political function of self-government. The strength of the Factory Councils was fully displayed in the summer of 1920 when more than half of a million workers occupied their factories.

In the meantime, the ruling social and economic classes were biding their time and waiting for the tide to turn. By 1920 the revolutionary thrust was exhausted. The Red Army had been defeated at the gates of Warsaw and the European labour movement was hopelessly divided between Communists and Socialists. The challenge of the working classes had either been brutally crushed, as in Hungary and Germany, or channelled towards reformist goals, as was the case in Italy. The traditional governing elites were pushed aside and, with them, liberalism and constitutionalism were discarded as valid political forms. Instead, authoritarian solutions were advocated--not so much to suppress revolutionary Socialism, which had already ran out of steam, but so as to wipe out the gains in social and industrial legislation which the labour movement had achieved since 1914. The establishment of a dictatorship in Hungary in the summer of 1919 represented the beginning of a period of virtually uninterrupted working class defeat and a concomitant advance of the new Radical Right across the continent: the Left was destroyed in Italy after Mussolini's seizure of power in 1922;

military dictatorships were established in most Southern and Eastern European countries in the 1920s and 1930s; in 1933 democracy was annihilated by Hitler in Germany and within one year Austria had meet a similar fate.(2)

The Spanish case cannot be separated from the wider European conflict. The First World War brought about the crisis of hegemony of the Constitutional Monarchy in Spain: neutrality did not spare the country from political upheaval and radical social and economic transformation. In the summer of 1917, the industrial bourgeoisie, the armed forces and the labour movement mobilized their forces and attempted to overthrow the ruling liberal oligarchy. The irony of the events of this year was that a large range of groups sharing comparable levels of hostility and contempt for the ruling oligarchy never managed to co-operate in a common initiative. Catalans and Republicans tried to win over the *Juntas*, but the latter were looking to Maura who, in turn, refused to get involved in the conflict. The strict legalism of Maura prevented his movement from playing a crucial role at that historical moment. Cambó emerged as the only significant figure trying to establish a political alternative based upon a coalition of forces with a common programme of economic and political modernization. The Left, outmanoeuvred by the cunning of the Catalan politician, was not up to the job. The Socialists, in particular, found themselves in the odd situation of being moderates forced by circumstances to become revolutionaries, and they paid dearly for their own ideological contradictions. The result was a situation of chaos and turmoil,

violence and revolution in which the government scored an important victory in the short-term simply by exploiting the internal disputes of the different opposing forces.

The Liberal Monarchy survived the revolutionary challenge of 1917, but the constitutional regime had to pay a high price for that victory: the alliance of Throne and army was consolidated at the expense of the discredited political elites. Henceforth the officers were to act as an anti-constitutional party with powers of veto, able to make and topple cabinets. The carefully-constructed edifice built during the last decades of the nineteenth century collapsed and the *Turno* between dynastic parties had to be abandoned.

After the failure of the coalition government of 1918, the best solution produced by the existing ruling order to fight back, the Canovite system was doomed. It lasted until 1923, but those years would be marked by agony and decline. In an era of mass politics and ideological mobilization the politics of notables and elites could no longer work. The organic crisis of the state would be long and painful, as although the political system was mortally wounded, it was still strong enough to prevent the creation of a political alternative.

In the international field, the country paid the penalty for its neutrality. Under the harassment of a proud France, which remembered the *Germanophilia* of key Spanish institutions, an isolated Spain found herself struggling alone

against the well-armed and well-trained Moorish guerrillas. The lack of efficient planning and the unpopularity of that campaign, which was grossly underfunded, finally led to the disaster at Annual in the summer of 1921, when over 12,000 Spanish troops were killed and nearly the whole eastern part of the Protectorate was overrun by the Moors. The impact of that defeat resembled that of 1898. It led to a national uproar demanding the heads of those responsible for such disaster. It was one more nail in the coffin of the dynastic politicians, accused again of inefficiency and incapability, and of leading Spain to international humiliation.(3)

The domestic situation presented a chaotic image. Rural *caciquismo* was still omnipotent and delivered the awaited results, but the dynastic parties were fragmented into a variety of rival factions. The political deadlock could not be solved. There were 30 partial crises and 13 total crises of government between 1917 and 1923.

The Allied victory, the Bolshevik triumph in Russia and the post-war economic recession intensified the class struggle in Spain. It was evident by the autumn of 1918 that Spain was sliding into a revolutionary situation which now, unlike in 1917, possessed both an urban and a rural dimension. Yet the swift suppression of the revolutionary strike in August 1917 had halted the revolutionary impetus of the Socialist leaders and broken up the coalition created against the regime. The Spanish Socialists were inflexibly opposed to any further revolutionary adventures

and thereby lost the opportunity to become, at a time of growing popular discontent, hegemonic among the forces fighting for radical change in Spain. Their power base was rapidly taken by the CNT which henceforth became the leading force of the organized working class, even making inroads into traditional Socialist strongholds. In 1920, the membership of the Socialist trade union, the UGT, lagged (with 211,342 members) far behind that of the CNT (which boasted a membership of 790,948). The Anarcho-Syndicalist movement, however, lacked the discipline, the organization and the ideological coherence of the Socialists. Rather than being an homogeneous group, the CNT constituted the amalgamation of opposite factions which ranged from moderate Syndicalists to uncompromising Anarchists.

The militancy of the masses and the revolutionary atmosphere could not be eradicated. Throughout 1918 food riots and workers' protests against the rising cost of living rocked the normal life of most cities. Workers had to cope with worsening living conditions produced by an increasing scarcity of basic commodities and a mounting inflation. The situation was even worse for the peasants, who had to survive with miserable wages and unhealthy diets and who had, in most cases only temporary jobs. News of the Bolshevik take-over and the subsequent land distribution in Russia was the ideological push needed to trigger off an all-out revolutionary upheaval in the Southern countryside. The traditionally rebellious mood of the Andalusian anarchist peasants had never really been extinguished and it was the Russian revolution which now provided for them the

necessary myth which, historically, had been needed to spark uprisings in the countryside. Between 1918 and 1920, the starving and long-suffering masses, showing an unprecedented degree of co-ordination and organization, rose throughout Southern Spain demanding 'land and bread'. Authorities and the rural bourgeoisie were caught by surprise. They lost control of the events and many fled in panic to the safety of the cities. Power lay in the many workers' trade unions, normally controlled by the Anarcho-syndicalists, which had sprang up amidst the revolutionary euphoria. Thus in 1919 a kind of dictatorship of the proletariat reigned over large swathes of the Andalusian countryside.(4)

Simultaneously, the CNT experienced an astonishing success and rapid advance in the industrial centres, in particular in Catalonia. In the summer of 1918, the Catalan CRT abandoned the old craft trade unions and instead adopted the model of the *Sindicato Unico*. It was a new strategy which soon proved a formidable weapon in the hands of the resolute Syndicalist leaders. The first major test of strength for the new *Sindicato Unico* took place in February 1919, when a strike broke out at the Anglo-Canadian hydroelectric concern known as 'La Canadiense'. The conflict began as a normal wages dispute between the management and workers who had recently joined the CRT and had been sacked, but soon became the most successful strike in Spanish labour history. The co-ordination, organization and careful planning of the Syndicalists as well as the solidarity of the Catalan proletariat was stunning. The mobilization of the workers was remarkable and lasted forty-four days, leaving the

city of Barcelona totally paralysed. To add insult to injury, the trade union of graphic artists even put into practice the so-called 'red censorship', that is the prevention of any publication hostile to the workers' position. The victory of the labour movement was total: the current Liberal administration, led by Count Romanones, promised the introduction of the eight-hour working day and the company agreed both to accept the re-hiring of its employees without penalties of any kind and to raise wages.(5) When the CNT held a Congress at the *Teatro de la Comedia* in Madrid in December, the organization was at the peak of its power. The structure of the *Sindicato Unico* was nationally adopted and amidst revolutionary optimism the CNT voted for adhering provisionally to the Comintern.(6)

The Spanish ruling classes shared with their European counterparts the fear of an imminent revolutionary victory. The revolutionary offensive in Spain, however, never really represented a challenge capable of bringing down the regime nor did it offer a viable political alternative. There did not exist any leading group that attempted to link the ruralside revolt with the urban unrest. The Socialists were not prepared to lead a violent insurrection and although the CNT stepped in and attracted massive support at a time of intensified class struggle, their own apolitical and libertarian principles prevented the Anarcho-Syndicalists from even considering the seizure of state power. Nevertheless, the expansion of the labour movement and the offensive of the CNT contributed decisively to the final disintegration of an already bruised and discredited

political system. They would persuade the ruling classes to discard the existing governing class which could guarantee neither social order nor political stability. The Spanish bourgeoisie in general, and the Catalan in particular, frightened by the growing power of the Syndicalists, finally dropped any reformist intentions that they might have coveted in the past, and sought to protect their economic interests by relying on sheer force. With the end of the war in Europe, the golden era of huge profits had ended. Industrialists could foresee an imminent economic recession in which they planned to resort to massive lay-offs of workers and cuts in production. Yet this could not be carried out with a powerful and combative CNT. Hence the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement had to be crushed.

In 1919 arose the first loud calls for a military dictatorship.(7) The bourgeoisie was clearly not prepared to surrender its social and economic privileges without a battle and hence it turned to the army for protection. The alliance between the bourgeoisie and the army acted not only behind the back of the central government in Madrid but even in open defiance to its orders on many occasions. In 1919 alone two cabinets confronted with the intransigent opposition of officers and industrialists had to resign.(8) The result would be the final collapse of civil supremacy and the final crisis of authority of the dynastic parties.

In the spring of 1919 an army of 20,000 troops was sent to Andalusia. Towns were occupied after pitched battles, workers'

unions were closed and hundreds of militants imprisoned. Even more brutal and violent was the reaction in Catalonia. There constitutional guarantees had been suspended in January 1919 and would remain so for more than three years. Real power thus lay with the Captain General of that region. Under his command, an old bourgeois militia dating from medieval times, *El Somatén*, was resurrected and its members granted permission to carry weapons, patrol the streets and arrest strikers. Not being satisfied with this, the industrialists hired gangs of thugs--one of them was led by the infamous former chief of police Manuel Bravo Portillo--whose task was to beat up and shoot leading Syndicalists. The streets of Barcelona soon became a battlefield. In November 1919, the Catalan employers launched a massive lock-out which lasted two months and left 200,000 workers jobless. One month later, the so-called *Sindicatos Libres* were established in Barcelona. They were a new trade union controlled by Catholic and Carlist workers. They presented the employers with a great opportunity to split the labour movement.(9) The climax of violence and repression was reached with the appointment of General Severiano Martínez Anido as Civil Governor of Barcelona in October 1920. For two years, this blood-thirsty and vicious officer was to run Barcelona as his private fiefdom. He disregarded any consideration of civil rights and regarded the CNT militants as war enemies. Thousands of Syndicalists and left-wing sympathizers were imprisoned or deported to distant provinces (making the journey on foot and in chains). Counter-terrorism received official protection. Gunmen of the *Libres* were trained and armed in military barracks and the notorious '*Ley de Fugas*' or the

shooting of captured Syndicalists 'while trying to escape' in custody introduced. Between 1919 and 1923, hundreds of the best militants of the CNT, including three General Secretaries, were killed.(10)

The intransigent attitude of the propertied classes and the brutal repression carried out against the CNT played into the hands of the extremists who began to dominate the organisation after 1919. As the CNT seemed to have reached its apex of efficiency and strength, its energies were to be channelled into a crazy wave of assassinations and terror. This was not only to end the collective discipline which had yielded its most successful fruits in the past, but was also ironically to play into the hands of those who only needed an excuse to smash the labour movement.(11) Moreover, the irony of indiscriminate repression was that the moderate Syndicalist leaders, and not the lesser known Anarchists, became the targets of Employers' gunmen. It was the extremists in the CNT who were best equipped and prepared to operate clandestinely and who were most disposed to meet violence with violence. From 1919 Anarchist groups of action responded in kind and industrialists, overseers and strikebreakers were gunned down. Among these, the most outstanding victims of Anarchist violence were the Conservative Prime Minister Eduardo Dato and the Archbishop of Saragossa, shot dead in March 1921 and June 1923 respectively. The endless spiral of violence spread from Catalonia to other regions. Spain resembled a country in civil war: seldom did a day pass without the newspapers reporting fresh assassinations or new acts of

vandalism.

Following the disaster of Annual in the summer of 1921, the services of Antonio Maura were once more required to save the political system from collapse. He again formed a national government, which included among others Juan de la Cierva and Francesc Cambó. As in 1918, the attempt failed miserably. Once the temporary cement provided by the Moroccan disaster disappeared, the coalition government was torn apart by irreconcilable internal political and personal rivalries. The last experience of a national coalition collapsed in March 1922. Henceforth mounting calls for a military take-over became deafening, while the dynastic politicians saw their role reduced to that of verbally abusing one another in the Cortes, which now more than ever, functioned as a mere talking-shop. It was amidst this climate of colonial disasters, social warfare and political vacuum that the same groups which had played a crucial role in the crisis of October 1917--Crown, Army and Industrial bourgeoisie--decided to throw their support behind an authoritarian solution in September 1923. In fact, in that year Primo de Rivera did not overthrow the last constitutional government, he merely limited himself to filling a vacuum which had existed ever since 1917.

NOTES.

Chapter 1: The outbreak of the war

1. On *caciquismo* see Joaquín Costa, *Oligarquía y caciquismo* (Madrid, 1975); Robert W. Kern, *Liberals, Reformers and Caciques in Restoration Spain* (Albuquerque, 1974); José Varela Ortega, *Los amigos políticos* (Madrid, 1977); Javier Tusell, *Oligarquía y caciquismo en Andalucía* (Madrid, 1976); José Varela Ortega, 'Los amigos políticos: funcionamiento del sistema caciquista', Joaquín Romero Maura, 'El caciquismo: tentativa de conceptualización', Javier Tusell, 'La descomposición del sistema caciquista español' in *Revista de Occidente*, 127 (October 1973); Julio Aróstegui and others, 'La España de los caciques. Del sexenio democrático a la crisis de 1917' in *Historia 16, Extra XXII*, June 1982.

2. On the impact of 1898 see Joséph Harrison, 'The regenerationist movement in Spain after the disaster of 1898 in *European Studies Review*, 9, 1, 1977; H. Ramsden, *The 1898 movement in Spain* (London, 1974).

3. On Maura and the Tragic Week the best analysis can be found in Joan Connelly Ullman, *The Tragic Week: Anticlericalism in Spain, 1875-1912* (Harvard, 1968); see also J. Romero Maura, *La rosa de fuego. El obrerismo barcelonés de 1899 a 1909* (Barcelona, 1974); Gabriel Maura and Melchor Fernández Almagro, *Por qué cayó Alfonso XIII* (Madrid, 1948); Rafael Pérez Delgado, *Antonio Maura* (Madrid, 1974); María Jesús González Hernández, *Ciudadanía y Acción: el conservadurismo maurista, 1907-1923* (Madrid, 1990). The term "Idóneo" was coined by Maura in a speech delivered on

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1 January, 1913 in which he announced his refusal to alternate in power with the Liberal party. As Maura-Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.240-241, notes:

"El partido conservador no puede ya dentro de tal sistema funcionar como oposición de Su Majestad, ni turnar en el gobierno ni compartir responsabilidades...el ministerio actual u otros que se formen con elementos análogos, deberán perdurar hasta tanto que se haya formado otro partido diferente del conservador actual, Idóneo para turnar con el...".

('The Conservative party cannot work any longer within the system as His Majesty's Opposition, nor rotate in government nor share responsibilities...the present administration or others to be formed with similar elements will have to last until another party, different from the present Conservative party, has been formed, an *Idóneo* (compatible) to alternate in power with them...').

4. Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *Poder y sociedad en España, 1900-1931* (Madrid, 1992), p.187.

5. Maura-Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, appendix, pp.472-473.

6. On the Socialists' support for neutrality see Fundación Pablo Iglesias, *Amaro del Rosal's Papers: History of the UGT* (hereafter AARD-330-2), August 1914. Pro-neutrality manifestos by the National Committee of the Socialists Party and the UGT can be found respectively in *El Socialista* (2 and 4 August, 1914). The *Lliga Regionalista*, party of the Catalan bourgeoisie, welcomed the official neutrality in its organ *La Veu de Catalunya* on 19

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August, 1914. Maura's backing for neutrality can be found in Real Academia de la Historia, Eduardo Dato's Papers (hereafter A.D.), in the section of correspondence from former Prime Ministers: Letters from Maura to Dato (2 and 28 August, 1914). Many believed that the main cause of Spanish neutrality was the military incapacity and economic weakness of the country to wage a modern war. See, for instance, Manuel Azaña, *Discurso en el Ateneo de Madrid el 15 de Mayo de 1917. Los motivos de la Germanofilia* (Madrid, 1917), pp.6,18; Manuel Cordero, *Los socialistas y la revolución* (Madrid, 1932), p.26; Manuel Espadas Burgos, 'España y la guerra' in *Historia 16. S.XXI*, n.51 (Madrid, 1983), pp.89-90.

7. See Public Record Office, Foreign Office Records (hereafter F.O.) 371-2105/49.262. Dispatch of Ambassador Hardinge to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Grey, about the Spanish army's hostility to Lerroux's pro-Allied stance (14 September, 1914); F.O. 371-2106/69.755. Hardinge to Grey concerning his embarrassment at being approached by Lerroux's Radical party (11 November, 1914).

8. Romanones, *Notas de mi vida, 1912-1931* (Madrid, 1947), pp.94-95; Romanones, *Las responsabilidades del antiguo régimen, 1875-1923* (Madrid, n.d.), p.77.

9. F.O. 371-2104/72.750. Hardinge to Grey (31 August, 1914).

10. Luis Araquistáin, *Entre la guerra y la revolución* (Madrid, 1917), pp.6-7.

Chapter 2: The year 1915: the critical phase

1. Gerald Meaker, 'A civil war of words' in Hans A. Schmitt

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(ed.), *Neutral Europe between War and Revolution, 1917-1923* (Virginia, 1988), pp.1-2, 6-7; Also see Adolfo Posada, *Actitud ética ante la guerra y la paz* Madrid, 1923), pp.13-14.

2. Archivo General de la Administración (hereafter A.G.A.), Foreign Office Section, Washington, Idd. 26; Boxes: 8134, 8136, 8140, 8141, 8142 and 8152.

3. F.O. 371-2195/37.227. Visit of Spanish Ambassador, Merry del Val, to British Foreign Office (11 August, 1914); F.O. 371-2169/39.448 and F.O. 371-2169/40.133. Spanish officers in the British army and Navy (17 and 18 August, 1914). F.O. 371-2104/72.750. Hardinge to Grey on the divisions within the two dynastic parties (18 November, 1914); F.O. 371-2468/7611. Hardinge to Grey about his satisfaction with the current government (20 January, 1915); F.O. 371-2468/85.652. Hardinge to Grey about the hostility of the German Ambassador, Prince Ratibor, towards the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marquis de Lema (23 June, 1915).

4. See, among others, Adolfo Posada, *Actitud ética ante la guerra y la paz* (Madrid, 1923); Hermógenes Cenamor Val, *Los españoles y la guerra: neutralidad o intervención* (Madrid, 1916); Fernando de la Reguera, *España neutral* (Madrid, 1967); Lorenzo Ballesteros, *La guerra europea y la neutralidad española* Madrid, 1917); Fernando Díaz Plaja, *Francófilos y Germanófilos* (Barcelona, 1973); J.Román, *Voces de guerra* (Barcelona, 1916); Luis Araquistáin, *Entre la guerra y la revolución* Madrid, 1917); *Polémica de la guerra, 1914-1916* (Madrid, n.d.); *Dos ideales políticos y otros trabajos* (Madrid, 1916); G.Meaker, 'Civil war

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of words' in Schmitt (ed.), *Neutral Europe between War and Revolution, 1917-1923* (Virginia, 1988); See also F.O. 371-2471/73.963 and F.O. 371-2760/20.756. Secret reports (29 July, 1915 and 17 April, 1916).

5. See Díaz Plaja, *op.cit.*, pp.150-152, 162; Cenamor Val, *op.cit.*, pp.228-230; See also F.O. 371-2471/103.219. Memo from British Consular agent Butler on the position of Spanish bishops towards the war (29 July, 1915); F.O. 371-2472/44.697. *Germanophilia* of Spanish clergy confirmed during the tour of the Bishop of Southwark (5 October, 1915).

6. Díaz Plaja, *op.cit.*, pp.91-92; F.O.371-2471/103.219. Memo from British Consular agent Butler about the position of the army (29 July, 1915); F.O.371-2105/49.962. Hardinge to Grey about the *Germanophilia* of the army (14 September, 1914); F.O.371-2468/115.649. Hardinge to Grey on plans of certain officers to annex Portugal (19 August, 1915).

7. F.O.371-2471/103.219. Memo from Butler on *Mauristas* and *Carlists* as the two most *Germanophile* political groups in Spain (29 July, 1915).

8. F.O.371-2412/51.655. Hardinge to Grey commenting on Maura's speech (29 April, 1915). Maura's speech at the Royal Theatre can be found in Antonio Maura, *Tres discursos* (Madrid, 1918), pp.9-35.

9. F.O.371-2762/185.472. Hardinge to Grey commenting on Maura's second speech (12 September, 1916 ; Maura's speech at Berlanga can be found in Maura, *op.cit.*, pp.39-53.

10. On the role of the Monarch during the war see Víctor Espinos

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Moltó, *Alfonso XIII, espejo de neutrales* (Madrid, 1977); see also J. Cortés Cavanillas, *Alfonso XIII* (Barcelona, 1966), pp.148-161; Princesa Pilar de Baviera and Colin Chapman Huston, *Alfonso XIII* (Barcelona, 1945), pp.165-189; Melchor Fernández Almagro, *Historia del reinado de Alfonso XIII* (Barcelona, 1977), pp.205-261; The Spanish King was believed until 1916 to favour the Allied cause. See, for instance, F.O.371-2105/49.204. Hardinge to Grey (14 September, 1914) and F.O.371-2760/20.576. Secret Report (2 February, 1916). But the Monarch moved towards the *Germanophile* camp in 1917. See Romanones, *Notas*, p.100; F.O.371-3033/96.587. Memo by British Military Attache Jocelyn Grant (5 May, 1917); F.O.371-3033/92.539. Opinion of the French Ambassador (7 May, 1917).

11. Meaker, *op.cit.*, pp.24-31; Díaz Plaja, *op.cit.*, pp.24-25, 190-191, 339-343.

12. F.O.371-2471/73.963. Memo from Butler on Catalans (29 July, 1915); see also Díaz Plaja, *op.cit.*, pp.75-82; On Cambó's ambiguous position see Jesús Pabón, *Cambó* (Barcelona, 1952), pp.448-449; Francesc Cambó, *Memorias* (Madrid, 1987), p.219.

13. F.O.371-2471/73.963. Memo from Butler on Republicans (29 July, 1915). F.O.371-2105/49.204 and F.O. 371-2106/69.755. Hardinge to Grey on Spanish Republicans (24 September, 1914 and 11 November, 1914); F.O.371-2471/69.000. Hardinge to Grey on rumours of Radicals planning to attack German ships in Barcelona (12 June, 1915). On Lerroux's position see Alejandro Lerroux, *La verdad a mi país. España y la guerra* (Madrid, 1915), p.51; Octavio Ruiz Manjón, *El partido Republicano Radical, 1908-1936*

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(Madrid, 1976), pp.110-111; Many leading politicians shared with the British Embassy the view of Lerroux as a demagogue and unprincipled adventurer. See, for instance, Andrés Saborit, *La huelga de Agosto* (Mexico, 1967), p.27,35; Manuel Cordero, *Los socialistas y la revolución* (Madrid,1932), pp.27-28; Francesc Cambó, *Memorias* (Madrid, 1987),p.187; Pere Foix, *Los archivos del terrorismo blanco* (Madrid, 1978), p.101.

14. On Melquiades Alvarez see Maximiano García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez* (Madrid, 1974), pp.316-318; Manuel Suárez Cortina, *El reformismo en España* (Madrid, 1986), pp.148-155.

15. Antonio Bar, *La CNT en los años rojos, 1910-1926* (Madrid, 1981), pp.359-431; Carlos Forcadell, *Parlamentarismo y bolchevización* (Barcelona, 1978), pp.215-229; Manuel Buenacasa, *El movimiento obrero español, 1886-1926* (Paris, 1966); pp.55-57; Diego Abad de Santillán, *El movimiento obrero español* (Puebla, 1965), pp.118-122.

16. Forcadell, *op.cit.*, pp.84-92; A. Fabra Ribas, *El socialismo y el conflicto europeo. El Kaiserismo: He ahí al enemigo* (Madrid, 1975 ; Abad de Santillán, *op.cit.*, pp.118-120; Luis Gómez LLorente, *Aproximación a la historia del socialismo español* (Madrid, 1976), pp.105-106; Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *El movimiento obrero en la historia de España* Madrid, 1972), pp.574-581; For a fuller consideration of the 1915 debate see AARD-330-2 (1915).

17. F.O.371-2106/64.601. Hardinge to Grey (29 October, 1914).

18. F.O.371-2106/60.039 Director of the Intelligence service to Hardinge (13 October, 1914).

19. Enrique Montero, 'Luis Araquistáin y la propaganda aliada

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durante la primera guerra mundial' in *Historia Social*, 1981, pp.245-248.

20. F.O.371-2105/58.868, 2105/64.599 and 2105/69.076. Hardinge to Grey 13 and 23 October, 9 November, 1914).

21. F.O.371-2468/103.725. Hardinge to Grey (29 July, 1915). The Ambassador was against the entry of Portugal into the war. He wrote:

"The present benevolent neutrality of Portugal is more useful to us than her active military help, especially if we have to buy it by the sacrifice of sympathy and goodwill in the peninsula".

See also F.O.371-2472/100.366. Foreign Office to British Ambassador at Lisbon, Lancelot D. Carnegie (24 July, 1915). The Foreign Office pointed out the following advantages of Portugal's entry into the war:

- 1)-Take possession of 44 enemy ships now in Portuguese Ports.
- 2)-Increase efficiency of our patrol of the Western coast of the peninsula by using Portuguese ports.
- 3)-Complete the blockade of German East Africa.

And the following disadvantages:

- 1)-Lose Portugal as intermediary for buying Brazilian, Danish or other neutral-owned munitions.
- 2)-Lose our freedom in the settlement of Africa after the war. We might be faced with the alternative of ingratitude or surrender to Portugal of some part of Northern German South-West Africa and Southern German East Africa.

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3)-We might be faced with trouble from Spain or internal revolution at Lisbon.

The ambiguous conclusion was that Portugal should not become a belligerent as she was more useful rendering services in her condition of neutrality. It was impossible, however, not to see the strength of the argument that Portugal had earned the lasting enmity of Germany without establishing any binding claim on the benevolence of Britain.

22. F.O.371-2470/3476. Hardinge to Grey (9 January, 1915).

23. F.O.371-2470/14.004. Hardinge to Grey (5 February, 1915).

24. Romanones writes that Dato told him that the German Ambassador had offered Tangier, Gibraltar and Portugal in exchange for Spanish support in the war. See Romanones, *Notas*, p.103 and Romanones, *Responsabilidades*, p.81; See also F.O.371-2470/29.115. The King confirmed to Monsieur Cooreman the German offers of Gibraltar, Morocco and free hand in Portugal (13 March, 1915); F.O.371-2472/144.697. The Spanish Monarch said exactly the same thing to the Bishop of Southwark (5 October, 1915); F.O.371-2472/159.874. That information was confirmed by Leopoldo Romeo, the pro-Allied editor of *La Correspondencia de España* (28 October, 1915).

25. F.O.371-2105/40.112. Secret Report by War Admiralty Staff (17 August, 1914).

26. F.O.371-2050/38.811. Foreign Office Memorandum (13 August, 1914).

27. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.212.

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28. F.O.371-2412/46.393. Grey to Hardinge (20 April, 1915).
29. Maura, *op.cit.*, p.23.
30. See ABC (11 April, 1915) and *El Mundo* (12 April, 1915).
31. Both mentioned above. F.O.371-2470/29.500. King's conversation with Monsieur Cooreman (13 March, 1915); F.O.371-2472/144.697. King's conversation with the Bishop of Southwark (5 October, 1915).
32. F.O.371-2412/65.976. (25 May, 1916).
33. F.O.371-2470/29.500. (15 March, 1915).
34. F.O.371-2412/65.976. Hardinge to Grey following Russian support for the Spanish claim for Tangier (25 May, 1915); F.O.371-2472/100.366. War Office and Admiralty consider Spanish claim (24 July, 1915); F.O.371-2412/160.862 and 2412/166.839. Conversations of Grey with Cambon (28 October and 11 November, 1915).
35. Raymond Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975* (Oxford, 1982), pp.481-482.
36. J.A. Vandellós, 'La balanza comercial y el cambio de la peseta' in *Revista Nacional de Economía*, n.95 (1931).
37. Instituto de Reformas Sociales, *Movimientos de precios al por menor durante la guerra* (Madrid, 1923), p.7
38. On the impact of the war on the economy see J.L. García Delgado, S.Roldán and J.Muñoz, *La formación de la sociedad capitalista en España* (Madrid, 1973); Ignacio Bernís, *Consecuencias económicas de la guerra* (Madrid, 1923); Instituto de Reformas Sociales, *Movimientos de precios al por menor durante la guerra* (Madrid, 1923); *Informes de los inspectores de trabajo sobre la influencia de la guerra europea en las industrias*

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españolas (Madrid, 1918). J. Vicéns Vives, *Historia de España y América*, Vol.V (Barcelona, 1974).

39. Juan de la Cierva, *Notas de mi vida* (Madrid, 1955), p.180; Romanones, *Responsabilidades*, p.82.

Chapter three: The Romanones administration: the domestic challenge

1. Various sources describe Romanones as the perfect example of a professional politician associated with the corrupt practices of the *Turno* era. See, for instance, Saborit, *La huelga*, pp.27, 95-96, 262; Cierva, *op.cit.*, p.58; Cambó, *op.cit.*, pp.239-240; The writer Azorín portrayed Romanones as lord and master of a clientele who continually followed him along the corridors of the Cortes. For the philosopher Ortega, Romanones' concept of politics did not go beyond the necessary tricks to cling to power. Both quoted in Javier Tusell, *La política y los políticos en tiempos de Alfonso XIII* (Madrid, 1976), p.61; The novelist and leading figure of the cultural Generación del 98, Miguel Unamuno, wrote that the limit of a semantic paradox was that Romanones was an outstanding leader of Spanish liberalism. Quoted in Salvador Forner Muñoz, *Canalejas y el partido liberal democrático* (Madrid, 1993), p.38.

2. Romanones, *Notas*, p.13. The Count claims that a united and strong Liberal party ended with the death of the historical leader, Práxedes Sagasta, in 1903. He also notes that he managed to seize the leadership of the party after the assassination of the then Prime Minister and leader Canalejas as a result of the

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role played by the Monarch. His rival, the Marquis of Alhucemas, seemed to be the best candidate for the post but the King, always willing to put into practice the principle of *Divide et Impera*, threw his support behind Romanones.

3. On Romanones' successful manoeuvre to destroy the reformist initiative see Manuel Suárez Cortina, *El reformismo en España* (Madrid, 1986), pp.89-96; Maximiano García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez* (Madrid, 1974), p.285. Most authors absolve Dato of any part in the internal coup which ended Maura's leadership of the Conservative party. In fact, Dato seems to have tried to persuade Maura until almost the last moment to form a Conservative government. It was thus Maura's own obstinacy as well as Romanones (with the connivance of the Monarch) who brought about his fall. There is abundant evidence of this in the private archives of both Maura and Dato. See, for instance, in Fundación Antonio Maura, Antonio Maura's Papers (hereafter A.M.), File 19, two letters from the former Minister of Interior, Juan de la Cierva, to Maura. In the first, dated 25 June 1913, Cierva claimed that he had been informed that Romanones, knowing that he could not hold on to power for long, was expecting Maura to replace him in October after the summer recess. On 26 October, 1913 Cierva wrote again to Maura insisting that Romanones had indeed resigned and therefore Maura should not waste time but take over immediately. Maura's refusal could only benefit the enemies of the Monarchy. Also see A.M., File 34, two letters from Dato to Maura. On 12 July, 1913 Dato confirmed to Maura that Romanones had told him that he would leave office in October and

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expected Maura to succeed him. On 19 October, 1913, Dato encouraged Maura to take over as soon as Romanones fell from power. He signed his letter: 'Your Servant'. Maura wrote a few days later to Dato, revelling in the Count's discomfort but showing no intention of taking power himself (A.D., letter from Maura to Dato, 23 October, 1913). Dato's position is strongly defended in Carlos Seco Serrano, *Perfil político y humano de un político de la restauración. Eduardo Dato a través de su archivo* (Madrid, 1978), pp.61-73. According to Seco, Maura began to lose the support of many Conservative notables after the statement of January 1913 in which he refused to alternate in power with the Liberals. They wanted to be led by Dato, but he remained loyal to Maura. Dato tried to persuade Maura to take power in October 1913, but his son Gabriel Maura made it impossible. Gabriel almost kidnapped his father when he took him to the villa of a Conservative Senator where he could not be reached. Then, and only then, Dato agreed to form a government. A similar argument is put forward by Virgilio Martín Nogales, *Eduardo Dato* (Alava, 1993), pp.56-59. More critical are the views of Maura and Fernández Almagro (*op.cit.*, pp.257-260) who argue that while it was true that Dato was not personally ambitious and was loyal to Maura, he was also weak and therefore could not oppose those in the party who claimed that the Crown should not be let down in a moment of crisis. See also José Gutiérrez Ravé, *Yo fui un joven maurista* (Madrid, 1944), pp.129-130, 183. He accuses Romanones who, fearing that he could be replaced by another Liberal cabinet led by the Marquis of Alhucemas, plotted with 'certain

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influential elements in the Palace', the end of Maura's leadership of the Conservative party. Dato was a weak figure who would become a puppet in the hands of the Count. If not Dato personally, the solution that he represented is heavily attacked in Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.191-193. He argues that the Dato cabinet was created to decapitate a man, Maura, rather than to follow a programme. "*Andando de puntillas Dato había aprendido a llegar lejos. Maura pisando fuerte iba camino del destierro*" ('Walking on his tiptoes Dato had learnt to go far. Maura treading firmly was on his way to exile'). See also María Jesús González Heredia, *Ciudadanía y acción: el conservadurismo maurista, 1907-1923* (Madrid, 1990), pp.39-40. She suggests that in October 1913 Dato's move permitted the re-creation of the *Turno* and a good opportunity to reform the system was lost. Probably the most important clash between the two Conservative leaders took place on 1 July 1916 in the Cortes. Dato declared that he could not understand why Maura, who until 1913 had described the conservative party as the cream of the nation, continually vilified his former party colleagues. Furthermore, nobody had suggested that he should abandon the party in 1913. Maura replied that he had not quit, but that he had left the party when he was told by the King that his decision was no longer of any importance as the other notables had plotted behind his back to replace him if he did not agree to form a government.

4. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.200.
5. Parliamentary Records (hereafter D.S.C.) 10 May, 1916.
6. Araquistáin, *Entre la guerra*, p.101.

Notes to chapter three (1. The labour movement)

1. The labour movement

1. On the origins and evolution of the organized labour movement in Spain see, Juan José Morato, *Pablo Iglesias: educador de muchedumbres* (Barcelona, 1968); María Teresa Martínez de Sas, *Socialismo y la España Oficial* (Guadalajara, 1975); Gerald Brennan, *The Spanish Labyrinth* (Cambridge, 1990); M. Pérez Ledesma, *Orígenes del Socialismo español* (Madrid, 1974); Gerald Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left in Spain, 1914-1923* (Stanford, 1974); Paul Heywood, *Marxism and the Failure of Organized Socialism in Spain, 1879-1936* (Cambridge, 1990); J. Zugazagoitia, *Pablo Iglesias. Vida y trabajo de un socialista* (Madrid, 1935); Andrés Saborit, *La huelga de Agosto de 1917* (Mexico, 1967); A. Saborit, *Asturias y sus hombres* (Toulouse, 1964); Antonio Elorza, 'Socialismo y agitación popular en Madrid, 1908-1920' in *Sistema* 1975; Pablo Iglesias, *Escritos*, 2 Vols. (Madrid, 1975); J. Romero Maura, *La rosa de fuego. El obrerismo barcelonés de 1899 a 1909* (Barcelona, 1975); M. Tuñón de Lara, *El movimiento obrero en la historia de España* (Madrid, 1972); Manuel Buenacasa, *El movimiento obrero español, 1886-1926* (Paris, 1966); Diego Abad de Santillán, *El movimiento obrero español* (Puebla, 1965); M. García Venero, *Historia de los movimientos sindicalistas españoles* (Madrid, 1969); Albert Balcells (ed.), *Teoría y práctica del movimiento obrero en España* (Valencia, 1977); Juan Andrade, *La burocracia reformista en el movimiento obrero* (Madrid, 1935); Joaquín Maurín, *Los hombres de la dictadura* (Zaragoza, 1977); Antonio Bar, *La CNT en los años rojos, 1910-1926* (Madrid, 1981); Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists:*

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the Heroic Years, 1868-1936 (New York, 1977); Pere Foix, *Apostols i mercaders* Barcelona, 1970); José M. Huertas, *El Noi del sucre. Materials per una biografía* (Barcelona, 1975); M.Sola Cañizares, *Hechos sociales en Cataluña, 1812-1934* (Madrid, 1970).

2. Tuñón, *op.cit.*, pp.30-39.

3. Heywood, *op.cit.*, p.36.

4. Instituto de Reformas Sociales, *Movimientos de precios*, pp.16-17.

5. Juan Antonio Lacomba, *La crisis española de 1917* (Málaga, 1970), p.31.

6. Labour conflicts are well presented in *El Socialista*, *El Liberal*, *El País* and *El Heraldo de Madrid*, January-May, 1916, See also José María Farregó, *Los atentados sociales en España* (Madrid, 1922), pp.214-217.

7. Andrade, *op.cit.*, pp.8-9, 29-30.

8. See *El Socialista* (20, 22 January and 24-27 February 1916, 1, 8, 13, 18-20 March 1916); See also *España* n.51 (13 January, 1916), n.52 (20 January, 1916) and n.58 (2 March, 1916).

9. In Fundación Pablo Iglesias, *UGT's Papers. National Committee Resolutions, 1916-1918* (hereafter AARD-IX).

10. See D.S.C. (28 June, 4 and 7 November, 1916). Urzaiz insisted in both June and November 1916 that he had not resigned but had been sacked as his economic measures were hurting certain privileged interests. On 28 June Urzaiz provoked a scandal when he declared that he had to go as he was not prepared to follow the traditional policy of both Conservative and Liberal administrations of granting favours and concessions. He named

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some particular cases, including his opposition to the return of five million pesetas to an Andalusian company which had links with Dato and to the granting of certain favours to several ecclesiastical orders. He also opposed the introduction of certain tariff barriers against the export of pyrites of iron and the lifting of those in the export of pyrites of copper. A new scandal broke out in the Cortes in November when Urzaiz declared that he had to choose between being fired or to prevaricate. He chose the latter. Organs of the press of opposite political tendencies had welcomed and backed Chancellor Urzaiz. See, for instance, *España*, nos. 51-54 (20 January-3 February, 1916) in which the work of Urzaiz is praised and n.58 (2 March, 1916). Araquistáin, in an editorial called "*La crisis*", argued that the sacking of Urzaiz was a victory for Romanones and the plutocracy. In another article called "*El mastín y el zorro*", another journalist, Luis de Olarriaga, claimed that the plutocracy must have been delighted with the departure of Urzaiz and the rise of two Castilian *caciques*, Villanueva and Alba. In *España* n.94 (9 November, 1916), Luis Araquistáin, echoing Urzaiz's words in the Cortes, titled his editorial: "*Todo el régimen es una prevaricación*". Similar favourable editorials favourable to Chancellor Urzaiz can be found in *El Socialista* (20 January, 25-26 February and 5-6 November, 1916). See also the *Maurista* journal, *La Acción* (28 February, 29 June, 7 August and 7, 29 November, 1916). On 6 November 1916 *La Acción* called the system "*a fetid pond*" and its representatives, "*a tribe of gypsies gypsies prepared to trade with everything regardless of the fact*

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that they were leading the country to total ruin".

11. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Serie A, Home Office Papers (hereafter A.H.N.). File 27A, Exp.6. Instructions from Alba to Governors for the elections of 9 April, 1916.

12. See Fernando Soldevilla, *El año político de 1916* (Madrid, 1917), pp.92-95. All the leading politicians of the Restoration--Dato, Romanones, Maura, Gasset, Alhucemas, Montero Ríos, Sagasta, etc--had one or more relatives in the Cortes. Over twenty national newspapers had their editors or members of their staff returned as Deputies. Some examples were: *La Tribuna*, *La Acción*, *El Socialista*, *El Liberal*, *El Imparcial*, *El Diario Universal*, *El Heraldo de Madrid*, *El País*, *La Mañana*, *El ABC*, *El Correo español*, etc.

13. *El Socialista* (3, 5, 22 and 25 April 1916); *España*, nos.63-65 (6, 13 and 20 April, 1916).

14. AARD-IX (Year 1916).

15. *El Socialista* (24 May, 1916).

16. AARD-330-2 (Year 1916).

17. A.Saborit, *Julián Besteiro* (Buenos Aires, 1967), pp.87-88. See also Saborit, *La huelga*, p.44. According to Saborit, Acevedo did not believe in his own proposal and was actually expecting a negative response from the UGT whom he knew to be reluctant to collaborate with the CNT.

18. Heywood, *op.cit.*, pp.40-41. Heywood stresses the fact that the rapprochement between the CNT and the UGT was partly due to the Socialist leaders' realization that they should be able to subsume the still smaller CNT within a united syndical federation

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in which they would retain hegemony. Nevertheless, it seems that pressure from below in both organizations was the main cause of their pact of alliance.

19. AARD-330-2 (Year 1916).

20. Details of the UGT Congress can be found in *El Socialista* (19-25 May, 1916).

21. The most important objective of the railworkers was the recognition of their trade union. See García Venero, *op.cit.*, p.357; Saborit, *La huelga*, p.48; Saborit, *Asturias y sus hombres*, p.164. For the events during the railway strike and its aftermath see *El Socialista* (8-20 July, 1916); *España* no.77 (13 July, 1916); Soldevilla, *op.cit.*, pp.286-307.

22. The campaign carried out in *El Socialista* (22-26 August, 1916). Romanones was accused of being behind economic and mining interests in Morocco. He was one of the main shareholders of the mining company La Colonizadora.

23. AARD-IX (Year 1916).

24. Fundación Pablo Iglesias, *Papers of Madrid's branch of the Socialist Party* (hereafter AASM-LXX-2).

25. Some leading pro-Entente editorials in *El Socialista*: 2 February, 1916 ('*Lucha de clases*'); 10 February, 1916 ('*La internacional y la guerra*'); 2 May, 1916 ('*Los socialistas y la guerra*'); 20 July, 1916 ('*Interview de Fabra y Ribas a Iglesias*'); 26 August, 1916 ('*Nuestra actitud*'); 22 September, 1916 ('*Impresiones de la guerra por Julián Besteiro*'); 30 December, 1916 ('*Enseñanzas de la realidad*'); 12 January, 1917 ('*La causa aliada*'); 5 February, 1917 ('*A qué llamamos*

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neutralidad'); In *España* n.107, 8 February, 1917 ('*La nota de Alemania*'); n.108, 15 February, 1917 ('*Ante el furor germánico*'); n. 112, 15 March, 1917 ('*Los socialistas demandan urgentes medidas del gobierno*'); n.113, 22 March, 1917 ('*Sobre la revolución en Rusia*').

26. Neutralist editorials in *Solidaridad Obrera* (17 August and 16 November, 1916; 3 and 5 February, 1917).

27. AARD-IX (Year 1916).

28. Soldevilla, *op.cit.*, pp.428-431.

29. AARD-IX (Year 1916).

30. See *ABC* (18 December, 1916); *La Acción* (18-19 December, 1916); *La Epoca* (19 December, 1916).

31. A.H.N. File 16 n.6 (Labour conflicts).

32. Saborit, *La huelga*, p.52; also see *El Socialista* (20 December, 1916; 7 and 12 January, 1917).

33. Article by Iglesias in *El Socialista* (8 January, 1917). Attack on the bankruptcy of the *Junta de Subsistencias* in *El Socialista* (23 February, 1917). Also see AARD-IX (Year 1917).

34. *El Socialista* (2 March, 1917).

35. *El Socialista* (7 March, 1917).

36. *El Socialista* (15 and 27 March, 1917).

37. *El Socialista* (28 March, 1917).

38. F.O. 185-1343/168. Hardinge to Balfour (2 April, 1917).

39. Saborit, *Julián Besteiro* (Mexico, 1961), p.95.

40. The government was attacked by nearly all the main newspapers. See, for instance, *El Socialista* (29 March and 2 April, 1917); *El Liberal* (29 March, 1917); *El Heraldo de Madrid*

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(29 March and 1 April, 1917); *El País* (29 March, 1917); *El Imparcial* (29 March, 1917); *La Epoca* (28-29 March, 1917); *La Acción* (March 1917).

2. The bourgeoisie

1. Arno Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (New York, 1974). Although the Spanish case is not considered in this work, all the conditions underlined by Mayer to prove the persistence of old regimes in Europe in 1914 were present in Spain.

2. On the consolidation of the Regionalist movement in Catalonia see Jesús Pabón, *Cambó* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1952); Josép Pla, *Cambó. Materials per a una historia d'aquesta ultims anys* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1930); Francesc Cambó, *Memorias* (Madrid, 1987); Maximiano García Venero, *Historia del nacionalismo catalan, 1793-1936* (Madrid, 1944); Albert Balcells, *Historia contemporánea de Cataluña* (Barcelona, 1981); Albert Balcells, *Historia del nacionalisme catala. Dels orígens al nostre temps* (Barcelona, 1992); Borja de Riquer, *La Lliga Regionalista: la burguesía catalana i el nacionalisme* (Barcelona, 1977); José Antonio González Casanova, *Federalismo y autonomía. Cataluña y el estado español, 1868-1938* (Barcelona, 1979); Antoni Jutglar, *Historia crítica de la burguesía en Cataluña* (Barcelona, 1984).

3. Vicéns Vives, *op.cit.*, p.350.

4. Joséph Harrison, *The Spanish Economy in the XXth Century* (London, 1985), pp.39-40. J.L.García Delgado, Santiago Roldán and Juan Muñoz, *La formaci'ón de la sociedad capitalista en España, 1914-1920* (2 vols., Madrid, 1973), vol.1, pp.76-77.

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5. Pabón, *op.cit.*, p.446.
6. Santiago Alba's links with Valladolid's wheat lobby can be seen in Varela Ortega, *Los amigos políticos*, pp.347-348. For the results of the General elections of April 1916 see Soldevilla, *op.cit.*, pp.82-90.
7. Harrison, *op.cit.*, p.41.
8. Eduardo Aunós, *Itinerario histórico de la España contemporánea, 1808-1936* (Barcelona, 1940), pp.329-330.
9. ABC (22 March, 1916).
10. The Catalan question was covered in the editorials of several national newspapers: *El País*, *El Liberal*, *El Heraldo de Madrid*, *El Imparcial*, *La Acción*, *El ABC*, etc (May-June 1916). Several leading politicians participated in the subsequent debate in the Cortes Cambó (*Lliga Regionalista*); Romanones, Ortega y Gasset, Alcalá Zamora and Rius (Liberal party); Marcelino Domingo (Catalan Republican); Nougués (Federal Republican); Rodés (Republican Nationalist).
11. On *Maurismo* see Gabriel Maura and Melchor Fernández Almagro, *Por qué cayó Alfonso XIII* (Madrid, 1948); María Jesús González Hernández, *Ciudadanía y acción: el conservadurismo maurista, 1907-1923* (Madrid, 1990); José Gutiérrez Ravé, *Yo fui un joven maurista* (Madrid, 1944); Ramón Punset, 'Maura y maurismo. Perspectiva histórica de la revolución desde arriba' in *Sistema* 233, November 1979; María Jesús González Hernández, 'Sobre Antonio Maura: el político, el mito y su política' in *Revista de Occidente*, n.77, 1987; J.Tusell and J.Avilés, *Maurismo y orígenes de la derecha española* (Madrid, 1986).

Notes to chapter three (2. The bourgeoisie)

12. A.M. File 82. Letters from Gustavo Peyrá to Maura (12 and 28 June, 1916).
13. D.S.C. Intervention of Cambó (7 June, 1916).
14. Cambó, *op.cit.*, pp.223-224.
15. The best study of Santiago Alba's economic projects is M.Cabrera, F.Comín and J.L. García Delgado, *Santiago Alba: un programa de reforma económica en la España del primer tercio del Siglo XX* (Madrid, 1989).
16. Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.448-449.
17. Cambó, *op.cit.*, p.246.
18. Cabrera et al., *op.cit.*, pp.143-146.
19. See *La Veu de Catalunya* (3-6 June, 1916). *ABC* (24 May, 1916); also see García Delgado et al., *op.cit.*, pp.255-322; Cabrera et al., *op.cit.*, pp.369-410.
20. See D.S.C. (17 June-12 July, 1916). Also see Cabrera et al., *op.cit.*, pp.410-418. Alba was ready to seek a compromise with those opposed to his projects. Nevertheless, Cambó claims that the *Lliga's* obstructionist strategy was produced by Alba's intransigence (Cambó, *op.cit.*, p.235). Many newspapers' editorials agree that the Liberal cabinet was looking for an excuse to close the Cortes. See, for instance, *La Acción* (8 and 14 July, 1916); *La Epoca* (23 July, 1916); *El Socialista* (24 July and 6 August, 1916).
21. *El Socialista* (5, 7 and 27 June, 6 August and 1 October, 1916). *España nos.*72-75, 79 and 89 (8, 15, 22, 29 June, 27 July and 5 October, 1916). Cambó claims that he agreed to give a speech at the Socialist *Casa del Pueblo* at Madrid in order to

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prevent Alba from doing so (Cambó, *op.cit.*, p.229).

22. Cambó, *op.cit.*, pp.239-240.

23. D.S.C. (31 October, 1916).

24. D.S.C. (20-21 November, 1916). Also see ABC (21 November, 1916). 25. Real Academia de la Historia. Natalio Rivas' Papers. *Memorias del reinado de Alfonso XIII, 1902-1931* (hereafter A.N.R.). File 8903 (December 1916).

26. Tusell-Avilés, *op.cit.*, pp.107-108; Cambó, *op.cit.*, pp.242-243; Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.469-470.

27. Pabón, *op.cit.*, p.469; Cambó, *op.cit.*, pp.236-237; Lacomba, *op.cit.*, p.109.

3. The army

1. On the role of the army in Spanish politics during the XIXth century see José R. Alonso, *Historia política del ejército español* (Madrid, 1974); Carlos Seco Serrano, *Militarismo y civilismo en la España contemporánea* (Madrid, 1984); Manuel Ballbé, *Orden público y militarismo en la España constitucional, 1812-1983* (Madrid, 1985); E. Christiansen, *The Origins of Military Power in Spain, 1808-1854* (London, 1967); M. Alonso Baguer, *El ejército en la sociedad española* (Madrid, 1971); Gabriel Cardona, *El poder militar en la España contemporánea hasta la guerra civil* (Madrid, 1983); Joaquim Lleixá, *Cien años de militarismo en España* (Madrid, 1986); Stanley Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford, 1967).

2. Ballbé, *op.cit.*, pp.226-227.

3. Ballbé, *op.cit.*, pp.247-248; Lleixá, *op.cit.*, p.60.

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4. Carolyn Boyd, *Praetorian Politics in Liberal Spain* (Chapel Hill, 1979); Ballbé, *op.cit.*, pp.249-250; Cardona, *op.cit.*, pp.7-9.
5. Boyd, *op.cit.*, p.10.
6. Payne, *op.cit.*, pp.76-81.
7. Payne, *op.cit.*, p.59.
8. Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth* (Cambridge, 1990); also see Ballbé, *op.cit.*, pp.273-278; Payne, *op.cit.*, pp.80-81.
9. See Joan Connelly Ullman, *The Tragic Week: Anticlericalism in Spain, 1875-1912* (Harvard, 1968).
10. Boyd, *op.cit.*, p.41.
11. Boyd, *op.cit.*, pp.51-52.
12. Boyd, *op.cit.*, pp.52-55.
13. B. Márquez and J. Capó, *Las juntas militares de defensa* (La Habana, 1923), p.24.
14. See J. Buxadé, *España en crisis. La bullanga misteriosa de 1917* (Barcelona, 1917). Also see Seco, *Militarismo*, pp.257-263.
15. Márquez-Capó, *op.cit.*, p.27.
16. Romanones, *Notas*, pp.135-138, 141-144.

Chapter 4: The Romanones administration: the international challenge

1. Soldevilla, *op.cit.*, pp.73-74.
2. In all his interventions in parliament throughout 1916, Romanones went out of his way to express his commitment to official neutrality and asked for the patriotic support of the chamber. See D.S.C. (10 May, 6 June, 13 October and 4 November,

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3. Conde de Romanones' Papers (hereafter A.R.). Correspondence with Ambassadors (II I A). Letter from León y Castillo (22 April, 1916).

4. A.R. II I A. Letter from Polo de Bernabé (16 March, 1916).

5. A.R. II I A. Letters from Romanones to León y Castillo (25 January, 23 February, 23 and 30 March, 1916).

6. A.R. II I A. Letters from León y Castillo to Romanones (5 and 14 February, 27 March, 1916). Also see Hermógenes Cenamor Val, *Los españoles y la guerra: neutralidad o intervención* (Madrid, 1916), pp.206-207. Cenamor agreed that due to economic realities Spain should ally with the West. Spain's balance of trade in pesetas with the two European camps in 1913 was the following:

	Imports	Exports	Total
France	205,206.453	328,175,911	533,382,634
Britain	317,641.818	241,211,777	558,853,395
Belgium	45,035,003	45,278,431	90,313,434
Italy	15,805,757	34,722,408	50,528,165
Portugal	57,055,336	42,367,918	104,423,254
Serbia	260,078	-----	260,078
Russia	44,973,518	8,286,803	53,260,321
Japan	629,587	77,713	707,300
Allies	686,607,550	705,120,961	1,391,728,511
(TOTAL)			

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Germany	185,373,167	74,418,566	259,791,733
Austria	10,334,926	8,797,340	19,132,266
Turkey	-----	5,761,019	5,761,019
Bulgaria	80,823	793	81,616
Central Powers (TOTAL)	195,788,916	88,977,718	284,766,634

7. F.O. 371-2711/29.361. Grey informs Hardinge of the meeting of the Spanish Ambassador at Paris with the French Prime Minister (10 February, 1916)

8. A.R. II I A. Letters from León y Castillo to Romanones (27 March, 10, 17 and 22 April, 8 and 22 May, 1916).

9. A.R. II I A. Letters from Romanones to Merry del Val (22 and 24 June, 1916). Also see A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. London, idd. 77. Box 7046 (Year 1916).

10. F.O. 371-2711/188.140. Hardinge to Grey (10 December, 1915).

11. F.O. 371-2711/19.049. Grey to Hardinge (31 January, 1916).

12. F.O. 371-2711/58.754. Grey to Hardinge (31 March, 1916).

13. F.O. 371-2711/72.158. Hardinge to Grey (15 April, 1916).

14. A.M. File 259 (4 September, 1916).

15. See Maura, *op.cit.*, pp.37-75. Also see F.O. 371-2762/182.808. Hardinge wrote to Grey that Romanones had been successful in inducing Maura to support him in his pro-Entente foreign policy (15 September, 1916).

16. On 13 September, 1916, *La Tribuna*, a Germanophile newspaper,

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noted: "Maura has betrayed his old friends at the request of important persons...". The pro-Allied press welcomed Maura's speech and *España* n.86 (14 September, 1916) suggested that if Maura kept delivering such pro-Western speeches he would soon be abandoned by the *Mauristas*.

17. F.O. 371-2762/182.208. Foreign Office to Hardinge (13 September, 1916).

18. F.O. 371-2762/189.921. Hardinge to Grey (16 September, 1916).

19. Romanones, *Notas*, p.117; Romanones, *Responsabilidades*, p.84.

20. F.O. 371-2760/20.756. Secret Report (2 February, 1916).

21. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris, idd.95. Box 5946 (Year 1916).

22. F.O. 395-117. Secret Report, dated October 1917, underlining the superiority of German propaganda in comparison to that of the Allies. It stressed that Germany was lavishing important sums in Spain to gain control of the press.

23. See A.H.N. Home Office, Serie A. File 48A. Exp.18 (2 February, 1929). A full account is given of Germany's strategy to finance and thus control the Spanish press. In 1916 Germany had an important success when the liberal newspaper *El Día* fell under its control. The German embassy contributed 35,000 pesetas monthly. The Liberal Deputy was in nominal charge of the editorials but the Mannerhsman brothers, two German agents, were in fact in control. Soon after Austria bought *La Nación* and Germany began to sponsor the Republican newspaper *España Nueva*. The Republican deputy and journalist Rodrigo Soriano received 4,000 pesetas monthly. In 1916 alone, Germany spent 500,000

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pesetas on activities related to manipulation and control of the Spanish press. Anarchists were often used to write neutralist editorials. A company called *Sociedad Civil de Estudios Económicos* was set up as a front to carry out these activities. The company was chaired by a Spaniard who had previously been employed at the Austrian Embassy. Also see A.R. File 96.n.20. Count Romanones confirms the existence of that company based in Madrid at calle Campoamor, 20. By the end of the war, it controlled over 500 local and national newspapers in Spain. He adds that a German, Gustavo Motschmann, was the go-between for the company and the Anarchists.

24. F.O. 185-1345. Report in 1917 from John Walters, British Director of propaganda in Spain. Money spent by Britain on Spanish press:

<i>La Correspondencia de España</i>	8,500
<i>El Imparcial</i>	7,500
<i>España</i>	1,500
<i>La Epoca</i>	3,000
<i>El Parlamentario</i>	2,500
<i>Los Bárbaros</i>	500
<i>Cantabria</i>	500
<i>Política</i>	75

Total: 24,075 pesetas

25. *La Acción* (23-26 June, 1916).

26. F.O. 371-2760/20.756. Secret Report (2 February, 1916).

27. F.O. 371-2761/87.617. Vaughan to Grey (8 May, 1916).

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28. *El Imparcial* (24 June, 1916).
29. For French protests about German submarine activities and the subsequent Spanish impotence see A.G.A.. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5946.
30. A.R. File 63. Exp.46 (September, 1916); Also see F.O. 371-2762/189.923. Hardinge to Grey (23 September, 1916).
31. A.G.A.. Foreign Office Section. London, Box 7039 and Paris. Box 5955.
32. A.R. File 63. Exp.31 (April, 1917).
33. A.G.A.. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5947.
34. F.O. 371-2762/229.037. Hardinge to Grey (11 November, 1916).
35. On the pro-German activities of the Governor of Fernando Poo see F.O. 371-2762/2229.041 Grey to Hardinge (14 November, 1916) and F.O. 371-2762/260.662. Grey to Hardinge (23 December, 1916)
36. F.O. 371-2762/46.070. Grey to Hardinge (14 February, 1917).
37. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5947. Also see A.R. File 63. Exp.46.
38. A.R. File 63. Exp.46.
39. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5957.
40. A.R. File 63. Exp.46; Romanones, *Notas*, pp.108-110; F.O. 371-2762/261.551. Secret Report (26 December, 1916).
41. For the pro-Western press see *El Liberal*, *El Socialista*, *El Imparcial* and *España*; and for the pro-German press see *La Acción*, *El Día*, *La Tribuna*, *España Nueva* and *El Debate*. All in December 1916.
42. Víctor Espinos Moltó, *op.cit.*, pp.191-193, 201-203; For the activities of the King during the war also see A.G.A. Foreign

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Office Section. Paris. Box 5948.

43. F.O. 371-2762/256.871. Hardinge to Balfour (14 December, 1916).

44. A.N.R. File 8903. 5 December, 1916.

45. F.O. 371-2762/256.871. Hardinge to Balfour (14 December, 1916)

46. For the note see *El Liberal* (28 December, 1916). For Romanones' opposition to the King's intention to attend the funeral at Vienna see A.R. II I A. Letters from Romanones to Fermín Calbetón, Spanish Ambassador at the Vatican (26 and 28 December, 1916). Also see A.N.R. File 8903. 5-10 December, 1916.

47. For the Austrian Ambassador's attack on the Count see A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 48A. Exp.18; Also see F.O. 371-3033/11.492 (January, 1917). The radiogram sent by the German Ambassador was published by *El Imparcial* and *El País* (4 and 9 January 1917, respectively).

48. The most outstanding newspapers in the anti-Romanones campaign were *El Día*, *La Tribuna*, *La Nación*, *La Acción*, *El Debate* and *España Nueva*. Also see A.N.R. n.8903. According to Rivas, Alcalá Zamora, Liberal Deputy and editor of *El Día*, was supporting a new Liberal cabinet headed by the pro-German General Weyler (18 December, 1916).

49. F.O. 371-3033/11.492. Hardinge to Balfour (17 January, 1917).

50. *La Acción* (9-10 January, 1917).

51. *España* n.107 (8 February, 1917).

52. A.R. II I A. Letters from Romanones to León y Castillo (3 and 6 February, 1917), letter from Romanones to Merry del Val 10

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February, 1917

53. D.S.C. (1 February, 1917).

54. *El Imparcial* (8 February, 1917).

55. D.S.C. (17 February, 1917).

56. A.R. II I A. León y Castillo to Romanones (10 February, 1917); also see F.O. 371-3035/39.928. Balfour to Hardinge (20 February, 1917).

57. A.R. II I A. Letter from León y Castillo to Romanones (6 February, 1917), letter from Fermín Calbetón to Romanones (17 February, 1917).

58. A.R. File 63. Exp.28 (February, 1917).

59. A.R. File 63. Exp.28 (April 1917), II I A. Letter from Romanones to León y Castillo (28 March, 1917).

60. There was a different interpretation of the March Revolution in Russia by the Leftist press in Spain. On the one hand, the *Germanophile* newspapers represented by the Republican *España Nueva* and the Anarcho-Syndicalist *Solidaridad Obrera* (18 and 20 March 1917, respectively) claimed that the revolution against the Tsar had been produced by the war weariness of both people and troops. On the other hand, *El Socialista* (6 March, 1917) demanded from the government measures against the German submarine blockade and espionage. According to the Socialist newspaper, the revolution had not been made against the war but against reactionary circles in Russia seeking a separate peace with Germany (series of editorials under the title "*Contra el espíritu alemán*", 17-24 March, 1917). On 6 April, 1917 Pablo Iglesias demanded breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany.

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61. A.R. II I A. Letter from Romanones to Castillo (14 April, 1917). The same day Castillo had written: *"We must act now otherwise it will be too late."*
62. Public Record Office. Cabinet papers (CAB.) 23/2. War Cabinet, 91 (8 March, 1917).
63. CAB. 24/7. GT.132; also see F.O. 371-3035/75.548. Vaughan to Balfour (12 April, 1917).
64. F.O. 371-3035/75.927. Vaughan writes to Balfour in regards to the attitude of the US Ambassador (13 April, 1917).
65. F.O. 371-3030/11.488. Jocelyn Grant to Balfour (9 January, 1917).
66. CAB. 24/7. GT.161 (14 March, 1917).
67. F.O. 371-3035/75.549. Conclusions of the Foreign Office after considering the advantages and disadvantages of Spain's entry into the war (12 April, 1917). CAB. 23/2.n.115. Appointment of an interdepartmental committee to report on the issue of exchanging Gibraltar for Ceuta. The committee was chaired by Lord Curzon and was formed by two members of the Foreign Office, Sir Eyre Crowe and Lord Drogueda, one of the Admiralty, Rear Admiral Hope, and one of the War Office, Major General Maurice (6 April, 1917). CAB. 27/51. C.115. By almost unanimity the committee reported against the proposed exchange of Gibraltar for Ceuta (10 January, 1919).
68. F.O. 371-3033/77.074. War Cabinet to Vaughan (13 April, 1917).
69. F.O. 371-3033/76.696 and 3033/77.736. Vaughan to War Cabinet (13 and 14 April, 1917).

Notes to chapter five (5.1. The disintegration of the Liberal party)

70. *El Socialista* (6 April, 1917).

71. *El Debate* (13 April, 1917).

72. *El Debate, La Acción, España Nueva, ABC, Solidaridad Obrera* (April, 1917).

73. The King's declarations in Fernando Soldevilla, *El año político de 1917* (Madrid, 1918), p.115. Villanueva's in *El Debate* and *El Día* (13 April, 1917). Dato's in *La Epoca* (14 April, 1917). Alhucemas' in *La Mañana* (14 April, 1917). The army's in *La Correspondencia Militar* (13 and 14 April, 1917).

74. A.R. II I A. Letter from Romanones to Fermín Calbetón (18 April, 1917).

75. A.R. File 63. Exp.46 (April, 1917).

76. *La Acción* (21 April, 1917).

Chapter 5: The hot summer of 1917

5.1. The disintegration of the Liberal party

1. *El Imparcial* (21 April, 1917).

2. A.G.A.. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5960.

3. CAB. 24/15. GT.394. Impression of the Alhucemas cabinet in Britain (1 June, 1917). The note sent by the new liberal government can be seen in *La Epoca* (27 April, 1917).

4. A.D. Mail from diplomats. Quiñones, a Spanish diplomat at Paris, wrote to Dato on 9 May, 1917: "*A los ojos de los Franceses, los españoles hemos perdido nuestra hidalguía*" ('In the eyes of the French, We Spaniards have lost our dignity.') For French reaction to German submarine attacks in Spanish waters see

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- A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris. Box 5962 (9-15 May, 1917).
5. *La Epoca* (19 April, 1917).
 6. Araquistáin, *op.cit.*, pp.8, 53-61; Also editorial by Luis Araquistáin in *España* n.118 (26 April, 1917); also see Romanones, *Notas*, p.103. According to the Count, the King went over to the pro-German camp in 1917.
 7. F.O. 371-3033/96.587. Jocelyn Grant to Balfour (5 May, 1917).
 8. See *España* n.118, "*Una crisis Germanófila*" (26 April, 1917); *El Socialista*, "*Saldo de Coronas*" (29 April, 1917).
 9. *El Liberal* (26 April, 1917 .
 10. *La Acción* (26 April, 1917 ; *ABC* (28 April, 1917).
 11. *El Socialista*, García Cortés' pro-neutrality editorial (1 May, 1917) followed one week later by Araquistáin's pro-interventionist answer (7 May, 1917).
 12. *Solidaridad Obrera* (5, 9 and 10 May, 1917).
 13. AARD-IX (May, 1917).
 14. Fundación Pablo Iglesias, *Papers of the Madrid's branch of the Socialist Party* (AASM-LII-2, 21 May, 1917). The CNT's note was published in *Solidaridad Obrera* (25 May, 1917). For the internal debate in the UGT see AARD-IX (May, 1917).
 15. Saborit, *La huelga*, p.55.
 16. Maura, *op.cit.*, pp.57-73.
 17. F.O. 185-1338/90.790. Editorials from French newspapers--*Le Figaro*, *Matin*, *La Victorie*--on Maura's speech (1 May, 1917).
 18. *España* n.119 (3 May, 1917); also see *El Liberal* (1 May, 1917).

Notes to chapter five (5.1. The disintegration of the Liberal party)

19. *El País* (28 May, 1917).
20. This fact was not missed by the *Germanophile* press. Soon they were accusing the Western Powers of backing a revolution which would establish a Republic in Spain. See *El Día* (28 May, 1917) and *La Acción* (30 May, 1917).
21. F.O. 185-1344.n.299. Hardinge to Balfour (6 June, 1917).
22. *La Epoca* (4 June, 1917).
23. F.O. 185-1344.n.268. Hardinge to Balfour (19 May, 1917).
24. Romanones, *Notas*, pp.135-137.
25. On the events leading to the officer's rebellion of June 1917 see Fernando Soldevilla, *Tres Revoluciones (Apuntes y notas)*. *La Junta de reforma. La asamblea parlamentaria. La huelga general* (Madrid, 1917), pp.1-30; also see Lacomba, *op.cit.*, 112-135; Boyd, *op.cit.*, 55-68; Buxadé, *op.cit.*, pp.41-63; Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, pp.23-40; Seco, *op.cit.*, pp.257-267.
26. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.36.
27. See *La Correspondencia Militar* (6 June, 1917).
28. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.36.
29. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 2, pp.178-179.
30. Soldevilla, *Tres revoluciones*, pp.63-65.
31. *La Epoca* (2 June, 1917 ; *ABC* (3 June, 1917).
32. *La Correspondencia Militar* (2, 6, 8 and 10 June, 1917).
33. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, pp.41-42.
34. Romanones, *Notas*, p.137.
35. A.R. File 1. Letter from Romanones to Alhucemas (10 June, 1917).

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36. A.R. File 1. Letter from Romanones to Dato (12 June 1917); see also *La Correspondencia Militar* (12 June, 1917).

37. A.R. File 1. Letter from Romanones to Groizard (23 June, 1917).

38. A.R. File 1. Letter from Romanones to Groizard and Villanueva (27 June, 1917).

39. The internal quarrel in the Liberal party can be followed in Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.268-279. The former Ambassador at the Vatican, Fermín Calbetón, would become one of the Liberal notables mustering support for the Count. For his role see A.R. File 1 (29 June, 1917).

40. Expression used by the Republican writer Alvaro de Albornoz in *El Parlamentario* (27 June, 1917).

5.2. The offensive against the regime

1. Lacomba, *op.cit.*, pp.15-16.

2. Romanones, *Notas*, p.141.

3. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.255-257.

4. *El Herald de Madrid* (6 June, 1917).

5. A.M. File 389. Carp.10 (June 1917).

6. Suárez Cortina, *op.cit.*, pp.170-171.

7. *El Socialista* (8 June, 1917).

8. *El Socialista* (12 June, 1917).

9. García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez*, p.339.

10. A.M. File 259 (12 June, 1917).

11. *La Acción* (11 and 13 June, 1917). A.M. leg.399. Carp.18. Letter from Francisco Salcedo Bermejillo to Goicoechea, leader

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of the *Maurista* youth, apologizing for the incident in which he struck the Monarch's portrait. He submitted his resignation which was not accepted. Goicoechea wrote to the King's secretary, Marquis of Torrecilla, confirming that monarchism was one of the pillars of *Maurismo*. The following day the Marquis replied that the King had been notified and was grateful for the *Maurista* loyalty (11-12 June, 1917).

12. Manuel Burgos y Mazo, *Páginas históricas de 1917* (Madrid, 1918), pp.59, 64-73.

13. Lacomba, *op.cit.*, pp.174-178; Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.501-507.

14. Cambó, *op.cit.*, p.255.

15. Soldevilla, *Tres revoluciones*, p.16.

16. Marcelino Domingo, *Qué espera el Rey* (Madrid, 1930), pp.25-31.

17. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.298. A.M. leg.399.

Carp.18. Letter from Dr. Zúñiga Garrido to Maura. The former stressed that he was a monarchist but he was prepared to blindly follow Maura even against the Monarchy (11 June, 1917). A.M. File 401. Carp.3. Letters from different *Mauristas* criticizing the Monarch for endorsing the *Turno* instead of calling Maura (June 1917).

18. The crisis of 1917 also revealed the internal contradictions within the *Maurista* movement. There were right-wingers who supported an authoritarian solution backed by the *Juntas* and those who wanted to join forces with the democratic alternative offered by the Assembly. A.M. File 29. Maura's abstentionist stand was applauded by Cierva. He confided to his former chief

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that if Dato made any mistake, political anarchy would follow (12 July, 1917).

19. A.M. File 402. Carp.22. Two officers from the *Cazadores de Estella* to Maura (6 June, 1917).

20. A.M. File 389. Carp. 10. Gustavo Peyrá to Maura (20 June, 1917). A.M. File 402. Carp.22. Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (22 June, 1917).

21. A.M. File 389. Carp. 10. Maura to Peyrá (23 June, 1917).

22. A.M. File 389. Carp. 10. Peyrá to Maura (25 and 28 June, 1917).

23. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.487. Two letters from Antonio to Gabriel Maura (23 and 30 June, 1917).

24. A.M. File 362. Carp.2. Miguel Maura to Antonio Maura (24 June, 1917) and Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (26 June, 3 and 8 July, 1917).

25. A.M. File 390. Carp.7. Centre *Maurista* at Chamberí to Maura (4 July, 1917). File 185. Alfonso Nadal to Maura (6 and 11 July, 1917). File 80. Ossorio to Maura (9 July, 1917). File 19. Cambó to Gabriel Maura (10 and 11 July, 1917).

26. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.487-488. Antonio Maura to Gabriel Maura (6 July, 1917).

27. A.M. File 390. Carp.7. Maura to Centre *Maurista* at Chamberí (7 July, 1917). File 397. Carp.7. Maura to Ossorio (12 July, 1917). A.M. File 185. Catalan *Mauristas* to Maura and reply (15 July, 1917). Fundación Antonio Maura. Gabriel Maura's Papers (A.G.M.). File 113. Carp.4 Gabriel Maura to Abadal (17 July, 1917).

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28. A.M. File 402. Carp.22. Peyrá to Maura (10 July, 1917).
29. Dato's role in the summer of 1917 is defended by Seco Serrano both in *Perfil político y humano*, pp.80-84 and *Militarismo y Civilismo*, p.270.
30. Luis Simarro, *Los sucesos de agosto en el parlamento Madrid*, 1918), pp.331-336.
31. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, p.288.
32. A.D. Mail from former ministers. Fernando Primo de Rivera to Dato (28 July, 1917); Also see A.N.R. n.8911 (July 1917).
33. *La Epoca* (26 June, 1917).
34. A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 42A. Exp.1. Instructions from Sánchez Guerra to Civil Governors (25-26 June, 1917).
35. *La Epoca* (8 July, 1917).
36. *La Epoca* (13 July, 1917).
37. *El Heraldo de Madrid* (6 July, 1917). See also Mauro Bajatierra, *Desde las barricadas. Una semana de revolución en España. Las jornadas de Madrid en Agosto de 1917* (Tortosa, 1918), pp.20-23; Cordero, *op.cit.*, pp.30-34.
38. Pla, *op.cit.*, vol.3, p.136.
39. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, pp.48-50.
40. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.46.
41. Juan José Morato, *El partido socialista obrero* (Madrid, n.d.) p.160.
42. *Solidaridad Obrera* (17 July, 1917).
43. For the publication of illegal leaflets see Burgos, *op.cit.*, pp.74-83; Bajatierra, *op.cit.*, p.20. Cambó's pamphlet was published in *España* n.130 (19 July, 1917).

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44. A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 42A. Instructions from Sánchez Guerra to Civil Governors (July 1917); also see Lacomba, *op.cit.*, pp.187-193; Gómez LLorente, *op.cit.*, pp.254-255. Burgos, *op.cit.*, p.84. According to Burgos, Lerroux and Cambó agreed to set up a Federal Republic. Lerroux could have his Republic and Cambó virtual independence for Catalonia.

45. A.M. File 362. Carp.2 Ossorio to Maura (13 July, 1917); Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (14 July, 17); Miguel Maura to Antonio Maura (14 July, 1917).

46. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.40.

47. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, p.238.

48. F.O. 371-3036/127.522. Hardinge to Balfour (19 June, 1917).

49. CAB. 24. Vol.21. GT.1511. Information Bureau, weekly report on Spain. Department of Intelligence (25 July, 1917).

50. A.M. File 362. Carp.2 Ossorio to Maura (13 July, 1917). Ossorio noted: "*El Rey aún confía en su habilidad para engañar a todo el mundo*" ('The king still believes in his ability to deceive everyone.')

51. That meeting is denied by Cambó in his memoirs (p.256), but is confirmed by Márquez, *op.cit.*, pp.48-50. It is also mentioned by Saborit. Saborit, *La huelga*, p.256.

52. Saborit, *La huelga*, p.256; Saborit, *Besteiro*, p.60.

53. A.R. File 14. Exp.19 (The Assembly of parliamentarians).

54. See Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.365-379. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.325-339.

55. *La Epoca* (20 July, 1917). Headlines: "*El triunfo del espíritu público*". Sánchez Guerra declared that there had been neither

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Assembly nor arrests.

56. F.O. 185-1346/390 and 371-3033/143.746. Hardinge to Balfour (20 July, 1917).

57. A.M. File 402. Carp.22. Peyrá to Maura (21 July, 1917).

58. *La Acción* (20 and 21 July, 1917).

59. Saborit, *Besteiro*, p.60.

60. Lacomba, *op.cit.*, p.201.

61. Juan Antonio Lacomba, 'España en 1917. Ensayo de morfología de una crisis histórica' in *Revista Saitabi* (Valencia, 1971), p.152; see also Salvador de Madariaga, *Spain* (London, 1942), p.237. For Madariaga, the Assembly was the great missed opportunity of modern Spanish history. It could have been the true salvation of Spain and of the Monarchical system had the Crown been more convinced of a parliamentary form of government.

62. See *La Acción* (21, 25 and 26 July, 1917); *El País* (21, 23 and 27 July, 1917); *El Liberal* (21 and 26 July, 1917); *El Heraldo de Madrid* (21 and 22 July, 1917); *El Mundo* (21 and 22 July, 1917); *El Socialista* (20, 21, 27 July and 1 August, 1917); *La Tribuna* (21, 22 and 25 July, 1917); *España* n.131 (2 August, 1991).

63. A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 48 A. Exp. 17 (29-30 July, 1917). Sánchez Guerra warns the Civil Governors that the lifting of the censorship does not mean the return to constitutional normality. Hence they should be aware of any anti-government articles to act with force.

64. Lacomba, *op.cit.*, pp.206-207.

65. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.492-493. Cesar Silió to Maura (21 July, 1917).

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66. A.M. File 61. Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (25 July, 1917).
67. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.495-496. Miguel Maura to Gabriel Maura (28 July, 1917). A.M. File 462. Carp.2. Miguel Maura to Antonio Maura (30 July, 1917).
68. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, Miguel Maura to Gabriel Maura (30 July, 1917).
69. A.M. File 80. Antonio Maura to Ossorio (7 August, 1917).
70. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, Peyrá to Maura (26 July, 1917).
71. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 13. pp.204-208.
72. *El Socialista* (2 April, 8 and 10 May, 1917).
73. The events of July and August can be followed in the national press. For instance, *El Heraldo de Madrid*, *El Liberal*, *La Epoca*, *El Imparcial*, etc (20 July-21 August, 1917).
74. García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez*, p.350.
75. A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 42. Exp.1 (June-July 1917).
76. Saborit, *Besteiro*, p.98. Núñez Tomás and Torralba Beci were replaced by Daniel Anguiano and Andrés Saborit respectively.
77. Maximiano García Venero is the only author claiming that *agent provocateurs* initiated the transport strike in July 1917 (García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez*, p.350). Two socialists, Saborit and Cordero, argued that the imprudence of Republicans like Marcelino Domingo and Félix Azzati was the cause of that strike (Cordero, *op.cit.*, pp.30-33, and Saborit, *Besteiro*, p.98). Pabón agrees with them Pabón, *op.cit.*, p.537). Saborit (in *La huelga*, pp.12-13) also points out that the lack of leadership of Daniel Anguiano, President of the Railworkers' Union, determined

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the evolution of the events.

78. Manuel Tuñón de Lara, *El movimiento obrero*, p.588.

79. Practically all authors agree that the government provoked the General Strike in August. See Albert Balcélls, *El sindicalismo en Barcelona, 1916-1923* (Barcelona, 1965), p.31; Gerald Meaker, *The revolutionary Left in Spain, 1914-1923* (Stanford, 1974), pp.83-84; Saborit, *Besteiro*, p.99; Tuñón de Lara, *El movimiento obrero*, p.589; Gómez Llorente, *op.cit.*, p.299; Buxadé, *op.cit.*, pp.218-219; Araquistáin, *op.cit.*, p.174; García Venero, *op.cit.*, pp.344-345; Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.245; Cordero, *op.cit.*, p.34. The exception is represented, not surprisingly, by Manuel Burgos y Mazo, Minister of Justice in the Dato Cabinet of August 1917. Burgos claims that the strike had been in the cards since March 1917. In fact, the government attempted to avoid clashes but could do nothing when faced by the intransigence of both the railworkers and the Company (Burgos, *op.cit.*, pp.107, 202).

80. Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.44-45.

81. *ibid*, *op.cit.*, p.9.

82. Tuñón de Lara, *Poder y sociedad*, p.262.

83. A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 42A. Exp.1. As early as 8 August, Sánchez Guerra was ordering the Civil Governors to draw up lists of the leading revolutionary elements so as to make their arrests easier as soon as the strike began. See also File 48. Exp.17. On August 12 Sánchez Guerra instructed the Civil Governors to form groups of vigilantes and policemen with the people of order of their localities.

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84. On the decision to declare the General Strike see Francisco Largo Caballero, *Mis recuerdos. Cartas a un amigo* (Madrid, 1976), pp.50-53; Andrés Saborit, *Asturias y sus hombres* (Toulouse, 1963), pp.165-168; Morato, *op.cit.*, pp.160-163; Cordero, *op.cit.*, pp.33-34; Gómez Llorente, *op.cit.*, pp.299-305; Saborit, *La huelga*, pp.69-74.

85. It was one of the many lies spread by the government during those days. In fact, they had been arrested when having supper. The police allowed them to finish their meals. See Simeón Vidarte, *No queríamos al rey. Testimonio de un socialista español* (Madrid, 1977), p.78; Simarro, *op.cit.*, p.61.

86. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, p.82.

87. *El Socialista* (2 August, 1917), editorial by Iglesias, "Abajo el régimen!". Saborit (*La huelga*, p.25), also says that the strike was in favour of the liberal bourgeoisie.

88. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, p.51; see also Gómez Llorente, *op.cit.*, pp.293-294.

89. Angel Pestaña, *Lo que aprendí en la vida* (Murcia, 1971), pp.59-63. Largo Caballero, *Correspondencia secreta* (Madrid, 1961), pp.73-74 and Saborit, *La huelga*, pp.12, 64, disagree with Pestaña. They argue that the CNT was led by reformist leaders who were happy to collaborate with the UGT.

90. Gómez Llorente, *op.cit.*, p.221.

91. Saborit, *Besteiro*, pp.100-102.

92. Saborit, *La huelga*, p.9.

93. The idea that extremists and radicals were in charge of the revolutionary movement is put forward by Burgos, *op.cit.*,

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pp.64-73. Indeed, revolutionary pamphlets were printed at the time. See, for example, "Esta es la Revolución" by Domingo in Marcelino Domingo, *op.cit.*, pp.57-79; see also Bajatierra, *op.cit.*, pp.12-13.

94. Largo's speech in Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.13-20

95. Saborit's speech in Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.50-51.

96. Prieto's speech in Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.108-109.

97. Gómez LLorente, *op.cit.*, pp.260, pp.270-272; Saborit, *La huelga*, p.23; Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, p.80; Vidarte, *op.cit.*, p.76.

98. Bajatierra (*op.cit.*, pp.57-61, 69) describes the violence in the clashes between strikers and the tram drivers protected by the army. He concludes that the workers were no match for the well-armed soldiers. Tuñón de Lara (*El movimiento obrero*, pp.586-588) says that neither the UGT nor the CNT had written off the need to resort to violence. Yet the Socialists were not prepared to go beyond mere political objectives. Buenacasa (*op.cit.*, p.63) writes that the events of the August strike helped many Anarcho-Syndicalists open their eyes. They could no longer follow the lead of people such as Indalecio Prieto who had declared that they had weapons but refused to provide the workers with ammunition.

99. Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.167, 176.

100. Burgos, *op.cit.*, p.23. Cordero (*op.cit.*, p.34) writes: "We did not believe the old man (Pablo Iglesias). We had such enthusiasm and confidence in those moments that we all unanimously voted for the General Strike."

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101. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.498-500. Miguel Maura to Gabriel Maura (19 August, 1917).
102. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, p.385; also in Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, pp.60-61.
103. Prieto's speech in Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.112-138; see also Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.170-171.
104. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 11, pp.195-197; Saborit's speech in Simarro. *op.cit.*, pp.112-138 and Saborit, *Asturias y sus hombres*, pp.168-171.
105. *La Acción* (9, 10, 15, 17 and 20 August, 1917).
106. Saborit, *La huelga*, *op.cit.*, p.13.
107. See Buenacasa, *op.cit.*, p.62 and Pestaña, *op.cit.*, p.63. Lerroux bribed Francisco Martorell, a chief of police at Barcelona. He was accused later by Bravo Portillo who took his job.
108. This opinion was shared by Saborit, *La huelga*, p.8, Burgos, *op.cit.*, pp.106-108, 161, 163 and Gustavo Peyrá, Maura and Fernández Almagro, pp.501-502. Peyrá to Maura (28 August, 1917). Besteiro claims (in Simarro, *op.cit.*, p.195) that Cambó was well informed of the steps being taken to launch the General Strike.
109. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.386-387; Buxadé, *op.cit.*, pp.269-271.
110. F.O. 371-3033/135.629. Hardinge to Balfour (9 July, 1917).
111. F.O. 371-3034/144.713. Balfour to Hardinge (19 July, 1917).
112. F.O. 371-3034 146.627. Unthorff to Hardinge (16 July, 1917).
113. A.M. File 362. Carp.2 Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (7 July, 1917).

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114. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris, idd.95. Box 5960.
115. F.O. 371-3034/142.714. Hardinge to Balfour (19 July, 1917).
116. F.O. 371-3034/181.841. Hardinge to Balfour about the Marquis of Lema (14 August, 1917). F.O. 371-3033/132.944. Grant to Balfour about the King (5 July, 1917).
117. *La Epoca* (19 August, 1917). The headline was "*Embaucadores y embaucados*". The conservative newspaper said that the Socialist leaders had been caught with 14 million pesetas. In Simarro (*op.cit.*, pp.63, 223) both Saborit and Besteiro accused Sánchez Guerra of having spread the news that the Socialists had sold out to the Allies.
118. For Burguete's statement see Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 11, pp.115-117. See F.O. 185-136/343 and 371-3034/175.803. Hardinge complains to Balfour that the Spanish authorities claim that the disturbances were the work of foreign gold (24 and 31 August, 1917).
119. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, pp. 60-61.
120. *La Acción* (12 September, 1917).
121. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris, idd.95. Box 5960. Instructions to Spanish consuls at Burdeos, Tolouse, Perpignan and Pau to follow the movements of all those involved in the August events. See also A.D. Correspondence from politicians. In late August Lerroux wrote to Dato denying having received any money from the French government. Lerroux demanded the release of his driver and asked why there was an order of arrest against him. He added: "*Todos sabemos el papel que hemos jugado en esta tragicomedia*" ('We all know the role that we have played in this

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tragicomedy').

122. F.O. 185-1346/469. Hardinge to Balfour (24 September, 1917).

5.3. The end of the Turno Pacífico

1. For the campaign against Cambó see *La Epoca* (4, 5, 9 and 12 September, 1917). See also F.O. 185-1347/506 and 1347/519. Dato and the Marquis of Lema confide to Hardinge that Cambó was the main threat to the government; Burgos (*op.cit.*, pp. 1-3, 111-115) singles out Cambó as the mastermind behind all the revolutionary events of 1917.

2. Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.547-553. *El Día* (7 September, 1917).

3. A.M. File 19. Cambó to Maura (27 September, 1917).

4. A.D. Correspondence from former Ministers. The Marquis of Lema to Dato (3 October, 1917).

5. A.M. File 362. Carp.2. Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (7 September, 1917), Miguel Maura to Antonio Maura (8 and 10 September, 1917).

6. A.D. Correspondence from former Ministers. The Marquis of Lema to Dato (3 October, 1917).

7. A.M. File 362. Carp.2. Gabriel Maura to Antonio Maura (11 and 20 August, 1917), Miguel Maura to Antonio Maura (12, 16, 17 and 19 August, 1917). See also Besteiro's speech in Simarro, *op.cit.*, pp.239-240, 240-243 and Domingo's speech, pp.286-288, 291-294. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.412-422; Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.61; Vidarte, *op.cit.*, pp.100-102.

8. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, p.405.

9. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.437-440.

Notes to chapter five (5.3. The end of the Turno Pacífico)

10. Soldevilla, *Tres Revoluciones*, pp.59-63.
11. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.443-447.
12. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, p.68.
13. A.M. File 402. Carp.22. Peyrá to Maura (4 October, 1917). Peyrá informs Maura of the visit of some officers of the Artillery Corps of Santiago: "...uno de ellos...me decía que la última nota oficiosa del gobierno inspiraba asco por su servilismo. Todos expusieron su deseo vehementísimo de ver a usted al frente del gobierno...El clamoreo es, pues, general, y solo falta que quien debe tener oídos oiga.." ('...one of them...told me that the latest government's statement had inspired nausea by its servilism. They all expressed their desire to see you at the head of the government...The clamour is, thus, unanimous, and the only thing needed is that he who should have ears should listen...')
14. *La condena del comité de huelga* (Madrid, 1918). Saborit, Besteiro, pp.103-104.
15. *El Socialista* (9 and 25 October, 1917).
16. Conclusions of the Assembly in *El Heraldo de Madrid* (17 October, 1917). See also A.R. File 14. Exp.19 (Assembly of Parliamentarians). The desperation of Sánchez Guerra, unable to prevent the new gathering of parliamentarians, can be seen in A.N.R. 8904 (9-15 October, 1917).
17. *El Liberal* (22, 24 and 25 October, 1917).
18. *La Acción*, Editorial encouraging the King to act (10 October, 1917). Other attacks on government (8, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 22 October, 1917).

Notes to chapter five (5.3. The end of the Turno Pacífico)

19. A.M. File 389. Carp.10 (21 October, 1917).
20. Soldevilla, *Tres Revoluciones*, pp.69-71.
21. *El Ejército Español* (19 October, 1917); *La Correspondencia Militar* (22 October, 1917).
22. *El Heraldo de Madrid* (19 October, 1917). Five days later *El Socialista* commented that Spain was the only country in which the electoral farce was publicly exposed and nothing happened.
23. *El Heraldo de Madrid* (24 October, 1917). The following day the same newspaper interviewed some of the leading *Junteros* at Barcelona who agreed with the words expressed by Márquez.
24. *España* n.133 (25 October, 1917): "*Todos desde Socialistas hasta Juntas quieren la caída del gobierno Dato*". *La Correspondencia Militar* (24 October, 1917): "*El Imperio de la verdad*". *El Debate* (23 October, 1917): "*La hora de dimitir*". *El Liberal* (24 October, 1917): "*La quiebra del Turno*". *La Acción* (19 October, 1917): "*Todos contra el gobierno y el gobierno contra todos*".
25. A.N.R. File 8912. Programme drawn up by Alba on 29 September, 1917.
26. A.N.R. File 8904 (15 October, 1917).
27. *La Epoca* (27 October, 1917). See also A.N.R. 8912 (26 October, 1917). Natalio Rivas commented that Romanones' sudden regenerationist ideals were surely due to the fact that he had smelt the crisis.
28. Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 16, pp.216-222,
29. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.505-506. Peyrá to Maura (26 October, 1917).

Notes to chapter five (5.3. The end of the *Turno Pacífico*)

30. F.O. 185-347/522. Hardinge to Balfour (28 October, 1917).
31. A.D. Correspondence from former ministers. The Marquis of Lema to Dato (3 and 5 October, 1917).
32. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, p.524.
33. A.D. Correspondence from former ministers. The Marquis of Lema to Dato (5 October, 1917).
34. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.497-503.
35. CAB. 24. Vol.31. GT.2540. Weekly Report from the Department of Information (7 November, 1917).
36. A.N.R. File 8904 (28 October, 1917). Natalio Rivas commented that the sacking of a Prime Minister had happened frequently under the reign of Alfonso XIII.
37. A.N.R. File 8904 (28-29 October, 1917).
38. A.N.R. File 8904 (29 October, 1917).
39. *La Acción* (28 October, 1917).
40. For the evolution of events follow *El Liberal*, *El País*, *La Acción*, *El Heraldo de Madrid* and *El Imparcial* (28 October-3 November 1917).
41. A.N.R. File 8904 (29 October, 1917).
42. Cierva, *op.cit.*, pp.188-189, says that he was visited by several officers who told him that he was the only civilian who could restore discipline in the army and carry through an efficient package of military reforms. He then met the King who told him that he was considering abdicating. The King begged Cierva to accept the post of Minister of War in a coalition led by the Marquis of Alhucemas. Cierva accepted, on condition of being allowed to publish a statement explaining that he was a

Notes to chapter five (5.3. The end of the *Turno Pacífico*)

member of that government only because of his sincere monarchism. On the other hand, Márquez and Capó (*op.cit.*, pp.75-82) suggest that Cierva himself had approached the officers offering his services. According to Márquez, the representatives of the Central Junta at Madrid, Commandant Espino and Captains Villar and García Rodríguez, without consulting to his colleagues at Barcelona, decided to back Cierva's bid for the post of Minister of War.

43. Gómez LLorente, pp.456-457; Lacomba, *La crisis*, p.316.

44. Lacomba, *La crisis*, p.288.

45. Cambó's declaration in *El Heraldo de Madrid* (4 November, 1917) *La Tribuna* and *La Veu de Catalunya* (6 November, 1917). The role played by Cambó during the crisis of October 1917 remains highly controversial. His biographers (Pla, *op.cit.*, vol.III, pp.200-209 and Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.570-572) defend the Catalan leader by arguing that he achieved the destruction of the *Turno*, the backbone of the political system, and made sure--by the appointment of an independent at the Home Office --that there would be a free vote. Cambó (*op.cit.*, p.262) claims it was not he but his partners on the Left that broke the Assembly, since their real objective had always been to set up either a Republic or a dictatorship of the proletariat. An intermediate position is adopted by Casanova (*op.cit.*, pp.205-206), who agrees that the *Lliga* betrayed the Assembly. Nevertheless, Casanova notes that after the failure of the working class, the bourgeoisie had to align with the oligarchy or risk the establishment of a military dictatorship. A majority of authors attack Cambó's move during

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those crucial days. Cordero (*op.cit.*, p.30) says that had not Cambó betrayed the Assembly the Monarchy would have collapsed. Saborit (*La huelga*, p.83) points out that in the '*gitaneo*' which followed the fall of the Dato cabinet, Cambó managed to impose his views and gained two portfolios. Fernández Almagro (*op.cit.*, pp.252-253) also says that Cambó abandoned the spirit of the Assembly and preferred instead to take advantage of the situation in order to get two seats in the cabinet and form part of a coalition based on a programme of minimal reforms. Boyd, (*op.cit.*, p.59) argues that Cambó brought down the Conservative government. Yet he was prepared to sacrifice the bourgeois revolution in order to save the Monarchy and the social order. Burgos (*op.cit.*, p.59) regards Cambó as the '*machiavellian*' leader of the offensive against the regime. He dominated and led all the others and once they were no longer useful, he simply got rid of them. The best analysis of Cambó's role can be found in the editorials by Luis Bello in *España*, nos.137 and 140 (22 November and 13 December, 1917). The Republican journalist writes that there was always present in the strategy pursued by the Catalan bourgeoisie and its leader Francesc Cambó a commitment to *Realpolitik* and opportunism. Thus they led and used the Assembly for their own benefit. Once their basic goals had been reached--destruction of the *Turno*, two portfolios in the new cabinet and an independent in charge of the Home Office--they destroyed the Assembly which they themselves had created.

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Chapter 6: The last year of the war: governments of monarchist coalition

1. Antonio Gramsci, *Selection from Prison Notebooks* (London, 1986), p.276.
2. *La Correspondencia de España* and *La Veu de Catalunya* were the only newspapers enthusiastic about the political solution. *El Heraldo de Madrid* and *La Acción* declared a partial truce. The coalition government was criticized by *El Liberal*, *El Socialista*, *El ABC*, *La Tribuna*, *El País* and *España*.
3. Romanones, *Notas*, p.145,
4. *El Liberal* (4 November, 1917).
5. Araquistáin, *op.cit.*, p.187; García Venero, *Melquiades Alvarez*, p.309.
6. View expressed in *La Epoca* (9 November, 1917), *El Heraldo de Madrid* (12 November, 1917) and *El Día* (16 December, 1917). The most polemical article appeared on *El Liberal* (2 February, 1918). According to that newspaper, during a lunch at the *restaurante del parque* in Barcelona, Cambó had stated that he had advised the King to form the Alhucemas coalition. The Catalan leader claimed that he could have been in the government except that he did not want to take on that responsibility. In fact, he said that he did not need to be a minister since it was easier to control Alhucemas, a weak and little man, from outside or through Ventosa, the *Lliga* minister in charge of the Treasury. Cambó then boasted that after the next General Elections the Regionalists would have 70 or 80 Deputies, so it would be impossible to rule in Spain without them. Thus, power would inevitably be in the

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hands of the *Lliga*. Cambó claimed that he would then be presiding over the next government which would automatically grant Home Rule to Catalonia. Yet Cambó reminded his audience that he was not a separatist. On the contrary, he said, the duty of the *Lliga* was not to rule only in Catalonia but in Spain. Catalonia would have to become the Prussia of the Iberian kingdoms. See also Prat de La Riba's Papers (hereafter A.P.R.). Letter from Cambó to Durán claiming that the Liberal party was totally broken and that he had preferred to have Alhucemas as Prime Minister as to take that role himself (3 November, 1917).

7. Boyd, *op.cit.*, pp.94-96.

8. Soldevilla, *El año 1917*, pp.574-575.

9. In *El Mundo* (30 January, 1918) Márquez regretted the readiness with which his resignation was accepted by the other members of the Central *Junta* and accused Cierva of having worked for his dismissal. According to Márquez, in October Cierva had entered into contact with the officers' representatives in Madrid (Commandant Espino and Captains García Rodríguez and Villar) through Julio Amado, editor of *La Correspondencia Militar*. Those officers exceeded their powers. Without consulting the other *Junteros*, they first supported the continuity of General Marina at the War Department and later threw their support behind Cierva. Márquez opposed Cierva's strategy of buying off the officers through rewards and promises. Thus, he first objected to sending a letter of congratulations to the new Minister of War and then to answering a questionnaire send by Cierva to some leading officers. When the *Junteros* in Madrid returned to

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Barcelona, they forced a vote which brought about Márquez's resignation. In a second letter to *El Sol* (13 March, 1918) Márquez bitterly attacked the *Juntas*, suggesting that they had nothing in common with those of June 1917. According to the Colonel, since the *Juntas* were without any national significance, had lost touch with their original objectives and only served as pedestal for one man, Cierva, they constituted the greatest threat to the life of the nation. He concluded with these words for his former companions:

"You will open an abyss between the army and all classes of the nation. You must not forget that any army without the love and esteem of the nation which supports it, is destined to plunge it into the lowest depths and to weep in company with it tears of blood..."

10. Those demands were extremely moderate. They wanted the creation of a corps of honorary officers with promotion up to the rank of major, the possibility of warrant officers being promoted to second lieutenants, and the uniforms of the sergeants and barrack conditions to be improved.

11. *El Liberal* (3 and 4 January, 1918). Cierva (*op.cit.*, pp.194-196) claims that they were in touch with revolutionaries and socialists. Hence they had to be disbanded. The proof was that several intercepted cables mentioned the word "*el abuelo*". There was, in fact, no evidence that the PSOE had organized any revolutionary plot within the army. After the August debacle, nothing could be further from the socialist plans. The word "*abuelo*" ('grandfather') was a common reference among socialists

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to their leader, Pablo Iglesias. Yet the veteran General and ex-Minister Fernando Primo de Rivera was also known as "el abuelo". Primo de Rivera, while minister, had shown interest in improving the conditions of the NCOs officers.

12. Cierva, *op.cit.*, pp.196.

13. Manuel Burgos y Mazo, *El verano de 1919 en Gobernación* (Cuenca, 1921), p.29.

14. Instituto de Reformas Sociales, *Movimiento de precios*, pp.10-11.

15. *El Sol* (22 December, 1917), Editorial: "El espectro del hambre".

16. AARD-IX (January 1918).

17. See editorial by Pablo Iglesias in *El Socialista* (4 January, 1918).

18. AASM-LXX-2. The objective was to release the members of the strike committee from prison. Thus they decided by 116 votes to choose them as candidates for Madrid in the local elections (22 October, 1917).

19. Fundación Pablo Iglesias, *Julián Besteiro's Papers*, Family correspondence (LXV-1). Letters to his daughter Lolita (17 and 18 November, 1917). In early November he described Lerroux as an adventurer of the same kind as Romanones.

20. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, pp.111-116; Forcadell, *op.cit.*, pp.245-257; Heywood, *op.cit.*, pp.54-57.

21. *Solidaridad Obrera* (11, 14 and 19 November, 1917).

22. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, pp.108-110.

23. On the red years in Andalusia see Juan Díaz del Moral,

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Historia de las agitaciones campesinas andaluzas (Madrid, 1977);
Constancio Bernaldo de Quirós, *El espartaquismo agrario andaluz*
(Madrid, 1974).

24. Bar, *op.cit.*, pp.359-431; Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*,
pp.149-154; Albert Balcélls, *El sindicalismo en Barcelona*
(Barcelona, 1968), pp.51-65

25. The results in Madrid were as follows: 9 Mauristas; 6
Republicans; 4 Socialists; 1 Reformist; 4 Romanonistas; 1
Liberal-Democrat; 1 Conservative; 2 Independents. See Jesús A.
Martínez Martín, 'Las elecciones municipales en la crisis de la
restauración: Madrid, 1917' in José Luis García Delgado (ed.),
*La crisis de la restauración: España entre la Primera Guerra
Mundial y la II Republica* (Madrid, 1986), pp.121-147. The
editorial of *La Acción* was titled: "*Maurismo o Republicanismo!*".
El ABC, *El Liberal*, *El Imparcial* and *El País* agreed that two
ideological currents had triumphed over the traditional fiction.
El Socialista regarded the election of the four members of the
strike committee as a revindication of the August revolutionary
movement. *La Epoca* pointed out that in the country the
monarchists had obtained an important victory and the same would
have happened in Madrid if they had formed an electoral
coalition.

26. The best example would be the local elections of April 1931.
The Monarchists once more obtained an overwhelming majority in
the countryside but they were defeated in the cities. The King
had to flee and the II Republic was established.

27. A.R. File 5 Exp.40. Letters from Romanones to Alhucemas

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(January-February, 1918). Also see Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.583-589; Cierva, *op.cit.*, p.201; Tusell and Avilés, *op.cit.*, pp.237-239. Also see A.H.N. Home Office. Serie A. File 28. Exp.2. There is abundant documentary evidence of abuses, briberies and persecutions in the weeks before the general elections of February 1918.

28. All newspapers agreed that the elections had failed to give a clear mandate to any political formation. *El Socialista* considered the election of the four members of the strike committee and the success of the Leftist coalition in Madrid to be a victory. *El Herald de Madrid* noted that nothing had changed: the old practices of electoral falsification had been used as in the past and the old governing elites were still in charge. *El Debate* also pointed out that, despite all the promises of the government, the purchase of votes and other illegal methods had been employed. The Catholic newspaper warned about the steady advances of socialism. *La Epoca* regarded the elections as a great victory for the Monarchy. Yet it also said that the advances of some radicals was a reason to worry. *El Liberal*, *El País* and *España Nueva* stressed that the fact that the members of the strike committee had become deputies was a victory for public opinion. For *La Acción* the results of the General Elections of February 1918 simply confirmed the trend towards truth initiated in the local elections of November 1917. *España* underlined that the results had brought about the end of the *Turno* for ever. Finally, *El Sol* argued that the new Cortes were far from ideal. Some new forces had made a certain progress, but the old parties

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were still in control.

29. Lacomba, *op.cit.*, p.337.

30. Pabón, *op.cit.*, p.590. See A.P.R. Letter from Cambó to Durán (1 February, 1918) in which the Catalan leader wrote that his electoral strategy had been to attack the government whilst avoiding the departure of the Catalan ministers from the government. A new crisis might have had no easy solution.

31. *El Liberal* (28 February, 1918).

32. A complete report on the military reforms can be found in *El Sol* (10 March, 1918). See also Boyd, *op.cit.*, p.100; Seco, *Militarismo*, p.276.

33. *El Socialista* (8 March, 1918).

34. *El Liberal* (2 March, 1918).

35. *El Liberal* (6 March, 1918).

36. A.R. File 5 Exp.40. Letters from Romanones to Alhucemas (1 and 9 March, 1918).

37. F.O. 371-3070/48.811. Memorandum on the internal situation in Spain (11 March, 1918).

38. Fernando Soldevilla, *El año político de 1918* (Madrid, 1919), pp.57-58; Cierva (*op.cit.*, p.204) argues that with his action he prevented the officers from taking the law into their own hands.

39. *El Socialista* (8 March, 1918): "*Bajo el imperio del sable!*"; Sánchez de Toca called Cierva "*Dictador al dictado*" in *El Heraldo de Madrid* (8 March, 1918).

40. Tusell and Avilés, *op.cit.*, p.141. *El Sol* (10 March, 1918) argued that Maura and Cierva were often put together in the same

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political camp. Yet Maura had proved that there was a huge gap between them.

41. *El Socialista* (10 March, 1918): "*Locura e indignidad!*". Cierva (*op.cit.*, p.204) claims that there was no clash in the cabinet. On the contrary, he convinced the other ministers after a friendly dialogue.

42. Alhucemas declared in *El Sol* (10 March, 1918) that he was back in power because of a personal request by the King.

43. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.258

44. Pabón, *op.cit.*, p.600.

45. *El Socialista*, *El Liberal*, *El País* and *El Sol* agreed that the country was under the threat of Cierva's dictatorship. The conservative *La Epoca* applauded the minister's show of authority. Cierva (*op.cit.*, p.205) suggests that he led the battle against the civil service as the other ministers did not know what to do and begged him to take the initiative. Cierva also claims that if he had not put down the strike, Socialism would have succeed in Spain.

46. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.259. Soldevilla, *El año 1918*, pp.74-89.

47. Márquez and Capó (*op.cit.*, pp.104-105) argue that there was a military plot to create a government presided over by Cierva with eight Colonels. This opinion is shared by Fernández Almagro (*op.cit.*, pp.259-260) and Seco (*Militarismo*, p.277). Rumours of a military take-over headed by Cierva were also reported by the British Ambassador. F.O. 371-3372/60.969. Hardinge to Balfour (6 April, 1918). Cierva (*op.cit.*, pp.202-203) denies that he was

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behind a military coup and even claims that he was asked twice by Alhucemas in March 1918 to head a government but he refused as he did not want to be a dictator.

48. *La Tribuna* (20 March, 1918).

49. Romanones, *Notas*, pp.145-147. See also F.O. 371-3372/60.969. Hardinge tells Balfour that the King hesitated and was only prevented at the last moment from accepting a Cierva cabinet by the wise advice of the Queen Mother (6 April, 1918).

50. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.260-261; Soldevilla, *El año 1918*, pp.94-107.

51. Nearly all the press rejoiced at the idea of a coalition government headed by Maura would put an end to the danger of a military cabinet presided over by Cierva. See, for instance, *El Sol*: "*España recibe jubilosa al nuevo gobierno*"; *ABC*: "*Gratitud al monarca!*"; *El País*: "*Triunfo del liberalismo!*"; *La Acción*: "*La voluntad del país!*"; even Luis Araquistáin in *España* wrote an editorial, "*Las dos caras de Maura*", in which the role of the veteran Conservative leader in the crisis of March 1918 was praised.

52. Maura and Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.311.

53. *España* n.148 (7 February, 1918).

54. F.O. 371-3372/fsw.017. Weekly report by the Department of Information (31 January, 1918). See also CAB. 24/35-GT.2973. Weekly report by the Department of Information (13 December, 1917); F.O. 185-1348/586. Hardinge to Balfour (10 December, 1917).

55.F.O. 371-3372/3464 and 3372/5669. Balfour to Hardinge and

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Hardinge's reply (7 and 10 January, 1918).

56. F.O. 371-3372/118.836. Report by political Intelligence Department (6 July, 1918).

57. A.G.A. Foreign Office Section. Paris, idd.95. Box 5976 (year 1918).

58. In January and February 1918 *El Parlamentario* carried out a campaign accusing the Germans of being behind anarchist activities. On 24 January, it named Albert Honnerman as the mastermind behind the German-Anarchist collaboration. On 25 February it demanded a thorough investigation to arrest the killers of the industrialist Barret. See also Pestaña, *op.cit.*, pp.174-175; Pere Foix, *op.cit.*, pp.59-60.

59. *El Sol* (4-7 March, 1918). See also *España* n.152 (7 March, 1918): "*El terrorismo alemán en España*". Cordero (*op.cit.*, p.41) notes that the Anarchists were easy prey for the German agents. They were financed to strike against those industries producing for the Allies. F.O. 371-3373/44.846. Hardinge informs Balfour of the connections between anarchists and Germans (9 March, 1918). On 26 January, 1918 *El Parlamentario* accused the former CNT's Secretary, Francisco Roldán, of being on Honnerman's payroll.

60. *El Sol* (10 March, 1918).

61. Pestaña, *op.cit.*, pp.115-119; Bar, *op.cit.*, pp.360-370.

62. *Solidaridad Obrera* (9 June, 1918); *El Parlamentario* (12, 26, 28 and 29 June, 1918); *El Sol* (12 and 14 June, 1918); *El Socialista* (12 June, 1918).

63. It seems that Royo provided the evidence to convict Portillo

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to Francisco Carbonell, a former chief of Police at Barcelona and rival of Portillo. Despite the overwhelming evidence against Portillo, and the numerous witnesses testifying against him--workers, policemen, experts, etc--the case was dismissed and the chief of police released in December 1918. See A.R. File 16. Exp.25 (The Portillo's affair); F.O. 371-3372/118.036. Report for the British Consul at Barcelona (5 July, 1918); Pestaña, *op.cit.*, pp.123-124, 173-179; Foix, *op.cit.*, pp.59-60; Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 22, pp.123-128.

64. *España* n.192 (12 December, 1918); *El Sol* (7-8 December, 1918). Márquez and Capó, *op.cit.*, appendix 22, pp.123-128.

65. F.O. 371-3375/119.647. Hardinge to Balfour (5 July, 1918).

66. *El Sol* (4 July, 1918). See also *El Parlamentario* (5 July, 1918); *El País* (4-5 July, 1918); *El Socialista* (4-6 July, 1918); *El Heraldo de Madrid* (5 July, 1918); *La Correspondencia de España* (5 July, 1918); *España* n.170 (11 July, 1918). Once more *La Epoca* (5 July, 1918) disagreed, when it claimed that Spain was still "the most liberal country in the world".

67. D.S.C. (4-6 July, 1918).

68. Alcalá Zamora was the editor of *El Día*, a newspaper financed by the Germans. Cierva was an ultraconservative who did not disguise his sympathy for Germany. He was mixed up with German commercial interests in Southern Spain and had defended before the Supreme Court the German appeal against the sentence passed by the Tetuán *audiencia* on the murder of the Mr. Vice-Consul Atkinson's servant.

69. A.D. Correspondence from former Prime Ministers. Maura to

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Dato (28 July, 1918).

70. A.N.R. File 8893 (8-10 August, 1918).

71. Soldevilla, *El año 1918*, pp.226-228.

72. A.D. Correspondence from former Prime Ministers. Maura to Dato (18 August, 1918).

73. *El Día* (11 August, 1918); *ABC* (18 August, 1918). See also Burgos, *El verano de 1919*, p.48; Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.264-265.

74. F.O. 371-3374/145.426 and 3374/150.374. Hardinge to Balfour (23 August and 2 September, 1918).

75. F.O. 371-3371/158.724. British Ambassador at Paris to Balfour (17 September, 1918). 371-3374/157.329. Balfour to Vaughan (19 September, 1918). A.D. Mail from diplomats. Polo de Bernabé to Dato (31 August, 1918).

76. F.O. 371-3372/118.836. Hardinge to Balfour (6 July, 1918), 3371/134.741. Hardinge to Balfour (28 July, 1918).

77. F.O. 371-3374/145.526. Hardinge to Balfour (23 August, 1918).

78. F.O. 371-3374/157.329. Balfour to Vaughan (19 September, 1918), 3374/158.384. Balfour to Vaughan (18 September, 1918), 3374/158.724. British Ambassador at Paris to Balfour (19 September, 1918), 3374/161.003. British Ambassador at Paris to Balfour (23 September, 1918), 3374/161.163. Balfour to Vaughan (24 September, 1918).

79. A.N.R. File 8906 (31 August, 1918). Rivas commented that the King was prepared to sack all his ministers.

80. A.M. File 272. Letter from Dato to Maura (3 September, 1918). News of the King's position filtered out and the Socialist

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Deputy, Indalecio Prieto, declared in the Cortes on 28 October that no government could undertake a coherent foreign policy with a royal veto. The French Foreign Minister, Cambon, also blamed the Spanish King for the weakening of the government's response to Germany. F.O. 371-3374/153.920. English Ambassador at Paris to Balfour (9 September, 1918).

81. Burgos, *El verano de 1919*, pp.48-52.

82. Soldevilla, *El año 1918*, p.288.

83. Burgos, *El verano de 1919 en Gobernación*, pp.37-41, 44-46; Romanones, *Notas*, p.148; Pabón, *op.cit*, pp.606-608.

84. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit*, p.262.

85. D.S.C. (27 April, 1918).

86. D.S.C. (4 June, 1918).

87. Pabón, *op. cit.*, pp.612-629; Romanones, *Notas*, p.149. Also see A.P.R. Letter from Cambó to Durán in which the Catalan leader claimed that the coalition government could do great things and he expected to be his engine. Otherwise the Monarchy would fall and the Regionalists would have to work only on behalf of Catalonia (23 March 1918).

88. A.N.R. File 8905 (13 July, 1918). According to Rivas, Alba was already considering resignation but he feared that people would accuse him of ambition and impatience. A.N.R. n.8893 (9-10 August, 1918). Alba and Cambó were forming a common front against the budget presented by Besada, but Alba reacted against Cambó's regionalist plans. A.N.R. n.8906 (18 September, 1918). All the ministers except Romanones and Maura, who abstained, opposed the projects presented by Cambó and Besada. On 13 September *El Sol*

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published the general opposition to Besada's budget and the offer by Alhucemas to Besteiro to join a new cabinet. Two days later *El Socialista* explained how Besteiro had turned down Alhucemas' approach.

89. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.267; Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.649-666.

90. Pabón, *op.cit.*, pp.651-666; Burgos, *El verano de 1919*, pp.50-52.

91. D.S.C. (24-25 October, 1918).

92. *España* n.186 (30 October, 1918).

93. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, pp.267-268.

94. Fernández Almagro, *op.cit.*, p.267.

Chapter 7: Epilogue

1. Martin Blinkhorn (ed.), *Fascists and Conservatives* (Cambridge, 1990), p.4.

2. Paul Preston and Helen Graham, 'The Popular Front and the struggle against Fascism' in Preston and Graham, *The Popular Front in Europe* (London, 1987), p.1.

3. A good analysis of the impact of the Annual disaster can be found in Angel Comalada, *El ocaso de un parlamento* (Barcelona, 1985).

4. Díaz del Moral, *op.cit.*, pp.267-273; see also Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left*, pp.137-143.

5. Balcells, *El sindicalismo en Barcelona*, pp.73-82.

6. For more details of the congress of the CNT in December 1919 see Bar, *Los años rojos*, pp.489-555.

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7. *La Acción* (8 March 1919). The editorial was titled: 'A dictator is needed'.

8. The policy of conciliation of the Liberal cabinet led by Count Romanones in April 1919 clashed with the position of officers and industrialists prepared to fight to the death with the CNT. As a consequence, the Civil Governor of Barcelona and its chief of police were ejected from the city by local officers. Romanones understood the hint and resigned. The Conservative cabinet led by Sánchez de Toca met a similar fate in December of 1919 when his conciliatory initiatives were opposed by the combined actions of industrialists and the military.

9. The most thorough analysis of the *Libres* can be found in Colin M. Winston, *Workers and the Right in Spain, 1900-1936* (Princeton, 1974). Winston's study constitutes an apology for the activities of the *Libres*, often dismissed as a mere 'yellow' trade union. Winston argues that they were a real workers' organization which was forced to take a defensive position when faced by the violence and intransigence of the CNT. He underlines that this trade union achieved a genuine level of workers' support and that by 1922 it could boast of more than 120,000 members. Yet Winston destroys his own argument when he recognizes that on a number of occasions after 1920 the *Libres* participated in terrorist activities and acted as strike-breakers in alliance with the Employers' Federation and the Civil Governor. The *Libres* enjoyed the official protection of Martínez Anido, who actually became the Honourary Chairman of the *Libres* cooks' trade union.

10. On the spiral of social violence and terrorism of these years

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see León Ignacio, *Los años del pistoleroismo. Ensayo para una guerra civil* (Madrid, 1981) and Fernando Calderón, *La verdad sobre el terrorismo. Datos, fechas, nombres y estadísticas* (Barcelona, 1932).

11. Balcells, *El sindicalismo*, p.112, argues that anarchist terrorism increased proportionally in periods of repression and diminished in those of tolerance and dialogue. Pestaña, *op.cit.*, Vol.1, p.113, claims that the leadership of the CNT did not back the terrorists but never stood up to them. As terrorism increased, it became more opportunistic and ruthless. Initially, gunmen killed for principles, but later the original Anarchist idealists were joined by other more opportunist characters, who regarded assassination as an end in itself.

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