

The political instrumentalization of professional football in Francoist Spain 1939-1975

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PROFESSIONAL
THE POLITICAL INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF FOOTBALL
IN FRANCOIST SPAIN, 1939 -1975

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF PHD
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BY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to be the first systematic study of the political instrumentalization of football in Francoist Spain from 1939 to 1975.

Seven separate and contrasting aspects of this political instrumentalization may be isolated, and, accordingly, this thesis will consist of a chapter examining each one of these seven aspects in turn. After a first introductory chapter, Chapter Two will examine the application of Fascist concepts to Spanish football. In the third chapter, the questions of whether and to what extent football was used by the Franco regime as a political soporific will be discussed. The theme of Chapter Four is the lack of democracy within the structures of the game, a situation that is alleged to have been deliberately imposed by the regime in order to not create an uncomfortable comparison for itself with the lack of national and local political democracy. The poor working conditions of the footballers, which mirrored those of the great majority of Spanish workers during the Franco period, are the subject of Chapter Five. In the sixth Chapter, the political significance of the presence in Francoist Spain of a group of refugee players and coaches from Eastern Europe will be examined. The diplomatic and ambassadorial significance of football, in particular of the

spectacular international triumphs of the Real Madrid club, will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The political significance of football as a focus for Basque and Catalan nationalist sentiment, in opposition to the centralist Madrid regime, is the subject of Chapter Eight.

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PREFACE

The objective of this thesis is to be the first systematic study of the political manipulation of football in Francoist Spain, from 1939 to 1975. With the exception of the politicization of sport in general and of football in particular, practically every other social, political and economic aspect of Francoist Spain has been subjected to a serious academic examination in recent years.

The political significance of football has been briefly alluded to in all of the general studies written in English about the Franco years, for example in Sir Raymond Carr's Modern Spain 1875-1980,¹ in Spain: Dictatorship To Democracy by Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi,² and in Spain In Crisis, edited by Paul Preston.³ In these general studies, however, the subject has received only a necessarily superficial treatment.⁴ The very existence of even these brief allusions to the political

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1. Sir Raymond Carr, Modern Spain 1875-1980, Oxford, 1981.
 2. Sir Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy, Oxford, 1980.
 3. Paul Preston, editor, Spain In Crisis, Sussex, 1976.
 4. In Carr and Fusi, op. cit., for example, the political manipulation of football is discussed in just two very brief paragraphs, p. 122.

significance of football in Francoist Spain demonstrates its importance and highlights the lack of a systematic academic study of the subject.

With regard to Spanish publications, the only comprehensive study of the political manipulation of football during the Franco period remains the author's own Fútbol y franquismo.⁵ There have been several studies of the political manipulation of Spanish sport in general, the most notable being Deporte y estado by Luis María Cazorla Prieto,⁶ Historias del deporte by Vicente Marco,⁷ and Política y deporte by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, written under the pseudonym of "Luis Dávila".⁸ The politicization of football in Francoist Spain is discussed at various stages in these three studies, but in an anecdotal rather than analytical manner.

The excellent Julián García Candau book El fútbol, sin ley was originally intended to be such a systematic study of the political manipulation of Spanish football in the Franco years, but failed to be so by concentrating too heavily on the situation during the transition from dictatorship to democracy.⁹ El bisturí de José María García, by the controversial sports journalist of the same name,¹⁰ and La gran estafa del fútbol español by García's Catalan colleague Alex J. Botines¹¹ both touch upon the political significance of football in

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5. Duncan Shaw, Fútbol y Franquismo, Madrid, 1987.
 6. Luis María Cazorla Prieto, Deporte y Estado, Barcelona, 1979.
 7. Vicente Marco, Historias del deporte, Madrid, 1982.
 8. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Política y deporte, Barcelona, 1972.
 9. Julián García Candau, El fútbol, sin ley, Madrid, 1980
 10. José María García, El bisturí de José María García, Madrid, 1974.
 11. Alex J. Botines, La gran estafa del fútbol español, Barcelona, 1975.

Francoist Spain, but, in the same way as the three general studies of Spanish sport mentioned above, in an anecdotal and dramatic rather than systematic manner.

There are several other books which concentrate usually on one particular aspect of the political manipulation of football in Francoist Spain. With regard to the poor, patronizing treatment received by the footballers from the Francoist sporting authorities and the football clubs, there is the detailed study Los esclavos de oro del balón by Tomás Martín Arnoriaga.¹² The social and political significance of the giant FC Barcelona club is specifically examined by Joan Josep Artells in Barça, Barça, Barça¹³ and by Jaume S. Sabartés in Barça: cara i creu,¹⁴ whilst Historia del Athletic Club concentrates on the Athletic de Bilbao club in a similar way.¹⁵

Several magazine articles have dealt with the political significance of football in Francoist Spain, the most notable being the humorous "La sociología insolente del fútbol español" series by Francisco Cerecedo in Posible during the winter of 1974-1975.¹⁶ In addition, in February 1977 El País Semanal published the Julián García Candau article "Cuarenta años del nacional-futbolismo".¹⁷

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12. Tomás Martín Arnoriaga, Los esclavos del oro del balón, Madrid 1975.
 13. Joan Josep Artells, Barça, Barça, Barça, Barcelona, 1972.
 14. Jaume S. Sabartés, Barça: cara i creu, Barcelona, 1982.
 15. La Gran Enciclopedia Vasca, Historia del Athletic Club, Bilbao, 1984.
 16. Francisco Cerecedo, "La sociología insolente del fútbol español", Posible (Madrid) No. 1-4, November 1974-January 1975.
 17. Julián García Candau, "Cuarenta años del nacional-futbolismo", El País Semanal (Madrid) 27 February 1977.

Given the lack of a comprehensive study of the subject, until now the various aspects of the political manipulation of Spanish football had not been isolated and examined separately. These aspects have previously been clumsily bundled together, either because of unwillingness or inability to separate them.¹⁸

Seven different aspects of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain may be isolated, and this thesis will consist of a chapter examining each one of these seven different aspects in turn. Chapter Two will examine the application of fascist concepts to the game. In the third chapter, the questions of whether and to what extent football was used by the Franco regime as a political soporific will be discussed. The theme of Chapter Four is the lack of democracy within football, a situation allegedly imposed deliberately by the regime in order not to create an uncomfortable comparison with the lack of national and local political democracy. The poor working conditions of the footballers, which mirrored those of the great majority of Spanish workers during the Franco years, are the subject of Chapter Five. In the sixth chapter, the political significance of the presence in Francoist Spain of a group of refugee players and coaches from Eastern Europe will be examined. The diplomatic and ambassadorial significance of football, in particular of the spectacular international triumphs of the Real Madrid club, will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The subject of the eighth and final chapter will be football's political significance as a focus for Basque and Catalan nationalist sentiment, in

18. See Carr and Fusi, *op. cit.*, for example, p. 122.

opposition to the centralist Madrid regime.

It is necessary at this point to offer a brief explanation of the methodology employed in the gathering of material for this thesis. The primary sources used can be divided into four groups: newspapers; journals; documents; personal interviews.

The newspapers most useful to the research of this thesis can themselves be divided into two categories: the daily general newspapers ABC (Madrid), El Alcázar (Madrid), Arriba (Madrid), Pueblo (Madrid), Ya (Madrid), Informaciones (Madrid), La Vanguardia Española (Barcelona), La Gaceta del Norte (Bilbao), and, for the post-Franco period, El País (Madrid) and Diario 16 (Madrid); and on the other, the specialist daily sports newspapers Marca (Madrid), As (Madrid), El Mundo Deportivo (Barcelona), Sport (Barcelona) and Dicen (Barcelona). In addition, several other provincial newspapers such as: Murcia Deportiva (Murcia) have been consulted for information about specific events.

In a similar way, the journals consulted can be divided into those of general interest and those specifically concerned with sport. In the first category, the most useful journals have been Posible (Madrid), Triunfo (Barcelona) and Cuadernos para el diálogo (Madrid) during the Franco period, and Cambio 16 (Madrid) and Tiempo (Madrid) during the transition to democracy. In the second category, Don Balón (Barcelona) and Barrabás (Barcelona) have been systematically consulted, in addition to the club journals Boletín del Real Madrid CF (Madrid), Aúpa Atlético (Madrid), Barça (Barcelona), and the Boletín Oficial de la Delegación Nacional de Deportes (Madrid).

The documentary material discovered in the course of the research for this thesis has been slightly disappointing. The archives examined have been those of the "Big Four" football clubs (Real Madrid, FC Barcelona, Atlético de Madrid and Athletic de Bilbao) of the RFEF, of the DND, of the Comité Olímpico Español (COE), and of the sports newspapers Marca, As and El Mundo Deportivo. The evidence obtained from these archives, however, has in many cases been far from conclusive. For example, it has been impossible to find documentary evidence either to prove or disprove the claim that the refugee players and coaches from Eastern Europe served as anti-Communist symbols for the Franco regime, or that the phenomenally high number of football matches broadcast live by Real Televisión Española (RTVE) actually contributed or not towards the maintenance of a high level of political passivity in Francoist Spain.

The inadequacy of the documentary evidence in connection with certain of the abstract concepts of this thesis largely explains the high number of personal interviews conducted. These interviews have been with former Francoist sporting officials, football club officials, footballers, veteran sports journalists and commentators, as well as with historians and social scientists whose work has had some connection, however slight, with the social and political significance of sport in Francoist Spain.

The questions asked in these interviews have obviously varied according to the specific areas of expertise and experience of the interviewee. For example, the questions to Ladislav Kubala, the most famous of the footballing refugees from Eastern Europe, naturally

centred on the political significance of his arrival in Francoist Spain,¹⁹ and the questions to the Real Madrid Vice-President Raimundo Saporta obviously centred on the diplomatic and ambassadorial importance to the Franco regime of the many spectacular international triumphs of that club.²⁰

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19. Author's interview with Ladislav Kubala, details of which are given in the appendix of interviews.
20. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Introduction is to provide the background information about football in Francoist Spain necessary for an understanding of the seven conceptual chapters that will follow. Accordingly, this Introduction will consist of: a brief history of the politicization of Spanish football up to 1939, a general survey of the political significance of sport in Francoist Spain; an examination of the political character of the Delegación Nacional de Deportes (DND) and the Real Federación Española de Fútbol (RFEF); a brief insight into the general nature of the "Big Four" Spanish football clubs, Real Madrid, Atlético de Madrid, FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao; an examination of the Spanish sporting Press during the Franco period.

In order to place the politicization of Spanish football during the Franco period in its proper historical context, it is necessary at this point to offer a brief history of the game before 1939.

Before the Civil War, Spanish football was only really politicized in its regionalist aspect.¹ This lack of politicization in other

1. See García Candau, *op. cit.*, and Artells, *op. cit.*

aspects was mostly due to the fact that governmental interest in the game was very low, thus giving the RFEF and the football clubs almost complete independence and autonomy vis-a-vis the Madrid authorities.

Football was introduced into Spain at the end of the nineteenth century by visiting British sailors and engineers, and also by Spanish students returning from Britain filled with enthusiasm for a novel and exciting game. The big clubs of today were created by the combined efforts of Spaniards and foreigners, beginning with Athletic de Bilbao in 1898, FC Barcelona in 1899, Real Madrid in 1902, and Atlético de Madrid the following year.

The RFEF was founded by these football clubs in 1902, and immediately organized a national knockout trophy under the patronage of the sports enthusiast King Alfonso XIII. In 1928, a national league was created, which brought with it professional players, coaches and club officials. Because of the small numbers of club members, however, the wages of these professionals were to remain relatively low until after the Civil War.

With regard to action on the field, the dominant pre-Civil War club was Athletic de Bilbao. Together with the other Basque clubs, Bilbao won over half of the national cups disputed before 1936. The key to the success of Bilbao was their direct and aggressive style, the product of both the huge British influence at the club and climatic factors. This style was adopted by the mostly Basque Spanish Olympic football team that dramatically won the silver medal at the 1920 Antwerp games, and

was christened the "Spanish Fury" by impressed journalists.² Apart from Antwerp, however, the Spanish national team failed to make a major impact on the international football scene. After bravely falling to hosts Italy in the 1934 World Cup quarter-finals, it was hoped that success would follow in the 1938 tournament in France. For obvious reasons, though, the "Spanish Fury" was not on show in France.

As stated above, Spanish football before the Civil War was really only politicized in its regionalist aspect. The two major Basque clubs, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad of San Sebastian, had a pan-Basque image because of their rigid policy of accepting only players born in the Basque provinces of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, Alava and Navarre. The two clubs increased their political significance in the immediate pre-Civil War years when their respective boards of directors both issued statements in favour of the campaign for Basque autonomy.³ Partly because of these official statements of support from both clubs, their stadia became centres of popular agitation for autonomy, with hundreds of ikurriña flags flying on the terraces, and with several explosive incidents between the crowd, the national policemen on duty and the visiting football teams, especially those from Madrid.⁴

Upon the outbreak of Civil War, the majority of the Bilbao and Real Sociedad directors and members rallied to the Republican cause.⁵ As

2. See El Mundo Deportivo, 27 June 1920.

3. Revealed by an examination of the archives of the two clubs.

4. For details, see La Gaceta del Norte, 12 May 1934 and 7 November 1935.

5. Revealed by an examination of the archives of La Gaceta del Norte.

shall be seen in Chapter Seven, certain prosperous Basque directors and members gave their support to Franco, but they constituted only a very small minority.

Many of the Basque players joined the militias to defend their homeland against the imminent Francoist invasion. The footballers' military careers, however, were to be shortlived. José Antonio Aguirre, the President of the autonomous Basque Republic who had originally earned his popularity as an Athletic de Bilbao centre-forward, decided to form a Basque national football team that would tour the world with the aim of collecting both funds and sympathy for the Basque cause. This team was christened, logically, El Euzkadi, and even included three Basque players from the Real Madrid club. El Euzkadi left for Paris in April 1937, where its spectacular winning performances earned considerable money and sympathy for the Basque cause. After France, the team continued on to Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union and Norway, by which time the Basque Country had been conquered by the Nationalists. The Basque players decided to move on to Mexico, where they played with distinction in the national league before dissolving the team in 1940. Only two players could bear the prospect of returning to an occupied Basque Country. The others signed for either Mexican or Argentine clubs, and promptly became the heroes of the exiled Basque communities in these countries.

The political significance of football in pre-Civil War Catalonia was not nearly as clear-cut as in the Basque Country, due to the bitter rivalry between the FC Barcelona and Español clubs. Despite having been founded by foreigners, FC Barcelona, or Barça as the club was popularly

known, had a far more Catalan image than its local rival. The gulf between the supporters of the two clubs was huge.⁶ The great majority of the Barça followers were Catalan speakers who favoured regional autonomy, whilst the Español supporters were mostly middle-class immigrants to Catalonia from other regions, professional men, state officials, and even a good number of policemen and military personnel.⁷ Practically none of the Español club members could speak Catalan, and it was widely thought that the very club name had been chosen as both a slight and a provocation to the native Catalans.⁸

In this way, the political context of the FC Barcelona-Español rivalry was important from the very beginning of the century, and considerably contributed towards the many violent local derby matches. In April 1912, a pitched battle between the players and supporters of the two rival clubs led to the local authorities suspending these derby matches for two years. Similarly violent clashes occurred in October 1921, March 1923, October 1927, May 1924 and March 1935.

The hostility of the Barça supporters, however, was directed with more ferocity towards actual manifestations of Castilian centralism than towards Español. In June 1925 during the centralist dictatorship of General Miguel Primo de Rivera, the military governor of Barcelona closed Barça's Les Corts stadium for six months because the crowd had

6. This gulf has been best illustrated by Artells, op. cit., p. 25-28.

7. See Artells, op. cit. p. 27.

8. This view has been expressed by Artells, op. cit., and in an interview with the author. This view has also been expressed to the author in many other interviews, for example with Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Alex J. Botines.

whistled and jeered at the band of the British Royal Navy playing the Spanish Royal March in a pre-match entertainment.⁹ The FC Barcelona supporters looked upon the wealthy and powerful Real Madrid club as a symbol of Castilian centralism, and, accordingly, the Madrid team was always granted an extremely hostile reception on its visits to the Les Corts stadium.¹⁰

Josep Sunyol, President of FC Barcelona from 1933 to 1957, was a typical Barça director. A wealthy textile manufacturer politically favourable to the moderate nationalism of Lluís Companys and Josep Tarradellas, he brought the club clearly out in favour of both the Autonomy Statute and the short-lived independent Catalan Republic established in October 1934.¹¹ Along with many Barça players, directors and supporters, on the outbreak of the Civil War, Sunyol joined one of the many Catalan militias and died fighting on the Jarama front in February 1937.

As with their Basque counterparts, however, the Barça players were not to be militia men for long. In April 1937, the Barça team embarked upon a tour of Central and South America. Even though funds were not returned to the Generalitat for the defence of Catalonia from the Nationalists, the political convictions of the touring players and directors were just as clear as in the Basque case. Again, few of the players ventured to return afterwards to Francoist Spain, the majority

9. Revealed by an examination of the archives of FC Barcelona.

10. Revealed by an examination of the archives of El Mundo Deportivo.

11. Revealed by an examination of the archives of FC Barcelona.

choosing to remain in either Mexico or Argentina.

It was not only in the Basque Country and Catalonia, however, that the political sympathies of the footballers leant towards the Republican cause.¹² Many players lost their lives fighting against the military insurrection, whilst not a single one fell for the Nationalist cause. Only the Basque and Catalan players, nonetheless, collectively finished up in exile as a result of the conflict. It was only these players who had the satisfaction of knowing that their political convictions were shared by the great majority of their clubs' directors and supporters.

The context of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain needs to be set not only by a brief history of pre-Civil War football, but also by a description of the general state of Spanish sport during the Franco years.

The brilliance of the Real Madrid football team and a handful of individuals such as the tennis star Manuel Santana, for example, served partially to cover up the poor state of Spanish sport in general.¹³ As shall be seen very shortly, the sporting Press did its best to disguise this painful truth, contenting themselves with faithfully reproducing the myopic speeches of ministers and DND officials. In the best traditions of Spanish triumfalismo, this sporting Press went into

12. See García Candau, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

13. Only two of the author's interviewees contested this widely-held opinion: Matías Prats, the ultra-nationalist football commentator on radio and television during the Franco years, and José María Lorente, the veteran Marca journalist.

flights of euphoria whenever one of the few Spanish victories occurred, even if the sport in question was as internationally insignificant as clay pigeon shooting or roller-skate hookey.¹⁴

The facts, however, speak for themselves. In the six Olympic Games in which Spain participated during the Franco period, only one gold medal was won, two silver and two bronze. This is a pathetic record, worse than that of tiny countries such as Finland, New Zealand and the Irish Republic, and was certainly not the way for Francoist Spain to emulate the hallowed sporting achievements of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.

The responsibility for this state of affairs largely lies with the Franco regime. As shall be seen in greater detail in Chapter Two, the direction of sport was handed to the Falange, the only permitted political party. The initial aims of Francoist sporting policy were twofold. Firstly, sport was supposed to serve as a means to create a healthy and virile race, and, secondly, as a focus for the international exhibition of rediscovered Spanish virility and national pride.¹⁵

Whilst Mussolini and Hitler, however, were prepared to invest massive amounts of money in sport in order to fulfill the same two objectives, Franco was not. The DND, a department of the Falange, was

14. A good example of this exaggerated and inappropriate triunfalismo can be found with the Press coverage of the Conde de Teba's victory in the May 1953 world clay-pigeon shooting championship. See Marca, 23-25 May 1953.

15. These aims were clearly expressed in the first edition of the Boletín Oficial de la DND, Madrid, April 1943.

obliged to be practically self-sufficient, depending on the revenue from the football pools for the greater part of its money. In this way, as noted in the following perceptive document from the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya the Franco regime wanted to impose a totalitarian model on Spanish sport, but without paying for it:

"The organization of sport in Spain is suffering from the consequences of the ambiguity which characterized the whole of the Francoist period. Between the "liberal" organizational model for sporting activity and the "totalitarian" model, the Franco regime chose the latter, maintaining its most formal aspects (sport as a panacea of the race and as a means of alienation of the masses) without ever disposing of sufficient economic resources to practise an authentic promotion of collective participation in sport."¹⁶

The principal Spanish sporting problem that the DND failed to resolve was the acute lack of public facilities. The opportunity regularly to play tennis, basketball or most other sports really only existed for the wealthy members of private clubs.

The gulf between the triumfalista rhetoric of the DND and the sombre reality was enormous. According to the DND, everything was always progressing splendidly. In spite of all the Olympic failures, Spain was permanently on the point of becoming one of the leaders of the sporting world. Even in February 1969, after further failure in the Mexico games, then Delegado Nacional de Deportes, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was still trying to point out that everything in the sporting garden was rosy:

"I ask all of you to continue with the same enthusiasm and with this exemplary dedication. And I also say to you that we are on the right road. The only thing that we have to do right now is

16. Reproduced in Antonio Alcoba, El periodismo deportivo en la sociedad moderna, 1980, p. 254.

accelerate our pace, because our objective of creating a sporting consciousness will automatically arrive if we continue working with the same enthusiasm."¹⁷

This blind optimism of Samaranch, flying in the face of all the facts, is all the more surprising given that his predecessor in the job, José Antonio Elola Olaso, had effectively admitted the partial failure of the DND in his farewell speech in December 1966. The official reason for the replacement of Elola Olaso with Samaranch was the former's ill health.¹⁸ At the time, however, it was common knowledge that he was removed by his superior, the Minister-Secretary for the Movimiento José Solís, because of the continued Spanish failures in the Olympics and in other international competitions.¹⁹ Unlike Samaranch, Elola Olaso was sufficiently honest upon leaving to admit that Spanish sport was not in perfect condition:

"There is still a great deal to be done. In the path followed we have committed many mistakes. I am the first person to unconditionally accept this, and I blame myself for the failure."²⁰

After the lack of public facilities, the other major problem for Spanish sport during the Franco period was the profusion of foreign imports. The football and basketball teams of Real Madrid, FC Barcelona and the other big clubs were packed with foreign players, many of whom became naturalized Spaniards and played for the Spanish national teams.

17. Reproduced in Boletín Oficial de la DND (Madrid) No. 387, March 1969.

18. See Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 281, January 1967.

19. This view has been expressed to the author in many interviews, for example with José María Lorente, and with Juan José Castillo, the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo.

20. Reproduced in Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 281, January 1967.

This Spanish policy of including foreigners in the national sports teams provoked many protests from other countries over the years. In August 1953, for example, there were strong Italian protests about the presence in the Spanish national pelota team of seven South Americans. In June 1962, there were vociferous complaints from many countries about the Spanish national football team including four foreign-born players in the World Cup team in Chile. The Spanish team, nonetheless, failed again, but the complaints caused the international football governing body FIFA to tighten its rules on imported players representing their new country.²¹

The DND would undoubtedly have preferred Spanish-born champions, but foreign-born champions were obviously better than none at all. This was especially true when they shouted the Falangist Viva España slogan in the moment of triumph, as did the black Cuban-born boxer José Legrá upon winning the world featherweight title from Howard (Minstone) in Porthcawl in July 1968.

The handful of sportsmen, whether Spanish or foreign-born, who actually achieved something in Francoist Spain did so in spite of rather than because of the sporting infrastructure. For every Manuel Santana or José Legrá, there were thousands of Spanish youngsters trying to play tennis or box on patches of waste ground, without the opportunity to either use a decent court or gymnasium or be guided by a professional coach.

21. For details of the FIFA rule changes, see World Soccer, October 1962.

In spite of the triunfalista rhetoric that poured every time a new Palacio de Deportes was opened, the DND was incapable of providing every Spaniard with the opportunity regularly to practise the sport of his choice. The DND received increasingly large sums of money from the football pools because its percentage share of the total revenue generated constantly rose, and because the total revenue itself also increased in proportion to the increase in public interest in the game. During the years 1951-1957, the DND received only 3% of the pools takings. This share was increased to 10% during the period 1957--1962, and from May 1962 onwards to a considerable 22%. Thus in the football season 1962-1963, the DND received 261,856,206,280 pesetas, a figure which had risen to 1,969,285,473,100 pesetas by season 1971-1972, an increase of almost 100%.²² Not even these sums of money, however, allowed the DND to raise the Spanish sporting infrastructure to normal European levels.

A major consequence of this lack of public sports facilities was that practically the only sport accessible to the lower classes was football. Of course, football also suffered from a lack of pitches and training facilities, but the game could be played, unlike most other sports, on any patch of ground, in the squares or on the streets, with only a ball as essential equipment. Right across postwar Europe, a whole generation grew up kicking a football around the empty bombsites and in the relatively car-deserted streets. Whilst in most other European countries, however, the youngsters gradually began to play on

22. Figures revealed by examination of the archives of the DND.

the newly-laid out grass pitches and in the new sports centres, the Spanish boys were compelled by the lack of public sports facilities to continue playing on the waste ground and in the streets.

Partly because of the lack of facilities for other sports, football almost completely dominated the sporting life of the average ^{Spanish male} Spaniard during the Franco years. As a boy, he would be playing all day in the streets, and would quickly be a supporter of one of the big clubs. Upon leaving school and beginning work, he would be unable to continue playing due to lack of time, especially if he was trying to hold down two jobs, like so many during the Franco period. Therefore, he only had time to read one of the daily sports papers and see his favourite team play on Sunday afternoon. Even if he did have time to practise another sport, then the lack of public facilities and the high cost of joining one of the private clubs would quickly combine to dampen his enthusiasm.²³ It is hardly surprising, given these circumstances, that football came to be called the deporte-rey in Francoist Spain.

In conclusion, therefore, it must be said that the most significant feature of Spanish sport during the Franco years was the striking contrast between the popularity of football as a spectator sport and the lamentably deficient sporting infrastructure.

23. This has approximately been the sporting history of most of the Spanish men who grew up in the Franco period that the author has interviewed. For details of the level of sports facilities in Francoist Spain compared to other countries, see Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-214.

It is now necessary to offer a brief illustration of the two institutions that governed Spanish football during the Franco years. The actions of the DND and the RFEF will be subjected to a close scrutiny on many occasions in the seven chapters that will follow. At this point, however, it would be appropriate to give an outline of the general character of these two institutions, before a conceptual approach to the politicization of football is adopted.

The DND was created by a February 1941 decree signed by Franco himself.²⁴ The full title of the new sports governing body was to be la Delegación Nacional de Deportes de Falange Tradicionalista Española y de las JONS. In this way, all possibility that sport could maintain a degree of independence from the new Francoist political order was swiftly destroyed.

Three reasons can be given for Sport in Francoist Spain being placed under the direction of the Falange. The first reason is that none of Franco's ministries had the means to attempt to administer sport. Secondly, by assigning sport to the Falange the Franco regime demonstrated its desire to apply the same concepts to sport as had done the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, namely that sport should serve as a means of "improving the race" and of gaining international respect and prestige.²⁵ The third reason that can be offered is that Franco

24. Reproduced in Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 1, April 1943.

25. This view is shared by Juan Pablo Fusi, leading historian of twentieth-century Spain, and by Dr. Sheelagh Ellwood, specialist Falange historian. For details of the political instrumentalization of sport in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany see Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-188.

possibly realized that sport was an area in which the potentially dangerous Falange could do less damage with their ideas about a new radical social order than at, for example, the Finance or Interior Ministry.²⁶

The founding decree of February 1941 gave the DND, in effect, complete control over Spanish sport, a control far more complete than has ever been exercised by a Ministry of Sport in a pluralist democracy, the phenomenon having been confined to dictatorships of either the Right or Left.

To begin with, the DND executive committee also served as the Spanish Olympic Committee. This arrangement was in clear contravention of the International Olympic Committee's rule that national Olympic Committees should be strictly "non-political" and have as little connection as possible with central government.²⁷ As was the case with so many other international rulings and recommendations, however, the Franco regime cynically overlooked this rule.

The regime-nominated head of the DND, known as the Delegado Nacional de Deportes, was empowered by the February 1941 decree not only to name the President and Vice-President of each of the separate Spanish sports federations, but also to appoint all of the executive committee members of these federations. In addition, the Delegado Nacional was

26. This view is similarly shared by Dr. Sheelagh Ellwood.

27. Revealed by examination of the archives of the Spanish Olympic Committee.

to nominate the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of all the regional divisions of each sports federation. As if all of these powers were not sufficient to exercise complete control over Spanish sport, the fourth article of the decree empowered the Delegado Nacional to veto any decision of a national or regional federation that was not to his liking. Therefore, if the Delegado's chosen men did not do what was expected of them, then he would be able either to replace them with more obedient men or simply force them to change their decisions.

As was pointed out with regard to the RFEF earlier in this Introduction, every Spanish sports federation had originally been formed by the various local clubs, and had enjoyed a very high level of autonomy from central government before the Civil War. The February 1941 decree completely changed this situation, subjecting the federations to a degree of control that would possibly have caused their West European counterparts immediately to rebel.

The DND was a Falangist institution, staffed largely, but not exclusively, with Falangists. In spite of this, however, its first head or Delegado Nacional was the army general José Moscardó, the hero of the 1936 siege of the Toledo Alcázar. Moscardó was an extremely popular figure with the Falangists, however, because of the way in which he had been built up by the regime's propaganda machinery into a war hero, and because of the fulsome way in which he had praised the 200 Falangist militiamen who had fought alongside his regular soldiers in the Alcázar siege.

The appointment of Moscardó as the first Delegado Nacional should

properly be seen as the awarding of a sinecure to an old war hero who was tired of the barracks and the parade ground. Despite his passion for equestrian sports and clay pigeon shooting, he was scarcely competent to be the effective Spanish Minister of Sport for fifteen years. Moscardó's ignorance of football, for example, by far the most popular and important Spanish sport, was practically total. He hardly ever attended a professional football match, not even to award the many trophies christened with his own name. In spite of this, however, he was the man with the greatest power to influence post-Civil War Spanish football.

As shall shortly be seen in detail, Moscardó hired and fired the RFEF officials at very short intervals, in this way assuring that they were loyal and obedient Falangists. He was responsible for the Falangist-inspired "Blue Period" in football in the 1940s, personally insisting upon the introduction of a number of Fascist symbols into the game. The two most notable such symbols were the right arm symbol by the players and the crowd before every match at all levels, and the Spanish national team use of blue shirts instead of the usual red one.

The powerful, irresistible leadership of Moscardó combined with the extensive powers given to the DND in the February 1941 decree to make the institution the uncontestably dominant force in Spanish sport. With the death of the old war hero in April 1956, the DND lost a certain amount of its power and influence. This was also partly due to Moscardó's successor, José Antonio Elola Olaso, being a rather weak personality and a dull, uninspiring leader.

Elola Olaso was as little of a sportsman and football expert as Moscardo had been. A Falangist volunteer in the Civil War, since 1940 he had served as the head of the Falange's youth organization the Frente de Juventudes, and would have become Minister-Secretary of the Movimiento in the Cabinet reshuffle of 1957 had it not been for his virulent anti-monarchism.

Only six months after his appointment to the post of Delegado Nacional, it befell to Elola Olaso to withdraw the Spanish team from the Melbourne Olympic Games, a gesture ordered by Franco's Consejo de Ministros as a protest against the Soviet invasion of Hungary. It is possible that Moscardo would have judged this boycott to be both futile and damaging for Spanish sport, and therefore have attempted, and most probably have succeeded, to persuade the Caudillo and his Cabinet against the withdrawal.²⁸ Elola Olaso, however, obediently accepted this decision from above and dutifully did his best to explain it to the disappointed sportsmen and sports journalists.

Elola Olaso will be remembered in football circles for making an enemy of the powerful Real Madrid President Santiago Bernabeu. This was the consequence of the Delegado's August 1962 decision to prohibit the importation of any more foreign footballers, a decision which angered Bernabeu because Real Madrid's spectacular successes in the late 1950's were largely the product of their foreign stars. The following summer, Elola Olaso further annoyed the Real Madrid President by refusing to

28. This view is shared by Matías Prats, José María Lorente and Juan José Castillo, op. cit. †

accept the resignations of the unpopular RFEF President Benito Pico Martínez and the national team manager José Villalonga.

His unpopularity with Bernabeu and most of the other influential figures in Spanish football contributed towards Elola Olaso's premature retirement in December 1966. The other important factor, as already stated earlier, was the continued Spanish failure in the Olympic Games and other international sporting competitions.

Elola Olaso was replaced, as was generally expected at the time, by Juan Antonio Samaranch, the young director of the DND in Catalonia. Samaranch was undoubtedly the most intelligent and able sports administrator to emerge from Francoist Spain. A Catalan of independent means, one of his strengths in rising to the pinnacle of world sporting power, namely the Presidency of the International Olympic Committee, which he assumed in 1980, was his political ambiguity. He needed to be a model Falangist originally to establish himself in the DND, especially with the disadvantage of being Catalan, but, in the 1970s, he realized that a move towards the democratic centre was necessary in order to make progress in the international Olympic movement.

Samaranch was, and indeed continues to be, a very popular figure in Spanish sport. With regard to football, he was sufficiently wise to cultivate the support of the giant clubs Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, of both of which he was a fully paid-up member.²⁹ This support for

29. Revealed by examination of the archives of Real Madrid, and of FC Barcelona.

Samaranch from the giant clubs was, on occasions, rather weak, largely because of his perseverance with the generally unpopular ban on foreign players. In contrast to Elola Olaso, however, he was looked upon by the football clubs as a man of compromise and dialogue, a man genuinely committed to the progress of Spanish sport. For these reasons, his sacking in September 1970 was both a surprise and a disappointment to many involved in the game.³⁰

The view exists that Samaranch's dismissal from the post of Delegado Nacional was due to the June 1970 Gureceta scandal, in which FC Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium was the scene of a violent pitch invasion after a dubious penalty award in a tense cup quarter-final match with Real Madrid.³¹ Consistent with this view was the appointment of the Barça secretary Juan Gich as replacement for Samaranch, in an attempt to placate the furious Catalans.

The indignation of FC Barcelona, however, was not directed towards Samaranch, a fellow Catalan and club member, but rather towards RFEF President José Luis Costa and the chairman of the Central Referees Committee José Plaza. Furthermore, as shall be seen in greater detail in Chapter Eight, Barça had very little influence in the sporting corridors of power during the Franco years, because it was viewed as a

30. This surprise and disappointment felt was expressed to the author by many veteran sports journalists, by several sportsmen, for example the tennis player Manuel Orantes and the footballer Manuel Velázquez, interviewed in Madrid, and also by two former Francoist sports officials, the ex-Delegado Nacional Benito Castejón and the former RFEF President Pablo Porta.

31. See, for example, Marca and As, 9-13 September 1970.

Catalan club of dubious political character. Therefore, they could not have brought about the downfall of Samaranch even had they wanted to.

The major reason for the removal of Samaranch was that his old friend José Solís had himself been dismissed by Franco as Minister-Secretary for the Movimiento in October 1969. The new Minister-Secretary Torcuato Fernández Miranda followed Solís' example and appointed Delegado Nacional his own good friend Juan Gich.

Compared to Samaranch, Gich was a weak and uninspiring leader, and was resented by the majority of the DND staff for being an outsider.³² In addition, being the former secretary of FC Barcelona, he was loathed and boycotted by an infuriated Real Madrid, and mistrusted by most of the non-Catalan clubs.

Gich organized, from June 1971 onwards, a massive publicity campaign encouraging Spaniards to play more sport, led by the slogan Contamos contigo. The campaign, however, met with only very limited success, because of both a sporting apathy on the part of the Spanish masses, and the acute shortage of public sports facilities.

Gich made himself popular with the football clubs in May 1975, by finally lifting the ban on foreign players. By 1975, the former Barça secretary seemed to have got the measure of the Delegado Nacional post,

32. Revealed by the author's interviews with staff of the Consejo Superior de Deportes, formerly of the DND, in March and April 1986, and with Benito Castejón.

and was earning the respect of the majority of sportsmen and journalists for his conscientious hard work. In July of that year, however, José Solís made a surprise return to the post of Minister-Secretary of the Movimiento, and immediately tried to bring back his friend Samaranch to head the DND. Samaranch, though, had ambitions within the International Olympic Committee, and so the position went to the promising young technocrat Tomás Pelayo Ros.

Pelayo Ros was as little of a sportsman as Moscardó and Elola Olaso before him, and as such was continually criticised by the ever bolder and more independent sporting Press, particularly by the new radical weekly Don Balón.³³ In the wake of the complete Spanish failure at the Montreal Olympic Games, Pelayo Ros was, as expected, dismissed as Delegado Nacional in September 1976.

By this time the post-Franco transition to democracy had begun, and both the Movimiento and the DND were on the point of being dissolved. It is perhaps ironic, therefore, that after so many years of being the sinecure of ageing war heroes and ambitious Falangists, the post of Delegado Nacional was finally offered to a keen sportsman and efficient administrator in the shape of Benito Castejón. He was already a respected man in Spanish sports as a result of having efficiently served as Samaranch's assistant from 1966 to 1970.

Although not a member of the party, Castejón was politically close

33. See, for example, Don Balón, (Barcelona) No. 27, 6 April 1976.

to the UCD of Adolfo Suárez, and as such was seen by the new centrist political leadership as the ideal man to preside over the transformation and democratization of Spanish sport. As shall be seen in greater detail in the Epilogue to this thesis, Castejón was to remain in his office in the Calle Martín Fierro until the socialist general election victory of October 1982, first as head of the provisional Dirección General de Deportes, and afterwards of the permanent Consejo Superior de Deportes.

In conclusion, it must be stated that the DND failed in practically everything that it attempted to achieve. It failed to transform the Spaniards into a nation of sportsmen, largely because it failed to construct the much-needed public sports facilities. The DND also failed to obtain much glory for Francoist Spain in the international sports competitions. Furthermore, the DND failed to gain the respect of the general public, of sportsmen, and of the Press, once the latter had become courageous enough to express itself freely.

The two major reasons for the general failure of the DND have been best expressed by Castejón.

"The biggest cause of the lack of effectiveness of the DND was the extremely low level of State investment in sport, the lowest level in post-war Europe except for Portugal, Greece and the Irish Republic. This meant that practically the only money the DND had to invest in the sporting infrastructure was its share of the football pools revenue. The second major reason for this failure, in my opinion, is that most of the Delegados Nacionales, and indeed most of the Falangist DND staff, were in the job because of their political beliefs or personal connections, rather than because of any passion for or understanding of sport. I remember how shocked

and disappointed I was, upon arriving at the DND as Samaranch's assistant in 1966, at the lack of commitment, enthusiasm, imagination, efficiency and understanding that I found there."³⁴

There was not a huge difference between the general character of the DND and the RFEF during the Franco years. By all accounts, the RFEF was also led and staffed by unenthusiastic Falangists.³⁵ Furthermore, the RFEF, like the DND, failed in its two major objectives: to administer domestic football efficiently; to create a national team that would earn international prestige and glory for Francoist Spain.

Compared to the other European football federations, the RFEF has little independence and few functions to perform during the Franco period, being sandwiched between the domineering DND and the busy regional federations, which administered the juvenile and amateur game. The RFEF only had to organize the national league, the Copa del Generalísimo, as the national cup tournament was known from 1939 onwards, and the national team. Nevertheless, as shall be seen on many occasions in the course of this thesis, these few functions created a whole host of problems for the RFEF.

As stated above, it was the clubs who founded the RFEF in 1902 and dominated it without governmental interest or interference until the Civil War. From 1939 onwards, however, the clubs were forced to accept

34. Author's interview with Benito Castejón.

35. This is the view of Benito Castejón, Pablo Porta, and of the majority of veteran sports journalists and football club officials who were well acquainted with the RFEF staff during the Franco years, expressed in interview to the author.

the new sporting order imposed by the DND and General Moscardó, and, as shall be seen in detail in Chapter Four, almost completely lost their power and influence within the RFEF. It was not until the final year of Francoism that the clubs began to regain part of this power and influence, after having suffered thirty years in the shadow of the DND.

DND domination of the RFEF reached its height during the iron reign of General Moscardó, from 1941 to 1956. As shall be seen below in detail, the war hero hired and fired the RFEF Presidents, Vice-Presidents and directors at will, regularly demonstrating his lack of patience with men who were not sufficiently zealous in applying Fascist symbolism to the game, or men who were unable to make the national team an unstoppable force in world football. Furthermore, Moscardó occasionally used his vast powers to the full extent and actually vetoed the decisions of the RFEF executive committee. In May 1950, for example, he vetoed the committee's plans for a four-day training camp at El Escorial for the national team about to fly to Brazil for the World Cup tournament, insisting upon a nine-day camp with a strict disciplinary regime.³⁶

The series of short-lived RFEF Presidents began with the retired army colonel and Civil War hero Julio Troncoso Sagredo in 1939. Under his leadership, the right-arm Fascist salute and the singing of the Falangist anthem Cara al sol were made compulsory at every football

36. Revealed by examination of the archives of the RFEF, in particular Circular No. 6 of May 1950.

match, at every level.³⁷

Troncoso Sagredo died in April 1940, and was replaced as RFEF President by Luis Saura del Pan, a good Falangist and the first of six Presidents connected with the Real Madrid club, where he had served as a director from 1930-1936. Like Troncoso Sagredo before him, however, Saura del Pan died after only one year in office.

The next President was Javier Barroso, another Civil War army hero, connected this time to Atlético de Madrid. Barroso owed his ascendancy in large part to the influence of his brother Antonio, a powerful army general who would serve as Army Minister from 1957 to 1961. Moscardó fired Barroso from the presidency in June 1946, when the blue-shirted national team surprisingly lost in Madrid to the Irish Republic, one of the few countries as shall be seen in Chapter Seven, prepared to play against Francoist Spain.

Moscardó replaced Barroso with the Falangist Jesús Rivero Meneses, the former DND National Inspector, and another ex-Real Madrid director. The brief reign of Rivero Meneses ended in March 1947, after humiliatingly heavy defeats for the national team against both Portugal and the Irish Republic. Moscardó, however, was not content simply with the head of Rivero Meneses. He also dismissed one of the RFEF Vice-Presidents, the treasurer and four directors, so frustrated was he with the continual failings of the national team.

37. Information from the archives of the RFEF, in particular Circular No. 3 of August 1939.

Rivero Meneses' successor was Armando Muñoz Calero, a Falangist doctor who had served with the "Blue Division" fighting against the Soviets. He proved to be the most effective President since the Civil War, organizing the successful Spanish 1950 World Cup campaign, during which he increased his popularity within Francoist circles by sending the famous "Caudillo, we have beaten perfidious Albion" telegram to Franco minutes after the decisive victory over England. Had he wished, Muñoz Calero could have remained in the presidency for many more years, but in July 1950 he stood down in order to serve as the Spanish representative on the executive committee of the world football governing body FIFA, and in order to devote more time to his medical practice.

The next RFEF President was the Falangist Manuel Valdés Larrañaga, whose lack of commitment to the game was demonstrated in 1952, when he accepted the post of ambassador in Venezuela. He was succeeded by fellow Falangist Sancho Dávila Fernández, who was ousted by a disgusted Moscardó in 1954 after the humiliating World Cup exit at the hands of minnows Turkey. A third obedient and unimaginative Falangist to spend two years as RFEF President was Juan Touzón Jurjo, Moscardó's eighth man for the job in fifteen years.

Touzón Jurjo was dismissed in 1956 when Elola Olaso assumed the leadership of the DND and installed his own man, his "Old Shirt" Falangist friend Alfonso de la Fuente Chaos. He was the fourth successive Falangist RFEF President, and the sixth one since 1939, the other two having been former army officers. These Falangists and retired Civil War heroes knew practically nothing about football, and

consequently failed to organize the national team and the domestic competitions efficiently. Neither were these dull men respected by the football clubs, who had become acutely frustrated at their lack of influence within the RFEF.³⁸ All that the clubs could do, as shall be seen in Chapter Four, was make recommendations to the RFEF executive committee at the annual assembly in July. These recommendations, however, could be and frequently were rejected by the Delegado Nacional.³⁹

Elola Olaso apparently realized the frustration of the clubs, and thus decided to change tactics in 1960. His nominee for the RFEF presidency was neither a Falangist nor an ex-army officer, but rather the Real Madrid director Benito Pico Martínez, whom Elola Olaso hoped would reestablish the confidence of the clubs in both the RFEF and the DND.

This change of tactics, however, proved to be something of a failure because of Pico Martínez' uninspiring style of leadership and the continual failures of the national team. As shall be seen in detail in Chapter Four, the club most hostile in its opposition to Pico Martínez was, ironically, Real Madrid.

38. This frustration was expressed to the author by Raimundo Saporta, the Vice-President of Real Madrid, by Agustí Montal, former President of FC Barcelona, and by Julio de Miguel, former President of Valencia CF.

39. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND. In July 1954, for example, the RFEF annual assembly recommended that a full-time, professional national team manager be appointed, but this proposal was rejected by the Delegado Nacional Moscardó. For further details, see Marca, 9-10 July 1954.

The new Delegado Nacional Samaranch appointed his own man to the RFEF Presidency in 1967, but continued with Elola Olaso's tactic of installing a director from one of the big football clubs. Samaranch's choice was José Luis Costa, another Falangist doctor who was on the Atlético de Madrid board. Costa proved to be just as ineffective and unpopular as all of the Presidents before him. During his reign, the national team hit an all-time low when it was eliminated from the 1970 World Cup qualifying competition by tiny[?] Finland. The clubs angrily demanded Costa's resignation, but their lack of power and influence was still such that he remained in power until the fall of his overlord Samaranch in September 1970.

The football clubs were gradually reasserting their influence within the RFEF, and instead of weekly accepting the decisions of the Delegado Nacional and his appointed President, they were becoming highly critical of the entire Francoist sporting hierarchy. The criticisms of the clubs were partly inspired by a new generation of dynamic and critical sports journalists, led by the previously mentioned Julián García Candau, José María García and Alex J. Botines.

The next RFEF President to have to work in this increasingly critical ambience was José Luis Pérez Payá, on paper a good choice by Delegado Nacional Juan Gich. Pérez Payá, as shall be seen in Chapter Two, had been a Falangist footballer or playing for both of the Madrid clubs, before devoting himself to his law practice. He annoyed the clubs with his vacillation over the two major football problems of the day: the scandal of the South American players entering with false documents in a bid to traverse the ban on foreign players; and the

difficult question, as shall be seen in Chapter Five, of affiliation to the social security system for the players. Pérez Payá had little capacity to solve either problem, being, in his own words, "sandwiched between the critical, demanding clubs on one side, and the intrasigent, uncomprehending DND on the other".⁴⁰ Furthermore, the national team failed to yield better results, being unable to qualify for the 1974 World Cup. Given these problems and the subsequent criticisms, it is rather surprising that Pérez Payá managed to remain in the presidency until being replaced by Pablo Porta in May 1975.

Earlier in this Introduction, the irony of Benito Castejón, probably the most effective and certainly the most popular Delegado Nacional during the whole of the Franco dictatorship, being appointed right at the end of that institution's existence was commented upon. The appointment of Porta should be seen in the same light, being largely regarded as the most effective RFEF President since the Civil War.⁴¹ Like most of his predecessors, he had a Falangist past, having been a young blue volunteer in the Civil War, and then serving as the Falangist head of Catalan university sports from 1944 to 1947. He then dedicated himself to his business interests, later working as the secretary of the Español club, the footballing haven for Francoists in Barcelona, during the period 1958-1962. In 1962, Porta was appointed to the executive committee of the RFEF by Elola Olaso, and two years later to the presidency of the Catalan regional federation. Porta himself claimed

40. Author's interview with José Luis Pérez Payá.

41. This is the view of the majority of the author's interviews, for example Benito Castejón, José Luis Pérez Payá, Raimundo Saporta and Agustí Montal.

that he was offered the RFEF Presidency by Samaranch in 1976 and then by Gich in 1970, but turned down both offers because he realized that it was an extremely difficult post that would leave him with no time for his business interests.⁴²

Porta finally accepted the presidency in May 1975, having been very critical of Pérez Payá's leadership. As shall be seen in the Epilogue, Porta was so popular a President that he was re-elected three times by the democratic system that he himself had designed, and only retired in 1984 because of a controversial Socialist government decree that prevented any sports federation President from remaining in office for more than three terms.

The internal workings of the RFEF will be examined in detail in Chapter Four. Suffice it to say at this point, in conclusion, that the RFEF during the Franco years was a largely ineffective institution, chiefly as a result of being dominated by the equally unpopular and ineffective DND. The power and influence of the football clubs was strictly limited, which caused them to be increasingly critical of both the DND and the RFEF. The RFEF Presidents and directors were, in general, inept and uninspiring men, chosen by the various Delegados Nacionales for their political record, connections with the Madrid clubs, and docile and obedient personalities rather than for any knowledge of football or qualities of leadership.

42. Author's interview with Pablo Porta.

These leaders obviously prejudiced the international performances of the Spanish national team, and rarely managed to organize the domestic competitions efficiently.

Of the 73 leagues and cups disputed during the Franco years, 60 of them were won by one of Spain's giant four football clubs, Real Madrid, FC Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Atlético de Madrid. The "Big Four", therefore, won 80% of the trophies contested, or, expressed in another way, their monopoly of success was broken by a smaller club only once every five years.

Although the "Big Four" clubs will feature heavily in the chapters that follow, it seems appropriate at this point to offer a brief illustration of the political character of each one during the Franco years.

In particular, a special study of the political significance of the Real Madrid club should be made here. Indeed, an entire monographic study would be required to explain fully the political role played by that club during the Franco period. The objective of the following section is to offer a brief resume of the reasons for considering Real, on the one hand, to be the "proud and conscious team of the regime",⁴³ or, on the other hand, the "defenceless victim of Francoist exploitation and manipulation".⁴⁴

43. Author's interview with Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

44. Author's interview with José María Lorente.

This is a debate that has been held in thousands of Spanish bars and dinner tables, and the central figure is always Santiago Bernabeu, the domineering figure who presided over the fortunes of Real for a remarkable thirty-five years, from 1943 until his death in 1978. According to the great majority of Real Madrid supporters and a good number of sports journalists,⁴⁵ Bernabeu was a charismatic leader whose success had nothing to do with the Franco regime, but rather everything to do with his own commitment and imagination. According to many supporters of other clubs and critical sports journalists such as Manuel Vázquez Montalbán,⁴⁶ Julián García Candau⁴⁷ and Alex J. Botines,⁴⁸ however, Bernabeu was an obvious Francoist who clearly took advantage of the favours lent to the club by the regime, which helped Real to achieve their five politically significant European Cup victories.

The arguments against Bernabeu and Real may be reduced to the following five accusations: firstly, that Bernabeu was a Francoist who attempted to emulate Franco in his leadership of the club; secondly, that the great majority of the Real members and supporters were also Francoists; thirdly, that the club cultivated and was proud of the support of the Franco himself and most of his ministers; fourthly, that Real, because of this official support, dominated the RFEF and thus benefited from partial referees; fifthly, that the club consciously

45. This is the view of the majority of veteran Madrid sports journalists, for example José María Lorente, Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo" of Marca, and Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera", as well as of most of the veteran Real Madrid supporters interviewed by the author.

46. Author's interview with Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

47. Author's interview with Julián García Candau.

48. Author's interview with Alex J. Botines.

allowed itself to be used by the Franco regime in order to improve both the general overseas image and the concrete diplomatic position of Francoist Spain.

With regard to the first charge, a brief study of the personal history of Bernabeu is enough to confirm his support for Franco. The son of a provincial lawyer, he studied Law himself in Madrid. His time in the capital, however, was mostly taken up by playing centre-forward for Real Madrid in the period 1912- 1927, and afterwards as trainer, secretary and director at the club. His administrative post at the Ministry of Finance and the 700 hectares farm which he inherited from his father made him a man of independent means. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, he took refuge with several Real friends in the French embassy for two years. In 1938, Bernabeu managed to escape from Madrid and enlist as a Lieutenant in the Nationalist army. He then took part in the conquest of Cuenca under the command of Camilo Alonso Vega, and afterwards in the invasion of Catalonia with General Agustín Muñoz Grandes. After the conflict, he returned to Madrid and the boardroom of Real, beginning his long presidency in September 1943. This personal history is sufficient to confirm Bernabeu's political sympathies. Furthermore, he made a number of politically revealing statements over the years, for example:

"I am not political. In the war I was a volunteer against Communism, and I would be again now, in spite of my age."⁴⁹

Bernabeu also followed the Francoist line in expressing contempt for the

49. Quoted in García Candau, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

regionalist movements. In July 1968, he provoked a bitter controversy by declaring to Murcia Deportiva:

"Those who say that I don't like Catalonia are not correct. I love her and admire her, in spite of the Catalans."⁵⁰

Given all of the above, there can be little doubt about the political sympathies of Bernabeu. The answer to the question of whether he actually attempted to emulate Franco, however, is far less clear cut.

According to Julián García Candau:

"Bernabeu wanted to emulate Franco in many things ... In postwar Spain, from the stadium of the six European Cups, he had as much power as any minister, and tried to impose Francoist ^{values} in the world of sport."⁵¹

Francisco Cercedo likened Bernabeu's style of leadership to that of Franco in the following way:

"Bernabeu has managed to make his leadership unquestionable, and that every discomformity with his management be identified as an attack on the most profound essences of the club."⁵²

This particular debate has far more to do with style than deeds. It can be argued, as have done both García Candau and Cerecedo, that Bernabeu was as sensitive to attacks on his leadership as was the dictator, and that Bernabeu, in the same way as Franco, identified himself intimately with the interest of the club, and attempted to make every attack on his leadership appear as a malevolent attack on the club itself. In March 1974, for example, he reacted angrily to critics of his dismissal of long-serving coach Miguel Muñoz, calling them "badly-intentioned people who don't have the best interest of the club at heart."⁵³ When the debate turns its attention to the deeds, however, the arguments of

50. Murcia Deportiva, (Murcia) No. 416, 27 July 1986.

51. García Candau, op. cit., p. 92.

52. Cerecedo, op. cit., Posible, No. 3, 15 December 1974.

53. Quoted in Marca, 17 March 1974.

García Candau and Cerecedo lose strength. The only concrete measure which Bernabeu can be said to have taken in order to safeguard his continued rule was the creation, in 1954, of the Real Madrid "Commission of Social Discipline". This Commission was established to discipline misbehaving members, to suspend from membership, for example, supporters who threw missiles or who jeered at their own team ^{when} they were losing. Bernabeu himself was not a member of this Commission, and a similar sub-committee existed at practically every other club. It is possible that this Commission ^{disciplined} some of Bernabeu's opponents within the club, but to suggest that the Commission was a repressive instrument designed to stifle opposition is to make an exaggerated suggestion for which there is no evidence. Bernabeu and Franco were compared for three main reasons: firstly, because their ages and years of power roughly coincided; secondly, because they both had loyal right-hand men in Raimundo Saporta and Luis Carrero Blanco, both of whom were expected to succeed their masters, but who, for completely different reasons, eventually did not do so; thirdly, as already seen, Bernabeu had fought for the Nationalists in the civil war, and was clearly a supporter of Franco. Bernabeu certainly did not need, however, to resort to the methods of Franco in order to maintain power at Real Madrid for so many years.

With regard to the claim that the great majority of Real supporters were also Francoists,⁵⁴ it is extremely difficult to offer

54. This claim has been made to the author in interviews with, for example, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Alex J. Botines, Julián García Candau, the former FC Barcelona player Carlos Rexach, the former Athletic de Bilbao players and coaches Iñaki Sáez, José Angel Iríbar and Javier Clemente.

any concrete evidence either against or in support. Since before the Civil War Real was generally regarded as the right-wing monarchist football club in the capital, and Atlético the republican and slightly socialist club.⁵⁵ During the Franco period, the majority of Real followers appear to have been favourable towards Franco, which the socialist and republicans who survived the Civil War seemed to lend football support towards Atlético.⁵⁶

This claim, however, cannot be supported by any statistical evidence. It could be pointed out that Franco was always received with cheers and applause on his visits to the Estadio Bernabeu, but the same would perhaps have happened had he chosen to visit any other stadium, except those of FC Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián. Another complicating factor is that Real have always had a policy of providing very cheap tickets for the working classes, far cheaper than for Atlético or Barça home matches. It would have been impossible for a visitor to the Bernabeu during the Franco years not to notice the immense lower class support for the club, although this support in itself obviously does not signify anything about the political sympathies of the Real followers. The official response from Real on this matter is predictably non-committal. As pointed out by current President Ramón Mendoza:

"Amongst our supporters, directors and members, there have been and are individuals of the most varied political persuasion.

55. García Candau, op. cit., p. 50.

56. This view is shared by many Madrid sports journalists, as well as Javier Castedo, the former Atlético Madrid Vice-President, and the former Atlético players Enrique Collar and Luis Aragonés.

Supporting Real Madrid does not mean that you have to be politically left, right or centre."⁵⁷

The third claim against the club is that it encouraged and was proud of the personal support of Franco and most of his ministers.⁵⁸ Neither side in this debate attempts to deny the high level of regime support for Real. The club archives revealed that all of the following ministers of Franco were fully paid-up Real members: Manuel Fraga, Fernando María Castiella, José Solís Ruiz, Gregorio López Bravo, Tomás Garicano Goñi and Juan José Rosón.⁵⁹ All of these regime men regularly attended matches at the Bernabeu, and made^{use} of the club's impressive Ciudad Deportiva sports facilities. In addition, the military leaders ^{Carrero} Luis Blanco, Camilo Alonso Vega and José Millán Astray were all committed Real supporters, and were frequently seen alongside the above-mentioned ministers in the VIP box at the Bernabeu. Given all of the above, it would be easier to list the regime personalities who were not Real supporters.

With regard to the dictator himself, the popular view^{was} that he was also a Real supporter. He only attended important international matches and the annual final of his own cup, always held in the Estadio Bernabeu. It is popularly held, however, that he always followed the

57. Quoted in As, 27 November 1985.

58. This claim has been made to the author in interviews with, for example Julián García Candau, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Alex J. Botines, José Ángel Iríbar, Javier Clemente, Agusti Montal, and the current FC Barcelona Vice-President Nicolau Casaus.

59. Revealed by an examination of the archives of Real Madrid.

fortunes of Real on television.⁶⁰ There can be little doubt, therefore, that Franco and his ministers were Real followers. The important question, however, is if the club was proud of and encouraged this regime support.

The answer to this question appears to be affirmative in both aspects.

The club encouraged this support by sending official invitation letters, personally signed by Bernabeu, to the ministers in question, and then informally inviting them to return whenever they wanted.⁶¹ It is difficult to imagine how much more encouragement the club could have offered. With regard to the question of pride, the official Boletín of Real Madrid reveals the satisfaction produced at the club by the many ministerial visits, offering photographs and quotations from the contented visitors about the splendid hospitality received. This pride was most clearly reflected in November 1959, when the Boletín included the following editorial in response to some fulsome remarks about the club from Foreign Minister Fernando María Castiella:

"Now, when the works of a minister of Spain point out quite clearly the national importance of the sporting mission of Real Madrid, judging it as a great event in the everyday life and hopes of the Spanish people, we believe that we are able to feel proud of everything that we have achieved up to the present."⁶²

Real Madrid also felt very proud when the various regime ministries presented the club with all manner of awards and decorations. The full list of these honours was always prominently placed in any of the

60. See, for example, García Candau, op. cit., p. 50.

61. Revealed by examination of the archives of Real Madrid, [op. cit.]

62. Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 112, November 1959.

official club histories, for examples 75 Años del Real Madrid.⁶³

In spite of all this, however, it is still possible to present a convincing argument to the effect that there was absolutely nothing that the club could do about this regime support. Furthermore, there were unpleasant incidents between Bernabeu and the Civil War hero General José Millán Astray, and afterwards with the Minister ^{of} for Agriculture Rafael Cavestany. In March 1955, Bernabeu expelled Millán Astray for creating a scandal with his kissing of the wife of a prominent diplomat. The Civil War hero reacted angrily to the expulsion, challenging Bernabeu to a pistol duel. The matter was finally resolved by Bernabeu's former commander General Muñoz Grandes, who pulled rank on Millán Astray and ordered him not to return to the stadium. It was also Muñoz Grandes, who, four years later, upbraided Rafael Cavestany in the Council of Ministers, when the latter complained that Bernabeu had refused to offer him the seat of honour in the VIPS box. Muñoz Grandes reminded the Falangist Minister for Agriculture that the stadium belonged to Real Madrid rather than to the Spanish State, and that Bernabeu should only give up the seat of honour to Franco himself.

These two incidents, however, serve only to prove that Bernabeu did not have to bow down to less important representatives of the Franco regime who visited the Real Madrid stadium. Indeed, these incidents could be interpreted as evidence of Bernabeu's privileged position within the regime.

63. 75 Años del Real Madrid, Madrid, 1977, p. 14.

With regard to the fourth allegation against Real Madrid, that it dominated the RFEF and therefore benefited from partisan preference, it should first be pointed out that, as seen earlier in this Introduction, no less than six of the twelve RFEF Presidents during the Franco years were connected with the club to some extent. In addition, the RFEF secretary from 1949 to 1979, Andrés Ramírez, was a paid-up Real member, Real Vice-President Gregorio Paunero served as RFEF Vice President from 1963 to 1977, and the club always had another representative besides Paunero on the executive committee of the RFEF. Given this numerical superiority of Real representatives and the lack of democracy within the RFEF, it is not surprising that the club was regarded as being highly influential. This opinion has been expressed most unequivocally in the Barcelona sports newspapers, in the FC Barcelona club magazine Barça and in several Basque and other regional newspapers.⁶⁴ Indeed, several campaigns have been launched by the Catalan newspapers in an attempt to uncover hard evidence of Real's domination of the RFEF, the most controversial one being that organized by Dicen in the autumn of 1977.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, none of these campaigns has turned up any substantial proof of unfair practices.

The biggest source of controversy concerning Real Madrid and the RFEF during the Franco years was, without doubt, the referees. It has

64. See, for example Barça No. 760, 9 June 1970, El Mundo Deportivo, 14 November 1973; Barça No. 1006, 24 February 1975; Dicen, 21 February 1977; Sport, 30 April 1979; El Mundo Deportivo, 4 October 1979; La Gaceta del Norte, 10 January 1981; Dicen, 23 April 1981; El Heraldo de Aragón (Zaragoza), 2 December 1982.

65. See Dicen, from 27 September-24 October 1977.

always been alleged in Catalonia, the Basque Country and the other regions, that Real systematically benefited from partisan refereeing of their matches, and that this partisanship substantially contributed towards the club winning so many leagues and cups.⁶⁶ Real Madrid and the sporting press of the capital have consistently ridiculed these allegations, claiming that they were based on envy and frustration rather than on concrete evidence.⁶⁷

Examination of the archives of the RFEF, the DND, and the major football clubs reveals that there is indeed no evidence to support these allegations against Real Madrid.⁶⁸ Some referees, for example Emilio Gureceta and Juan Ortiz de Mendivil, appear to have favoured Real in crucial matches, others, however, appear to have favoured another of the big clubs, occasionally at the expense of Real. In June 1968, for example, the partiality of Antonio Rigo towards FC Barcelona in the cup final provoked a shower of missiles from the Real supporters and a strong protest from Bernabeu.

It appears that certain ambitious referees decided deliberately to favour one of the big clubs in particular, with the objectives of being placed on the UEFA and FIFA lists, and thus handling lucrative European

66. See for example: Dicen 27 September-24 October 1977, El Mundo Deportivo, 4 October 1979; La Gaceta del Norte, 10 January 1981. This claim has also been made to the author in interviews with, for example, Alex J. Botines Nicolau Casaus, José Angel Iríbar, and Javier Clemente.

67. See, for example; Marca, 15 June 1977, 23 October 1978 and 17 May 1981; As, 11 September 1978 and 24 October 1978. This view is also shared by Raimundo Saporta.

68. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND, the RFEF, Real Madrid, Atlético de Madrid, FC Barcelona, and Athletic de Bilbao.

and international matches. A strong recommendation that a certain referee be placed on these lists from one of the big clubs was often sufficient. It was not in the interests of an ambitious referee, however, to upset another of the "Big Four" clubs. The RFEF has always operated a bizarre and unique recusación system, whereby every club can name one referee per season whom it does not want to have handling its matches. To be blacklisted by one of the "Big Four" clubs always meant the end of a referee's international ambitions, and therefore many referees appeared to favour one of the big clubs in particular, but without offending the others. This was obviously done at the expense of the smaller clubs, because to be blacklisted, for example, by Murcia or Valladolid was not a serious obstacle in the path of an ambitious referee. Thus whilst the "Big Four" vociferously complained whenever they believed themselves to be the victim of partiality, the modest clubs were largely forced to suffer in silence.

The only irrefutable fact about the whole issue is that Spanish referees have been generally very poor by European standards, and this continues to be the case. This explains why so few of them have risen up high on the UEFA and FIFA list.

Another area in which it is alleged that Real Madrid benefited from their influence within the RFEF was the venue of the cup finals. From 1947 onwards, these finals were always played at the Estadio Bernabeu, even on the six occasions when Real was one of the finalists, thus converting the occasion into an effective home match.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that these cup finals were played

in the Bernabeu not because Real dominated the RFEF, but because the RFEF was dominated by the completely centralist Franco regime, in the shape of the DND and the Movimiento.⁶⁹ The DND ruled, in March 1941, that the final of every sporting competition should be held in Madrid.⁷⁰ The Estadio Bernabeu was chosen as the venue because it was the largest stadium in the capital city, the same as Wembley Stadium in London or Parc des Princes in Paris. Indeed, it could even be argued that this centralism actually worked against Real, because the opposing teams in the six finals were spurred on by a sense of injustice and so played especially hard, with the result that Real were surprisingly defeated in front of their own supporters on no less than four occasions. Furthermore, on the two occasions when Real did win the cup final in the Bernabeu, the merit of victory was partially stripped by the general opinion that their triumph was inevitable and unjust.⁷¹

It is very difficult to conclude, therefore, that Real Madrid benefited greatly from the alleged partiality of the referees and from the Bernabeu being the venue of the cup finals. Indeed, the Madrid club's domination of the RFEF was more apparent than real. Six of the RFEF Presidents during the Franco years were connected with the club, but this does not appear to have been an important factor in Real's many domestic successes. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that, as already pointed out in this Introduction, the influence of the

69. This view is shared by Raimundo Saporta, Benito Castejón, José Luis Pérez Payá, and Pablo Porta.

70. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND.

71. This opinion was cautiously expressed, for example, by El Mundo Deportivo, 25 June 1962, and by Dicen, 19 June 1975.

clubs as a whole within the RFEF was minimal during the Franco years, and also that Santiago Bernabeu was twice so exasperated by the actions of the RFEF that Real actually boycotted its annual assemblies and executive committee meetings. The first such unprecedented boycott occurred as a protest against the presidency of the former Real director Benito Rico Martínez, and lasted from 1963 to 1966. The second boycott was directed against the unpopular José Luis Pérez Payá, another RFEF President with Real Madrid connections, and ran from 1970 to 1974.

The fifth and final claim against Real Madrid is that it deliberately allowed its many international successes to be exploited by the Foreign Ministry, in order to improve both the poor general overseas image and concrete diplomatic position of Francoist Spain.⁷² The way in which the overseas victories of the club helped the Franco regime has best been summed up by Alex J. Botines:

"Real Madrid has been, for years, the club that has best served the regime. Real Madrid has paraded across the whole continent the importance of a country which has a forced evaluation with regard to everything European. Our sub-development found in Real Madrid an exception which allowed Spaniards to go abroad "with head held high"⁷³

Neither supporters nor critics of the club have attempted to deny the validity of this assertion. The questions of how and to what extent Real Madrid served as an ambassador for the Franco regime, however, will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Seven rather than here. What is in debate here, in this brief discussion of the general political

72. This claim has been made to the author in interviews with, for example, Miguel Vidal of As, Julián García Candau, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Nicolau Casaus, José Angel Iríbar, and Javier Clemente.

73. Botines, op. cit., p. 71.

significance of Real Madrid, is whether the club was conscious, even proud, of helping the regime in this way.

The key figure in this debate is Raimundo Saporta, the Real Vice-President who, according to Julián García Candau, used regularly to receive detailed instructions from his close friend and Real member Fernando María Castiella, Franco's Foreign Minister from 1957 to 1969, about how the club could help improve the image of the country when travelling abroad.⁷⁴ Saporta has not attempted to deny the existence of these instructions, but does not accept that the club was systematically manipulated by the Franco regime.

"It is true that Castiella used to advise me before certain trips abroad, but only about strict matters of protocol, for example how to address particular Heads of State. It is ridiculous to suggest that Real Madrid was the ambassador of the Franco regime. As Castiella himself said, we were the ambassadors for Spain as a whole, and obviously proud of being so. But no strict political interpretation can be placed on this. Real Madrid improved the overseas image of Spain by winning the European Cup six times with attractive attacking football, causing queues for tickets wherever we played. If Spain at the time had a government of the Centre or the Left, then they would have basked in the reflected glory of our triumphs in the same way as the Franco government did. This is what every government of whatever kind does when its sportsmen are successful. Whatever the case, I can certainly assure you that Real Madrid would have behaved exactly the same abroad whatever government Spain had in the 1950s and 1960s."⁷⁴

Saporta's arguments can be said to raise more questions than they resolve. Even if it were true that Real was proud of being an ambassador for Spain in general rather than for the Franco regime in particular, in itself a debateable claim as shall shortly be seen, for

74. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta,

the Europe of the 1950s and 1960s, Spain largely signified Franco. In the case of a sporting team helping to improve the overseas image of a generally ostracized country, the institution which will obviously benefit the most from this improvement is the government of that particular country. There is enough evidence, however, to suggest that Real Madrid was conscious and proud of being an ambassador for both the country and the regime. The club Boletín proudly reproduced the many letters received from the Foreign Ministry and other institutions of the Franco regime, congratulating Real on its splendid ambassadorial work.⁷⁵ Furthermore, Santiago Bernabeu often spoke about the subject, for example in December 1960, when he responded in the following way to a laudatory speech from the Delegado Nacional Elola Olaso, during one of his many visits to see Franco at his El Pardo residence:

"Your Excellency: the pleasing words of our Delegado Nacional de Deportes fill us with satisfaction, because, although humble, our club has, as indeed we all have, a deep-rooted love and duty for our country, and the idea of looking for and findings, with whatever pretext, something that is useful for the glory and prestige of Spain, is profoundly etched into our awareness."⁷⁶

Bernabeu was for more explicit eight years later, in an interview with Pedro Rodríguez of Arriba, expressing the pride caused in him by the praise heaped upon Real Madrid by Franco's Foreign Minister.

"Do you know, Rodríguez, who is the Foreign Minister?...Yes, Castiella. Have you read what he has said about Real Madrid? Here is the cutting. Señor Castiella says: "Real Madrid is a complete sporting style. Its players are authentic ambassadors of sportsmanship." These are the things that give us strength."⁷⁷

75. See, for example, Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 28, October 1953, and No. 132, May 1961.

76. Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 128, January 1961.

77. Quoted in Arriba, 26 December 1968.

It could be argued that this is sufficient proof of the fact that Real was proud of serving as an effective ambassador both for Spain and the Franco regime. It remains to be seen in detail in Chapter Seven how and to what extent the club served as, in the words of Foreign Minister Castiella, "the best embassy that we have sent abroad."⁷⁸

It is appropriate at this point to draw together the different conclusions arrived at in the light of the limited evidence presented in this Introduction about the political significance of Real Madrid during the Franco years. These conclusions are: that Bernabeu was an obvious Francoist, but he had no need to imitate the methods of the dictator in order to retain power; that the majority of Real supporters were probably also Francoists, although the definitive proof of this obviously does not exist; that Real was the club of Franco and of most of his ministers, and was proud of being so; that the club did not dominate the RFEF, and consequently did not benefit from the systematic partiality of the referees; that Real was a conscious and proud ambassador for both Spain and the Franco regime.

It is possible to terminate this brief introductory debate about Real Madrid with two contrasting opinions, a radical critique of the club's political significance, following by the official response from Real. This is the opinion of Francisco Cerecedo about the club during the Franco years:

"Even at the risk of flattery, it is necessary to do justice by affirming that Real Madrid has been the non-official institution

78. Quoted by Julián García Candau, "Cuarenta años del national-futbolismo, El País Semanal, 27 February 1977.

which has most identified itself with, and the most brilliant services has lent to, the regime. Not even its most convinced enemies could dispute this. Everybody can see the innumerable official awards, decorations and congratulations which have been bestowed upon the club over the years."⁷⁹

The Vice-President of the club, both during the Franco period and now, however, not surprisingly holds a different view:

"Real Madrid is and has been apolitical. It has always been so powerful because of being at the service of the vertebral column of the State. When it was founded in 1902, it respected Alfonso XIII, in 1931 the Republic, in 1939 the Generalísimo, and it now respects his majesty Don Juan Carlos. This is because it is a disciplined club, which obeys the institutions that leads the nation with loyalty."⁸⁰

It is not necessary to offer such an exhaustive study of FC Barcelona, the bitter rival of Real Madrid, because the political significance of the Catalan club during the Franco years will be examined in detail in Chapter Eight. It is only appropriate here to offer a brief introductory sketch of the general nature of Barça, considered to be the best supported and most economically powerful football club in the world."⁸¹ In spite of all the European cups and domestic trophies, Real Madrid has never had either as many supporters or much financial power as Barça, because the latter has served as the effective Catalan national football team, and as such is able to count on, to some extent or other, the support of practically all of that region's six million inhabitants.

79. From Cerecedo, *op. cit.*

80. Quoted in El País, 3 December 1978.

81. World Soccer, March 1984.

The struggle between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona has always been one of the central features of Spanish football. This struggle has been fought at three levels: firstly, as a purely sporting struggle between the country's two giant football clubs; secondly, as a regionalist struggle between the clubs representing Castille and Catalonia; thirdly, as political struggle, especially during the Franco years, as shall be seen in Chapter Eight, between a club generally considered to be right-wing and Francoist, and another with the image of being liberal and anti-Francoist. This struggle was astutely summed up by Alex J.

Botines:

"What is very clear in Spanish football is that the game is, in reality, a weekly political confrontation. Real Madrid represents something, and the Barcelona supporter knows it; Barça represents something else, and the Real Madrid supporter also knows it."⁸²

The enormous support and economic power of FC Barcelona, however, has never been translated into consistent success on the field. The club claims that this lack of success was due, during the Franco period, to the persecution and unfavorable treatment of all things Catalan.⁸³ Nevertheless, this is not the only reason that can be put forward. Until the 1960s, the Barça team was formed by a majority of Local Catalan players, supplemented by three or four stars from outside Catalonia or from abroad. In the early 1960s, however, this policy changed.

82. From Botines, op. cit., p. 71.

83. This claim was made to the author by Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus, and Carles Rexach.

In an attempt to emulate the success of Real Madrid with the most cosmopolitan team Spain had seen, Barça began to spend massively on importing foreigners and buying any Spanish player who demonstrated potential. These big names often brought with them scandal and controversy, but very few performed to better effect than the old Catalan stars. In consequence, Barça won the Spanish league championship on only one occasion during the 23-years period from 1961 to 1984. FC Barcelona gradually became known as the "great under-achiever of world football",⁸⁴ and this reputation was confirmed by their failure to beat modest Steaua Bucharest in the 1986 European Cup final in Seville.

It is paradoxical that although the Barça team has gradually lost its Catalan character, the club has gradually become one of the most politically and socially significant Catalan institutions. FC Barcelona was a dynamic centre of Catalan sentiment before the Civil War, especially during the agitation for the Autonomy Statute."⁸⁵ After the conflict; however, because of the repression of all things Catalan, the club acquired an absolutely crucial political and social significance. The matches in the Les Corts and afterwards Camp Nou stadia offered a regular opportunity for thousands of Catalans to congregate and speak in their officially forbidden mother tongue, sing outlawed traditional songs such as La Santa Espina and Els Segadors, channel their political frustration into a loathing of Real Madrid, and, from the late 1960s onwards, wave the illegal Catalan national flag the senyera. This social

84. World Soccer, March 1984.

85. Artells, op. cit.

and political significance of the club has been best summed up by the Barça supporter Manuel Vázquez Montalbán:

"Barça is the only legalized institution that unites the man in the street with the Catalonia that could have been and never was...This is as important an institution as the Monastery of Montserrat, the Omnium Cultural, the Institut d' Estudis Catalans or L'Orfeo Graçienç."⁸⁶

The directors, players and supporters of FC Barcelona have been frequent visitors to Montserrat, the celebrated Catalan religious centre. The abbot of the monastery, Dom Cassia Just, was a controversial figure because of his support for the famous December 1970 lock-in by leading Catalan artists and intellectuals at Montserrat. In November 1974, Just's welcoming speech to the visiting Barça party included both the common place about FC Barcelona being "more than just a football club", and also a reference to the crucial importance of the club in assimilating into Catalan society the thousands of immigrants from southern Spain:

"Barça is much more than a football club, although, naturally, the sporting results have a basic importance, and Montserrat represents and is much more than a monastery. One of the most positive values that I find in FC Barcelona is that it helps the people from afar, the immigrants who come from other parts, to integrate themselves into Catalonia. Barça is one of the most friendly and efficient ways of welcoming with open arms the thousands and thousands of immigrants, who, after a short while, are cheering for the same colours as the native supporters."⁸⁷

It was indeed a permanent source of frustration to the Español club, Barça's local rivals, that the great majority of immigrants from the South began to support FC Barcelona instead of themselves.⁸⁸

86. From Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., p.120.

87. Quoted in Barça, No. 922, 19 November 1974.

88. This frustration has been expressed to the author by Antonio Baro, the Español President since 1971, and several Español supporters.

The conclusion of Emilio Pérez de Rosas and Alfredo Relano writing in El País Semanal was that the character of the club during the Franco years should be best understood as the expression of the Catalan's phobia towards centralism:

"There has been a phobia towards centralism, the great phantom to the Catalan people, and which makes them look upon Español as a specter in their own house. It is a phobia which identified Real Madrid as another arm of the repression, as an instrument to reinforce the centralist image of the state. And it is a phobia which forgets that from 1939 until the arrival of Di Stefano (the Argentine star whose transfer provided a row with political undertones between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid) in 1953, that is to say during the years of the fiercest doctrinaire Francoism, Real Madrid did not win the league, but Barcelona often did."⁸⁹

It is frequently claimed that Athletic de Bilbao, the third of Spain's "Big Four" football clubs, was as potent a political symbol in the Basque Country during the Franco years as Barça was in Catalonia.⁹⁰ In spite of this claim, however, it would be difficult to find two more different clubs. Whilst FC Barcelona has always been profligate with its money, buying expensive players from abroad and from the other Spanish regions, since 1919 Bilbao has had a strict policy of only using local Basque players, the great majority proceeding from their famous youth training schemes. Whilst Barça has wanted to present the image of a rich cosmopolitan and internationally ambitious club, Bilbao has always been regarded as a homely and friendly club, not desperate for success, but rather sufficiently patient to wait for the youngsters to convert themselves into another formidable team.

89. El País Semanal, 12 October 1982.

90. This claim has been made to the author by: Iñaki Sáez, José Angel Iríbar, Javier Clemente, many Athletic de Bilbao supporters, and also by Howell Llewellyn in World Soccer, April 1982.

It is remarkable that a club which only uses local talent should have won as many trophies as has Athletic de Bilbao. The "Lions of the North", as they are popularly known, completely dominated Spanish football at the beginning of the century, in the 1930s until the Civil War, and again in the 1940s. Between then and the 1980s, when the glory days returned again, Bilbao were always placed high in the league and were frequent winners of the Copa del Generalísimo. The other Basque clubs, Real Sociedad de San Sebastián and Osasuna de Pamplona, have also followed a policy of local players only, but with only a tiny fraction of the success enjoyed by Bilbao.

The major reason for this success has been Bilbao's rapid and direct style of play, with a profusion of long, high centres, a style adopted both because of the huge British influence at the club and climatic conditions. As shall shortly be seen in Chapter Two, this style allegedly personified the mythical, politically significant "Spanish Fury".

With regard to the political importance of Athletic de Bilbao, the pre-Civil War support for the Autonomy Statute and the fund-raising Euzkadi team have already been discussed in this Introduction. After the conflict, the club served as a centre for Basque dissent against the centralist, repressive Franco regime in much the same way as did FC Barcelona in Catalonia. There was, nonetheless, one big difference. Beyond their respective regions, Bilbao has always been far more popular than Barça, as evidence by the Basque club having, in 1968, 293 local supporters clubs outside the Basque provinces, compared to FC Barcelona's 43 outside Catalonia.⁹¹ It has been alleged that the

existence of so many Bilbao supporters clubs during the Franco years had a partially political motive, because the club was seen as anti-Francoist symbol by disaffected workers across the whole of Spain.⁹²

The fourth of the "Big Four" clubs is Atlético de Madrid, founded in 1903 as a nursery club of Athletic de Bilbao. This original link between the two clubs explains the similarity in name and colours. The Bilbao connection, however, was definitely severed in 1922. In comparison to local rivals Real, Atlético has always had the reputation of having a large socialist and Republican element among its supporters.⁹³ There is indeed evidence to suggest that the great majority of Atlético supporters voted for the Popular Front coalition in the elections during the Second Republic.⁹⁴ It also seems that the socialists and Republicans who survived the Civil War and the subsequent purges maintained their footballing allegiance to the club, and encouraged their children to do the same, rather than being seduced by the glamour and success of Real.

91. Revealed by examination of the archives of Marca.

92. This claim was made to the author by José Angel Iribar, Javier Clemente, and Howell Llewellyn, op. cit. For an interesting account of the frenetic celebrations of one particular Athletic de Bilbao supporters club, that of the village of Pulpí in Almería province, in Evaristo Acevedo, Carta a los celtíberos esposados, Madrid, 1969, pp. 117-118.

93. See, for example, García Candau, op. cit. This view has been expressed to the author by Miguel Vidal, Javier Castedo, Luis Aragonés, Enrique Collar, and by many Atlético de Madrid supporters.

94. By means of the detailed breakdown of Madrid election results offered by Javier Tusell Gómez in La segunda república en Madrid: elecciones y partidos políticos, Madrid, 1971, pp. 204-220, it can clearly be seen that the barrios in which the great majority of Atlético supporters lived, namely Latina, Inclusa and Hospital, were very fertile ground for the Popular Front coalition.

Many Atlético directors, however, were closely linked to the Franco regime. The Atlético President from 1956 to 1963 was Javier Barroso, former RFEF President and brother of the Minister of War. His successor was the self-made millionaire hotel builder Vicente Calderón, decorated many times by Franco himself and a declared regime supporter. Amongst the men who have served on the Atlético board of directors have been Armando Muñoz Calero, the former Falangist Jesús Suevos, the Minister for Health and Social Security.⁹⁵ This list of regime personalities at Atlético is a pale imitation of that of Real Madrid, but is sufficient in itself to demonstrate that the leadership of the club was clearly Francoist, even if there was an oppositional tendency amongst the supporters.

In addition to these personal links, Atlético was temporarily connected to the Franco regime in an institutional way. In October 1939, the club was taken over by the Spanish Air Force, after Real Madrid has preferred to maintain their independence, thus becoming Atlético Aviación. The advantages for the club were generous subsidy from the Minister of Air General Juan Yagüe, unlimited petrol and use of vehicles, and the right to choose from all of the players serving in the Air Force, with first option over those of the Spanish Army. Taking these benefits into account, it is not surprising that Atlético won the first two leagues contested after the Civil War. It is perhaps more surprising that the club did not win any further trophies before returning to its former independent state in April 1946.

95. Revealed by examination of the archives of Atlético de Madrid.

The plans of Vicente Calderón for a new Atlético stadium in the 1960s were delayed by the reticence of the Madrid City Council, under the chairmanship of future Prime Minister Carlos Arias Navarro, thus forcing the club to play their home matches in Real Madrid's Estadio Bernabeu during the season 1966-1967. In spite of having been Atlético Aviación and the Francoist club leadership, these stadium problems provided the unfounded suggestion that Atlético was being officially obstructed for not having been as useful to the Franco regime as Real.⁹⁶ The lack of foundation for this claim was demonstrated by the fact that Franco was pleased to accept, in September 1971, Atlético's invitation to open the new Estadio Vicente Calderón, and also that Real Madrid themselves had trouble, in the early 1970s, with their plans to build a new stadium in the northern suburbs of the city.

With regard to the political significance of Atlético de Madrid during the Franco period, it should be concluded that had the club enjoyed more success than its local rivals, then it would have become the "club of the regime" instead of Real, with far more ministers and military figures among its directors and supporters. Without doubt, this would have annoyed the anti-Francoist element amongst the Atlético followers, but a winning team to put Real in the shade would surely have delighted the vast majority of supporters, whatever the political consequences of this might have been.

96. This suggestion was made to the author by several socialist Atlético de Madrid supporters, but not by any former player or official of the club, neither by any journalist.

The objective of this Introduction has been to offer a brief illustration of the major institutions of Spanish football during the Franco years. It is necessary at this stage to examine the general character of the Spanish sporting Press. The most striking feature about this sporting Press during the Franco period that it was both very extensive and popular, and indeed has lost only a fraction of this popularity since 1975. There was at least one weekly sporting paper in every single Spanish province, and only a handful of these have since disappeared. It was the daily sports papers of the big cities, however, which obtained the big sales figures, and this continues to be the case.

The best-selling sports paper during the Franco period was the Madrid daily Marca, the big money-maker of the extensive Press chain of the Movimiento, financing many dogmatic and unpopular provincial Falangist papers. Marca was founded in 1938, with the Civil War still in progress, by the leading Falangist Manuel Fernández Cuesta, the brother of the Minister of Agriculture and later Justice, Raimundo. For almost thirty years, Marca was the best-selling Spanish newspaper, with approximately 400,000 copies purchased daily.⁹⁷ As shall be seen in detail in Chapter Two, Marca was instrumental in imposing Falangist concepts and symbols on Spanish sport in the 1940s, an approach which was moderated in subsequent years.

Marca's excellent sales figure entered a decline from 1967 onwards, because of the creation of the rival independent As in Madrid. It was

97. Edouard de Blaye, Franco and the Politics of Spain, London, 1976, pp. 487-488.

only after this decline in sales that ABC and Ya managed to overtake Marca in the popularity list.⁹⁸

In Barcelona, the biggest-seller amongst the sports papers was the sensationalist Dicen closely followed by the old-established and staid El Mundo Deportivo. Between them, the two accounted for a quarter of the total newspaper sales in the Catalan capital with Dicen only being outsold by La Vanguardia Española.⁹⁹

Two major reasons can be given for the immense popularity of the sporting Press in Francoist Spain. The first reason is the massive popularity of sport itself, and the second the extremely tedious and unimaginative nature of the non-sporting Press, rigidly censored by the Ministry of Information and Tourism. This censorship caused most newspapers to seek out safe ground in two main areas: foreign rather than domestic problems, and as much sporting information as possible. In spite of this extensive sports coverage, however, the tedium of the general newspapers appears to have caused many moderate sports enthusiasts to buy one of the specialist sports dailies, bored with the persistent political triumphalism and triviality of the likes of ABC, Ya and Arriba.

Approximately half of the sports coverage in both the sporting and non-sporting Press centered on football. Except during the summer football break, it was only very rarely that another sport managed to take the subject matter of the headlines

98. Edouard de Blaye, *ibid.*

99. Edouard de Blaye, *ibid.*

temporarily off football. The normal state of affairs was a daily saga of league and cup battles, transfers, injuries, controversies and scandals.

It has been alleged that the sporting journalist was one of the few writers whose work was not subjected to the scrutiny of Franco's censors.¹⁰⁰ Although, sports journalism was not subjected to the direct censorship of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, there was, nonetheless, a strict code of practice imposed by the Press and Propaganda Commission of the DND. This Commission published its golden rule in the Boletín Oficial de la DND in April 1943:

"It remains absolutely forbidden to publish or print any kind of criticism of the Federations, of national or regional character, and of the actual behavior of its members."¹⁰¹

Thus it was strictly prohibited for the sporting Press to criticize the Francoist football authorities, no matter what mistakes they made or even what corruption they became involved in.

This DND ruling was slightly modified in 1958 and again in 1969,¹⁰² but essentially remained the same during the whole of the Franco period. The application of the rule was extremely rigid in the immediate post Civil War years. In November 1943, for example, Alfonso Bea Martín, the sports correspondent of the Teruel Falangist newspaper Lucha, was suspended by the DND from his work for six months for having criticized the referees of the Aragonese Federation. In March 1952, the RFEF

100. This opinion was expressed to the author by José María Lorente, Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo", and Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera".

101. Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 1, April 1943.

102. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND.

President Sancho Dávila attempted to exploit to the full the 1943 DND ruling. In a note to the sporting Press in general, he asked journalists to refrain from printing the declarations of players, trainers and directors about referees, as well as complaints about RFEF punishments and even rumours of possible corruption. The note concluded by requesting the sporting Press to steer clear of:

"...everything which cannot be considered correct information, avoiding unfounded sensationalism and the diffusion of news that could serve to upset footballing unity and to slight the supreme authority of the RFEF."¹⁰³

The application of the DND ruling became gradually less rigid. This relaxation was partly due to the general loosening of the censorship undertaken by Manuel Fraga, Minister of Information and Tourism from 1962 to 1969, and also to the creation, in 1959, of the Spanish Group of Sporting Journalists. This Group, predictably, was dominated by the Falangist journalists of Marca, and, also predictably, served to maintain conformity and obedience in the world of sporting journalism, in a far more subtle and effective way than the DND ruling had done. Membership of this Group was obligatory, which created an obvious dependency upon the DND and the Marca journalists. This dependency has been denounced by many young sporting journalists of the 1960s, particularly by Alex J. Botines:

"During the Franco dictatorship, we sporting journalists had neither liberty of expression nor professional autonomy. We were subjected to the restrictive norms of both the DND and the Group of Sporting Journalists, which meant that any article critique of the authorities or any piece of investigative journalism was out of the question. I entered sports journalism with lots of hope and illusions, but quickly learn that initiative and imagination

103. Quoted in Viaje al centro de la censura franquista, Cambio 16, Madrid, 1985.

were actually disadvantages in this profession. All that you were supposed to do was to report the goals, take quotations from all and sundry, and praise the authorities."¹⁰⁴

It has also been alleged that many sports journalists during the Franco years were paid by the football clubs and the RFEF for writing favourable prose.¹⁰⁵ This allegation has been put in print by only two writers. The first of these is Botines, who dedicates a whole chapter on his book La gran estafa del fútbol español to the issue, recounting how, as a novice, he refused a generous monthly supplement to his meagre salary from a "great ex-international player" of FC Barcelona.¹⁰⁶ The other journalist to have put this allegation in writing is Vicente Marco, the former head of sport for the extensive radio chain SER. In his Historias del deporte he alleged that, whilst in Milan in April 1966 to cover the European Cup semi-final, he was approached by a Real Madrid representative who offered to pay all his hotel bills and expenses.¹⁰⁷ The same as Botines, he apparently surprised the intermediary by refusing the offer.

Other sports journalists have privately claimed that the RFEF, was even more generous than the clubs.¹⁰⁸ It has been alleged that all the national team were paid by the RFEF, and, furthermore, that a substantial brown envelope was occasionally handed over at the end of

104. Author's interview with Alex J. Botines.

105. This allegation was made to the author by Julián García Candau, Alex J. Botines, Juan José Castillo, José María García of radio SER, and Antonio Hernáez, editor of Sport.

106. Botines, op. cit., p. 32.

107. Marco, op. cit., p. 98.

108. This claim has been made to the author by Julián García Candau, José María García, Antonio Hernáez, and Miguel Vidal.

the trip. In order to receive these favours, the sports journalists were supposed to use every known superlative to describe the victory, or, on the other hand, use every excuse possible to explain away the defeat, such as the referee being biased against the Spaniards, the opposition violent, or the pitch unfavourable.

It seems that the existence or the extent of this purchasing of sports journalists depended very much upon the club President or RFEF President involved. It is alleged that the most generous men were the Real Madrid President Santiago Bernabeu, the Valencia President Julio de Miguel, and the RFEF Presidents Alfonso de la Fuente Chaos, José Luis Costá and José Luis Pérez Payá.¹⁰⁹ Other Presidents were apparently sufficiently secure in their positions to not have to resort to these methods, or were opposed to the purchasing of sports journalists on ethical grounds.

In conclusion, it must be said that the average sports journalist during the Franco years was a dull and unimaginative writer, obedient to the demands of his editor and to the restrictive guidelines of the DND and the Group, and eager to accept favours from insecure Presidents. Nevertheless, a new generation of radical, critical sports writers emerged in the 1960 s, headed by Francisco Cerecedo, Julián García Candau, José María García and Alex J. Botines. Not surprisingly, none of these was connected to Marca, Spanish national television or radio. Furthermore, the Barcelona sports papers as a whole began to adopt a new

109. This claim has been made to the author by Julián García Candau, José María García, Antonio Hernández, and Miguel Vidal.

critical and challenging attitude towards the Francoist sporting authorities from the mid-1960s onwards, especially, as shall be seen in detail in Chapter Eight, with regard to the allegedly unjust treatment of FC Barcelona.

By way of concluding this brief illustration of the Spanish sporting Press, and indeed the Introduction to this thesis, it seems appropriate to offer Botines's precise classification of his colleagues into four groups:

"There are sports journalists who fulfill their obligations by sensationalizing the situations; others who believe themselves to be fulfilling it by simply expounding the official version; there are those who are considered enemies by this footballing regime merely by showing themselves to be difficult on occasions; and there are finally those, the worst, who wait for a telephone call in order to write not what they think, but rather what those in power want to be written."¹¹⁰

110. Botines, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

CHAPTER TWO: FOOTBALL AND FASCISM

The first of the seven aspects of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain to be discussed in this thesis concerns the regime's application of Fascist concepts to the game. Before commencing upon a detailed study of the application of these concepts to football, it is first necessary to offer a brief history of Spanish Fascism, and an outline of its attitude to sport.

Fascism arrived in Spain in the early 1930s, with the three principal founders being the young demagogues Onésimo Redondo, Ramiro Ledesma and José Antonio Primo de Rivera. Although there were considerable ideological and tactical differences between the three, there was, ultimately, more that united than divided them. They shared an admiration for the movements of Mussolini and Hitler, an obsession with defending traditional Hispanic Christian values from the peril of godless Marxism, plans for a totalitarian State that would protect the workers and eventually create a classless society, and a dream of imperialist expansion at the expense of the weaker nations.

In October 1931, the small, Valladolid-based bands of aggressive young militants under the leadership of Redondo and Ledesma combined to form the Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista(JONS). Exactly two

years later, the charismatic José Antonio Primo de Rivera, eager to defend the former military dictatorship of his father, but anxious to lose his aristocratic image, founded the Falange. A marriage of convenience between these tiny nascent Fascist groups occurred in February 1934, the resultant alliance party being titled Falange Española de las JONS.

The Falange was a small and insignificant party until 1936, increasingly dominated by the energetic Primo de Rivera. The political polarization caused by the coming and the outbreak of the Civil War, however, led to a sharp increase in membership, similar to that experienced by the Communist Party. The Falangist militias made a significant contribution to the Nationalist victory in the conflict.

The rise of the Falange, however, was to be checked by three body blows that were to ensure its eternal political frustration. Firstly, in April 1937 Franco adeptly controlled the heady ambitions of the Falange by merging it, by means of a Unification Decree, with the Carlists, the small Alfonsine monarchist group Renovación Española and the Catholic authoritarian CEDA. The large but ambiguous movement that emerged was given the name of Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS. The second blow to the ambitions of the Falange was the execution of José Antonio Primo de Rivera in Alicante prison in November 1936 having been found guilty by the Republican authorities of being a party to the military uprising of the previous July. With his death, the Falange was deprived of its only popular leader, one of the few men who might conceivably have seriously challenged Franco's claim to sole power in the event of the Nationalist Civil War victory. The third body blow

was the defeat of the Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany in the Second World War, and the consequent impossibility of the realization of Spanish imperial ambitions. A large part of the raison d'être of Spanish Fascism was lost with the defeat of the Axis power.

Franco needed the resources and enthusiasm of the Falange in order both to help win the Civil War and to safeguard his personal rule afterwards. Under no circumstances was he prepared, however, to allow the construction of a one-party Fascist state which would compromise the power and influence of the other groups that had fought equally as hard as the Falange to defeat the Republic. Thus, Spain emerged from the Civil War with an ostensibly Fascist administration, but without there having been a fascist conquest of the state such as had occurred earlier in Italy and Germany.

Franco skilfully deflected the ambitions of the Falange by giving them relatively unimportant areas of power, for example sport. The only considerable source of power to which the Falange was allowed access to during the Franco years was the extensive "vertical syndicates" structure. As a kind of compensation, the dictator continued to pay lip service to the Falangist ideology of class cooperation and defence of the workers' interests, and insisted upon the use of many Falangist symbols, such as the yoke and arrows emblem, the Cara al sol battle anthem and the right-arm salute. In the words of Juan J. Linz, "the bureaucratized and lifeless structures of the Falange" continued to function in Francoist Spain long after the Falangist rhetoric had

become rather empty and meaningless for the Franco regime.¹

Even this rhetoric and these symbols came into question from 1945 onwards. The post-war anti-Fascist climate in the West, which led to the lukewarm United Nations embargo on Francoist Spain, caused the dictator to realize the need to improve his overseas image by removing the Falangist gestures. In consequence, Franco set in motion a very gradual process of "de-fascistification" of his regime. The first concession to Western democratic opinion was the September 1945 withdrawal from Tangier, which Franco had opportunistically occupied in 1940. In the late 1940s, the formerly obligatory Fascist salute was gradually phased out, and a dubious exercise was launched to prove to the outside world that the Falange had in fact never been a Fascist movement and that the Francoist State had never been a totalitarian state.

In addition to this gradual phasing-out of the Falangist symbols and rhetorics, the Alfonsine monarchists and the Opus Dei technocrats gradually, but by no means completely smoothly, added to their power and influence within the Franco regime at the expense of the Falange. In consequence, many veterans of the Falangist Civil War militias and of the "Blue Division", the Falangist force sent by Franco to fight alongside Hitler's troops on the Russian front, felt cheated and manipulated by the dictator. The clearest example of this Falangist

1. Juan J. Linz, "From Falangeto Movimiento-Organización, the Spanish Single Party and the Franco Regime, 1936-1968", p. 159, in Huntington and Moore, Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society. The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems, New York, 1970.

frustration was demonstrated by Francisco Herranz, former leader of the Falangist militia, who publicly committed suicide in Madrid in November 1969, in order, as he said in his final words, to protect against "the treachery to which the Falange has fallen victim".²

The reasons for the Falange being given control of Spanish sport were fully discussed in the Introduction to this thesis. The vague sporting plan of the Falange, never published in any kind of detail, was for a society in which every able-bodied member would be participating in some sport or other in giant stadia or sports centres. This popular participation would be inspired by the patriotic display offered to the outside world by the leading Spanish sportsmen in the international competitions, especially the Olympic Games.³

In very much the same way as the plans of the Falange for a totalitarian fascist State were never to be realized, the Falangist plan for sport did not become reality. As seen in the Introduction, the Franco regime was neither able nor disposed to invest in sport vast sums of money, unlike Mussolini and Hitler. In addition, in the post-Civil War years the Spanish people were generally too under-nourished, unhealthy and too busy working long, poorly-paid hours to participate in much sport.⁴ It is safe to assume that, even if adequate public

2. Quoted in Edouard de Blaye, *op. cit.*, p. 460.

3. This vague plan was published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 2, May 1943.

4. This has been alleged in many publications, for example: Vicente Marco, *op. cit.*, p. 19; Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, p. 32; Luis María Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 113. This claim has also been made to the author by many veteran football supporters, frustrated potential sportsmen in the 1940s.

sporting facilities had existed in Spain in the 1940s, they would have remained largely unused.⁵ Although, as shall presently be illustrated in detail, the rhetoric of the Falange and its sympathisers painted a completely different picture, sport was practically at the bottom of the list of priorities of both the Franco regime and the great majority of the Spanish people.

As shall be seen in Chapter Three, by the 1950s Spain had become an extremely sports-conscious country, but not according to the Falangist model. The Spanish public were filling to capacity the country's football stadia, many of them newly-constructed, with only a tiny amount of help from the DND,⁶ in order to see spectacular imported players like Alfredo Di Stéfano, Ferenc Puskas and Ladislao Kubala. In addition, it is estimated that more than half of the population followed the football commentaries on the radio, partly because of their participation in the immensely popular football pools.⁷ This huge passive participation in sport was far removed from the Fascist model, and the only consolation for the Falangist DND was that the football clubs became so prosperous that, led by Real Madrid in 1958, they constructed their own all-embracing sports centres, in this way partly

5. This allegation was made in Vázquez Montalbán, *ibid.*, and Cazorla Prieto, *ibid.*

6. According to the archives of the Real Madrid club, the total cost of the construction of the Estadio Bernabeu during the years 1944-1947 was 37,244,000 pesetas, of which one million pesetas, less than 4%, was provided by the DND's "Support Fund for the Construction of Private Sporting Facilities". In October 1951, the DND ruled that it would contribute just 2.5% to the cost of all future football stadia constructions or improvements information revealed by the author's investigation of the archives of the DND.

7. This estimate was made in Marco, *op. cit.*, p. 26, and in Vázquez Montalbán, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

relieving the pressure on the DND to provide public sports facilities. It is ironic that the best opportunities for the average Spaniard to practise sport were provided not by the DND, but privately, as a result of the success of football as a passive spectacle.

The contrast between the reality described above and the Falangist rhetoric of the 1940s could hardly be starker. In the post-Civil War years, the examples of Italy and Germany were constantly used to demonstrate that sport was to be an essential feature of the new classless society that the Falange desired. A good example of this rhetoric can be found in the articles of Enrique Gil de la Vega, known by the pseudonym of "Gilera", who became the sports correspondent of the Francoist Madrid newspaper El Alcázar, after having fought in the Falangist militia during the Civil War:

"Today, sport is no longer a privilege of the rich. Sport is practised by increasingly greater numbers of citizens of both sexes and of all social classes, and the State is supporting this. It is natural that the State should intervene in its favour, especially by contributing to the construction of new facilities necessary to face up to the demands of the increased number of participants ... The system is still not perfect; the machine will not really function effectively whilst the present economic difficulties persist; but, for the first time ever, we know that if today we are little, then tomorrow we will be a lot, because we have found an ideal and the means to arrive at it, just as the youth of Italy and Germany arrived at it before."⁸

Similar Fascist rhetoric was offered by Dr. Antonio Fereiras, the sports correspondent of the Falangist daily Arriba from 1939 to 1944. On the occasion of the football team of Hitler's air force to play an

8. El Alcázar, 23 November 1941.

exhibition match against Atlético Aviación in November 1941, a visit that will be presently discussed in detail, Fereiras made the Fascist connection between the sporting prowess of a nation and its military potential:

"The most cultured, dynamic, robust and healthy nations strive to achieve the recognition of their global potential in the Olympic competitions, with all the accompanying propaganda, respect and admiration. It is now a matter of public knowledge that nations prepare for war in an atmosphere of work, discipline and sport. The gigantic war machinery of the Third Reich has, in its different successful campaigns, no doubt, that spirit full of youth, dynamism, energy, opportunity and gentlemanliness that we find so many times in the Olympic stadium or on the sports grounds."⁹

Whilst "Gilera" and Fereiras led the field with the quality of their Fascist sporting rhetoric, it was the daily sports newspaper Marca, staffed exclusively by Falangists until the early 1970s which carried the largest quantity. As seen in the Introduction to this thesis, Marca was the big money-earner of the extensive Cadena de prensa del Movimiento ("Press Chain of the Movimiento"), assisting the Spanish state in the financing of a whole host of loss-making Falangist local newspapers. On the occasion of Marca becoming a daily paper in November 1942, its headline read "Arms raised to the Spanish sportsmen!"¹⁰ The articles that followed offered this explanation of the Nationalist victory in the Civil War:

9. Arriba, 20 November 1941.

10. Marca, 25 November 1942.

"The triumph was a tribute to the potential of a race that had sketched out for us a path and a style of physical conduct: that of the national vigorization by means of the gymnasium and the cultivation of sport."¹¹

Before entering into a detailed examination of the Fascist influence over Spanish football, it is appropriate at this stage to offer a brief approximation of the extent of Fascist influence over both football in other countries and over other sports in Francoist Spain.

The regimes led by Hitler and Mussolini were the first systematically to instrumentalize football. Their objectives in doing this were threefold: to use the game as a hook to attract young men, especially youths, to the activities of the Party; allegedly to "improve the race" by increasing popular participation in sport; to demonstrate to the world, at the level of international matches and tournaments, the alleged superiority of the Italian and German races.¹²

As a consequence of these objectives, many local football leagues were established in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, especially in rural areas where the organization of the game had previously been practically non-existent. Before all of these league matches commenced, the boys or young men were required to give the Fascist salute and frequently sing the Party's particular anthem.¹³

11. Ibid.

12. These Fascist and Nazi plans for sport are outlined and discussed in Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-229, and in Carl Diem, Historia de los Deportes, Barcelona, 1966, p. 86-89.

13. For further details, see Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

These salutes and anthems were also obligatory in the semi-professional and professional leagues of Italy and Germany. Another consequence of this Fascist instrumentalization of the game were the name changes enforced upon all clubs that had titles with a foreign influence, usually due to having been founded by British engineers or railwaymen. This policy began in Italy, where Internazionale of Milan, for example, was compelled to become Ambrosiana, and Florence Football Club Associazione Fiorentina di Calcio. Afterwards in Germany, the two most significant enforced name changes converted Kickers Offenbach into Der Offenbacher Fussball Verein and Red White Essen into Rot-Weiss Essen.

It was at international level however, that the Fascist politicization of football reached its peak. The Italian and German national teams always led the capacity crowds in the saluting and singing before the matches, which would proceed in an ambience of aggressive nationalism. The visiting national team was expected to comply with this Fascist gesturing, and there were protests from the British TUC, the Labour Party and other socialist groups when the England team gave the right-arm salute before a match in Berlin in 1938.¹⁴

The national team of Fascist Italy gave immense satisfaction to Mussolini. Upon being granted, in 1932, the hosting of the 1934 World Cup finals tournament, the Italian federation charged the leading manager Vittorio Pozzo with selecting a 20-man squad, took the players

14. See, for further details, Sir Stanley Rous, Football Worlds, London, 1978, pp. 63-64.

away from their clubs and confined them to a military-style training camp for two full years. Even this intensive preparation, however, coupled with the impassioned home crowds, was not enough in itself to lift Italy to the trophy. When they were losing the quarter-final 0-1 to Spain, and seemingly on their way to a surprise elimination, the Italians resorted to violent tactics. The famous Spanish goalkeeper Ricardo Zamora was deliberately injured, Italy equalized, and in the replay that took place without Zamora, the hosts narrowly won 1-0.¹⁵ Mussolini, present at all Italy's matches in the tournament, excused the team's violence in a way which accurately exempted the Fascist interpretation of international sporting contests:

"Football is a physical and psychological struggle in which the team from the stronger race will always win. For this reason, Italy will, without doubt, soon be champion of the world."¹⁶

Mussolini's hopes were fulfilled. Italy picked up the World Cup after beating Austria in the semi finals and Czechoslovakia in the final.

Mussolini's team could not claim to be the real world champions, however, until they had beaten England, who refused to participate in the World Cup until 1950. In a violent match in London in November 1934, known as the "Battle of Highbury", three England players were stretchered off and two Italians sent off, as the hosts beat the World Cup holders 3-2.

After another two-year long training camp, a rejuvenated Italian

15. For further details, see Brian Glanville, History of the World Cup, London, 1978, p. 68.

16. Quoted in Diem, op. cit., p. 92

team retained the World Cup in the 1938 tournament, staged in France. On the day before the final in Paris, there was a vociferous demonstration outside the hotel by French socialists protesting against the Italian intervention in the Spanish Civil War, which provoked a violent response from the Fascist guards of the Italian team.¹⁷

The national team of Nazi Germany, in contrast failed to earn much domestic or international prestige for the Hitler regime. Coached by the Nazi party member Otto Nerz, the team reached the semi finals of the 1934 World Cup tournament, but then surprisingly crashed out of the 1936 Olympic football tournament, in front of Hitler and a capacity crowd in Berlin, to a modest Norway. Nerz was immediately dismissed, but his successor, Sepp Herberger, fared no better. Despite including players from annexed Austria, Germany were eliminated in the first round of the 1938 World Cup tournament by unfancied Switzerland.

Football was also subjected to Fascist influence by the Salazar regime in Portugal. This was a regime which like that of Franco, was reactionary and authoritarian rather than Fascist, but which also indulged in Fascist posturing and rhetoric. Clubs with foreign-influenced names were compelled to change their titles, for example Benfica Football Club becoming Benfica Club de Futbol, and Sporting Club Lisbon Club Desportivo de Lisboa. The same as in Francoist Spain, there was also the pre-match saluting and singing, without a fraction of the State investment in the sporting infrastructure that occurred in

17. See Glanville, op. cit., p. 81, for details.

Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany.¹⁸

Fascist influence over football has been effectively limited to Italy, Germany, Portugal and Spain. The game has frequently been utilized as a catalyst for aggressive nationalism, the clearest example being in the South American military dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s. There is a definite qualitative difference, however, between Fascist and aggressively nationalist influence over football, even though the line between the two concepts may appear to be rather thin on occasions. In these South American military dictatorships, there was practically no rhetoric about how the national team, or club teams playing against overseas opposition, should demonstrate their racial superiority over the foreign players. On the other hand, there was an abundance of rhetoric about how the players should be conscious of defending national pride.¹⁹

A strong Fascist influence was exercised over all sports in Francoist Spain, not just over football. The main instrument of this influence was the control of sport by the Falangist DND. The DND imposed this influence in two major ways: firstly, by insisting upon Fascist posturing before every sporting contest; secondly, by appointing Falangists to many important sporting positions. It was the rule of the DND up to 1948 that, prior to every sporting contest at every level, the competitors had to line up, give the Fascist salute and

18. For further details, see Diem, op. cit., p. 174, and World Soccer, November 1966.

19. For further details, see the text and footnotes about the subject at the beginning of Chapter Seven of this thesis.

chant the Falangist war-cry of, Arriba Espana!, along with, Viva Franco!²⁰ Before the final of any tournament, be it of national, regional or provincial character, the players, officials and spectators were compelled to sing the Falangist anthem Cara al sol and the same before any international contest. Even though it was not compulsory, in certain sports Cara al sol was sung before every domestic contest. This was the case, for example, before every volleyball match during the period 1939-1944, because of the enthusiasm for the song of Juan Antonio Fernández Lozano, the Falangist President of the volleyball federation in these years.²¹ The Falangist anthem was also sung before every roller-skate hockey match during the same period, due to the President of that Federation being the prominent Catalan Falangist Juan Ramón Escrivá.²² The DND strictly upheld its rules about Fascist posturing. In November 1941, for example, the Catalan regional football federation was instructed by the DND to "apply the appropriate rigorous disciplinary methods" to the teams of the small mountain towns Tremp and Sort, who had omitted to give the necessary salutes and chants before their match. They were punished with the deduction of five league points each.²³ In November 1944, Joaquín Martínez Peralta was dismissed as President of the handball federation, held responsible by the

20. This rule, issued by the predecessor of the DND, the Consejo Nacional de Deportes, in August 1939, was published in Marca, and El Mundo Deportivo, 27 August 1939.

21. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of El Mundo Deportivo, 19 March 1943.

22. For further details, see El Mundo Deportivo, 19 March 1943.

23. In the archives of the DND, the author uncovered a letter, dated 21 November 1941, from Moscardó to Raimundo Rivas, the President of the Catalan federation, demanding strict punishment.

Delegado Nacional de Deportes General Moscardó for the absence of Cara al Sol before a friendly match with Portugal in Sevilla.²⁴ The same fate befell Ramiro Villanova, the President of the basketball federation, when the Falangist anthem was not sung before a match with Portugal in Valencia in March 1945.²⁵

This Fascist posturing in Spanish sport was abruptly terminated by the DND in August 1948, when the Fascist arm salute was abandoned, and the chanting and Cara al sol singing made discretionary. It has frequently been alleged that these measures were taken by the DND as part of the tacit policy of "de-Falangization" undertaken by the Franco regime in the late 1940s.²⁶ Arriba España! and Viva Franco! continued to be shouted and Cara al Sol sung up until the 1960s in the sports presided over by Falangists, whilst these practices were simply dropped in the sports governed by non-Falangists. The singing and chanting continued before every roller-skate hockey match, for example, during the whole of the presidency of the Falangist Escrivá, which lasted until 1962. The same occurred in handball, until the death of the Falangist federation President José María Aragonés in 1964.

Because of the direct nominations of the DND, approximately half of the Presidents and directors of the Spanish sports federations were Falangists in the 1940s. This proportion gradually declined to

24. For further details, see Marca, 7-9 November 1944.

25. See Marca, 4 March 1945 for details.

26. This allegation has been made in the following publications: Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., p. 130; Marco, op. cit., p. 27; Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., p. 38; Francisco Cerecedo in Posible, Madrid, No. 2, 1 December 1974.

approximately a third by the end of the Franco period²⁷. In addition, the Consejo Nacional de Deportes, the predecessor of the DND in the years 1939-1941, also led by General Moscardó, ruled in August 1939 that there must be at least two active Falangists amongst the directors of each private sporting club. This rule was maintained until 1959, when the presence of these Falangists became recommended but not obligatory.²⁸ As a consequence of all the above, Falangist personal influence at both the sports federations and the various clubs remained extremely high throughout the whole of the Franco period. In 1970, for example, there were three Falangists on the eight-man executive of the volleyball federation, Antonio Soriano, José Luis Sanz and Jesús García Pereda, and two amongst the ten directors of the champion club Estudiantes of Madrid, Juan Antonio Solano and Benito Sánchez Gil.²⁹

It is appropriate to conclude this brief examination of the Fascist influence over sports apart from football in Francoist Spain with an illustration of the kind of Fascist rhetoric that was applied both by the Falange itself and by its many sympathisers in the sporting Press. Apart from football, the sports more affected were athletics and basketball. As early as 1940, Marca pointed out that athletes had to be

27. This estimate was made by the author, in the light of the information revealed by the archives of Marca, El Mundo Deportivo and the DND.

28. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of the DND. The choice of these two Falangist directors was left to the club Presidents, who frequently needed to consult with the local Party organization about the matter.

29. This information was uncovered by the author in the archives of Marca.

priority of the Falangist sporting plans:

"The premier sport of our "New Spain" simply has to be athletics. Because it is the sport which will do more than any other to improve the minds and bodies of our young people, those who will be charged with leading the Spanish race into future glory. And because it is this sport, in its manifold activities, which will do more than any other to demonstrate to the other nations of the world the progress made by us Spaniards since our glorious "War of Liberation" against the forces of liberalism and decadence. After the present conflicts raging in the world are finished, the other nations will bear witness, by means of the Olympic Games and other international sporting competitions, that we Spaniards are a race reborn and rejuvenated, a race that has rediscovered its traditional virility and impetuousness."³⁰

Despite the almost complete lack of improvement of the sporting infrastructure since the Civil War, and despite the extremely low level of participation in athletics, there was nonetheless an abundance of Falangist optimism about the participation in the 1948 Olympic Games in London. The Boletín Oficial de la DND carried the following advice to the Spanish athletes chosen for the Games:

"Above all remember, you sporting leaders of "New Spain", that your exploits, whether they result in glorious triumph or disappointing defeat, must constitute a demonstration to the whole world that our Patria has been reborn in the course of bloody struggle and is on the point of being great once more. Show to the other nations that Spain is potent, virile and powerful again, that Spain is ready to resume her rightful place amongst the handful of leading free nations of the world."³¹

The Spanish performance in London, however, was abysmal, the only medal won being a silver in equestrian. As was pointed out in the Introduction to this thesis, Spain won only one Olympic gold medal, two silver and two bronze during the whole of the Franco period, and none

30. Marca, 10 April 1940.

31. Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 68, June 1948.

of these were for track and field events.³² Spanish athletes achieved a similar lack of success in the various European Championship and Mediterranean Games tournaments.³³ Because of this almost complete lack of success, the Fascist rhetoric surrounding athletics declined in quantity. As late as 1968, however, the following kind of language and imagery was employed in the DND's message to the Olympic team preparing to make the trip to the Games in Mexico:

"You are charged with the weighty responsibility of both demonstrating to the watching world that we Spaniards are consistently becoming a more virile and potent race, and of setting an example to the young people of the Patria, by your courageous performances, so that the generations to come will vigorously strive to emulate your achievements, and in so doing continue to exhibit Spanish power and potency."³⁴

As can be easily appreciated, the content of this message is not so different from that given to the Spanish Olympians by the DND twenty years earlier. The conclusion about this Fascist rhetoric with regard to athletics must be that it declined in quantity more than in quality or content.

32. The complete Spanish Olympics record during the Franco years reads as follows: silver medal for the equestrian team in London, 1948; in Helsinki in 1952, Angel León Gonzalo won the silver in the 50 metres pistol shoot; the Spanish team boycotted the Melbourne games in 1956 because of the Soviet invasion of Hungary; in Rome in 1960, the Spanish team won the bronze medal at hockey; no medals were won in Tokyo in 1964, neither in 1968 in Mexico; in the 1972 Winter Olympics in Sapporo, the gold medal in the skiing special slalom was won by Francisco Fernández Ochoa, whilst in Munich in the summer Enrique Rodríguez Cal won the bronze at flyweight boxing.

33. As revealed by the archives of the DND, only seven medals were won in the nine European Championship and Mediterranean Games tournaments in which Spanish teams participated.

34. Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 300, August 1968.

The other sport, apart from football and athletics, which provoked an abundance of Fascist rhetoric was basketball. This was partly because basketball was clearly the second most popular sport after football, both at spectator and participation level, and partly because, as explained in the following way by the Boletín Oficial de la DND , it was a physical contact sport:

"The two sports which best embody our rediscovered Spanish masculine values are, without doubt, football and basketball. These are team sports, in which the values of comradeship and sacrifice for others come to the fore. And they are also physical contact sports which permit the natural fury, impetuousness and virility of the Spanish sportsmen to fully manifest itself."³⁵

As was the case with athletics, there would undoubtedly have been more Fascist rhetoric concerning basketball if the Spanish national team and club teams had been more successful in the international competitions. On the few occasions when there was something to celebrate with regard to basketball, this rhetoric was employed. In June 1965, for example, when the Spanish team reached the semi finals of the European Championship, held in Athens, Marca offered the following preview of the crucial match against Yugoslavia:

"It is to be hoped, and indeed expected, that la furia española ("the Spanish Fury") will once again be on display tonight, both for us Spaniards either present here in Athens or watching at home on television, and for the watching Continent. Our team will again have to employ their considerable physical power, swift intelligence and traditional Spanish courage and impetuousness. Tonight they will have to prove to Europe that they are real men. We should all be optimistic and confident, we Spaniards have demonstrated on countless occasions throughout history that we are at our best, most virile and furious, when we have to react against adverse circumstances."³⁶

35. Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 78, April 1949.

36. Marca, 11 June 1965.

The Spanish team lost this semi final heavily, and achieved extremely little international success afterwards. The same as in football, the Real Madrid basketball team was far more successful internationally than the national team, partly because of the abundance of leading foreign players in the Real ranks. This success provoked many flights of rhetoric similar to the ones given above, the clearest example occurring in May 1969, in the form of the DND's congratulations to Real Madrid for having won the European Champions Cup:

"This has been one of the most heartening, inspiring Spanish sporting performances in history. It was marvellous feeling to see Spaniards (sic) in command, dominating a sporting event of such importance and prestige, passionately displaying the determination, virility, impetuousness and fury for which we are renowned throughout the world."³⁷

Similar rhetoric was produced as a result of Real Madrid's other international basketball successes.³⁸

It can be clearly seen from the examples given above that a common theme in all of this rhetoric was the "rebirth" of Spain because of the Nationalist victory in the Civil War. This theme was frequently employed in the general publications of the Falange, for example in the pocket book of José María García Cernuda, distributed amongst Falangists in 1943:

"Spain has, in effect, been reborn in the fire and passion of the "War of Liberation". Out of the ashes of the conflict has risen a rejuvenated, transformed, revitalized and magnificent Spain, with the Falange at its head."³⁹

37. Marca, 14 May 1969.

38. See, for example: El Alcázar, 22 October 1966, and 2 November 1971; Arriba, 10 October 1968; Marca, 29 March 1969.

39. José María García Cernuda, Sobre la Revolución de la Falange, Bilbao, 1943, pp. 29-30.

Another theme to be found in practically all of the Fascist sporting rhetoric is the "rediscovery" of traditional Spanish masculine values, a theme frequently referred to in many Falangist publications, for example in their official version of Spanish history, designed for use by history teachers:

"As a result of the heroic struggle in the "War of Liberation", many of the traditional racial virtues of the Spaniards were recovered, such as courage, passion, sacrifice, determination and dedication to the cause."⁴⁰

A third theme common to this rhetoric is the necessity to demonstrate this "rebirth" and "rediscovery" to the world in general, as pointed out by Sigfredo Hillers de Luque:

"In the company of foreign visitors to Spain, or whilst ourselves overseas, it is our duty, both individually and collectively to clearly demonstrate to what extent we Spaniards have improved as a race in the thirty years since the historic day when the Patria was reborn..."⁴¹

All three of these themes were usually present in the celebration of every Spanish international sporting success during the Franco period. This was the reaction of the DND in May 1953, for example, when the Conde de Teba won the world clay pigeon-shooting title:

"This is one of the clearest demonstrations offered to Spain and the outside world that, since our glorious "War of Liberation", we are a nation reborn, having rediscovered and recuperated our traditional Hispanic virtues of courage, determination and impetuosity."⁴²

40. FET y de las JONS, Sección Femenina, Lecciones de Historia de España, Bilbao, 1944, p. 79.

41. Sigfredo Hillers de Luque, Ética y estilo falangistas, Madrid, 1974, pp. 320-321.

42. Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 123, June 1953.

A fourth theme that can be extracted from this Fascist sporting rhetoric is the affirmation of Spanish national unity and the negation of all hints of regionalism or separatism. A good example of this appeared in Marca when, in October 1957, the Spanish team, made up almost completely of Catalans, won the world roller-skate hockey championship in Lisbon:

"This inspiring victory has once again demonstrated that we Spaniards are at our best when fight together. The team that has lifted our beloved national flag so high in Lisbon is a team made up of fiercely patriotic and proud Spaniards. Spaniards from Catalonia, Spaniards from Castille, Spaniards from the Basque provinces, but first and foremost Spaniards, fighting together for the glory of the race and the Patria. The terrible days when the Spaniard fought against Spaniard are now consigned to history, and will never return. Now we are all fighting together."⁴³

Another example of this theme appearing in a sporting context occurred in April 1965, when the Spanish national rugby team, similarly composed of a majority of Catalans, beat the West Germany team in a friendly match in Barcelona. This was the reaction of the Marca correspondent:

"How heartening it is to see Spanish sportsmen from all different regions of the country fighting side by side, united in a common cause: the glory of the Patria. Today the city of Barcelona has shown that it is more Spanish than ever, through the exemplary patriotism of its spectators, through the dedication to the national colours of the players that it has provided for the Spanish team..."⁴⁴

43. Marca, 12 October 1957.

44. Marca, 4 April 1965.

This theme of national unity was one of the major preoccupations of José Antonio Primo de Rivera. He dedicated a large proportion of his writings and speeches to condemning the Basque, Catalan and Galician autonomy movements, for example in the Norma Programática de la Falange, which he drafted in November 1934. The second clause of this programme stated that:

"Spain is a unit of destiny in universal terms. Every conspiracy against this unity is repulsive. All separatism is a crime which we will not pardon."⁴⁵

It is appropriate at this stage to commence a detailed examination of the Fascist influence over Spanish football during the France years. This examination will mainly consist of a study of the concrete Fascist influence over, and the Fascist rhetoric surrounding, professional football. Before this, however, a brief insight into junior and amateur football is necessary.

As seen earlier in this chapter, junior and amateur football leagues were established in rural areas in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, with the objective of drawing young men into activities of the Party. These leagues were completely separate from those organized by the Italian and German football federations. The Falange did not copy this idea, for two main reasons. Firstly, because, it did not have the financial capacity to establish these leagues, which would have necessitated greatly subsidizing the construction of football pitches in remote villages where there had never been sufficient interest in the game for the locals to construct a pitch themselves. Secondly, because

45. Reproduced in José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Obras completas, Madrid, 1949, p. 359.

the Falange believed that its control over all of the sports federations, through the DND, was such that the creation of a parallel, and perhaps even rival, sporting organization was necessary. There seemed to be little point in establishing separate Falangist leagues when the Falange's influence over the traditional leagues meant that, until 1948 throughout Spain and in certain regions until much later, as shall shortly be seen, every match at every level had to commence with the right arm salute and chanting of Viva Franco! and Arriba España!⁴⁶ Fascist influence over professional football, the same as Fascist influence over Spanish sport and society in general, reached a peak in the immediate post-Civil War years, and thereafter declined only very gradually. This influence was so high during the period 1939-1948 that these years have become known as the "Blue Period" of Spanish football.⁴⁷ During the "Blue Period", Fascist influence over professional football was exerted in five main ways: firstly, by the nomination of an abundance of Falangists as Presidents and directors of the national and regional federations and of the clubs; secondly, by the name changes forced upon the clubs with foreign-influenced titles; thirdly, by the Fascist gestures that were obligatory before every match; fourthly, by the immense amount of Fascist rhetoric that surrounded the game; fifthly, by the neo-fascist mystification applied to the game by the media. All of these manifestations of Fascist

46. This point of view was implicitly expressed by General Moscardó's assistant, General José Villalba, in an interview with El Mundo Deportivo, 8 February 1946. Villalba commented that he was "extremely satisfied" with the local leagues, and that he saw "absolutely no need to change their organizational structure".

47. This phrase was first coined in Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., p. 31, and has since been copied in many publications, for example Marco, op. cit., p. 19.

influence over the professional game were consequences of the irresistible control exercised over Spanish sport in general by the Falangist DND.

The large number of Falangists in executive positions in post-Civil War football is both a cause and an effect of the strength of the Fascist influence over the game. They were either directly appointed by the DND, or chosen by the clubs in order to comply with the DND's ruling of August 1939 that there must be at least two active Falangists amongst the directors of each sporting club. It can be estimated that at least a third of the directors of the national and regional football federations and of the professional clubs during this "Blue Period" were either active or former Falangists.⁴⁸ Three of the five RFEF Presidents during these years were Falangists: Luis Saura del Pan, from 1940 to 1941; Jesús Rivero Meneses, from 1946 to 1947; Dr. Armando Muñoz Calero, from 1947 to 1950. Many of the fifteen regional federations were presided over by Falangists at this time, for example Juan Curto Sánchez, President of the Castilian federation from 1939 to 1944, José Luis Valverde at the Murcian federation during the period 1939 to 1950, and Joaquín Herrero Cuesta, in power in Navarre from 1943 to 1951. The most notable Falangist Presidents at club level during this "Blue Period" were Antonio Rodríguez at Zaragoza from 1939 to 1947, succeeded by fellow Falangist José María Herrera, Juan Carlos Delgado at Cádiz

48. This estimate was made by the author in the light of the information revealed in his examination of the following archives: those of the RFEF, of Real Madrid, of FC Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián, of Atlético de Madrid, and of El Mundo Deportivo.

from 1939 to 1942, Raimundo Rodríguez Vilches at Racing de Santander from 1940 to 1954, Juan Andrés Armendariz at Murcia from 1942 to 1951, Eduardo Ramírez at Betis of Seville from 1945 to 1951, and Juan Antonio Pérez García, in command at Valladolid from 1946 to 1959.

The abundance of Falangists in Spanish football during this "Blue Period" was not confined, however, to Presidents and directors. It has been estimated that approximately a fifth of the professional players in these years were either active or former Falangists.⁴⁹ The most notable of these Falangist players were: Enrique Molina, the Valencia player who fought in a Falangist militia in the Civil War, joined the Falangist "Blue Division" sent by Franco to fight alongside Hitler's troops on the Russian front, where he died in February 1943; Jorge Campanal of Sevilla, of whom it is alleged that his surprising selection for the national team in 1941 owed a considerable amount to his political views;⁵⁰ Angel Rovira of Español and the national team; Miguel Moleiro and José Luis Clemente, both of Real Madrid.

It is surprising both that the enforced name changes of the football clubs with foreign titles was not an initiative of the DND, and that these changes did not occur until 1941. During the two post-Civil War years, these club names were allowed to continue unchanged, despite the examples of name changes from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. It

49. This estimate was made to the author by the veteran sports journalists Juan José Castillo of El Mundo Deportivo, 3 September 1984, and Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera" of ABC.

50. This allegation, which provoked an angry response from the player and his friends, was made by Alex J. Botines in La gran estafa del fútbol español, Barcelona, 1975, p. 22.

Text cut off in original

Díaz Pastor was that the players wanted to commence the game as possible, because of the driving snow.⁵⁴ In May 1945, the of the La Coruña club Miguel Texeira was actually replaced by Moscardó after Cara al Sol had failed to be played through the stadium's loudspeaker system before the international match with Portugal.⁵⁵

The Fascist rhetoric surrounding Spanish football during the "Period" was immense in both quantity and quality, with the material already isolated in this chapter constituting the basis of the rhetoric. An example of the themes of the "rebirth" of the nation and the "rediscovery" of traditional Hispanic masculinity appeared in June 1941, in the Marca report of the cup final between Valencia and Español:

"It was an inspiring sporting struggle of men against a kind that has been occurring with frequency since the Patria in the "War of Liberation"... The Madrid crowd to a moving demonstration of commitment, passion, firmness and impetuousness, virtues that are returning to Spain with strength with every day that passes."⁵⁶

The theme of national unity, one of the Falange's priorities, usually featured prominently in this Fascist rhetoric-proclaimed by Falangist Marca when one of the Madrid teams played against Basque or Catalan opponents. For example, this was apart

54. Ibid.

55. See Marca, 7-11 May 1945 for details.

56. Marca, 10 June 1941.

of the paper when Atlético Aviación played host to Athletic de Bilbao in February 1942:

"This match was a classic confrontation of virile and courageous Spaniards, locked in an absorbing and inspiring sporting struggle. Regardless of which region of our Patria they may hail from, the twenty-two men down on the field were all authentic Spaniards, and it certainly showed in the way in which they played."⁵⁷

Marca was not the only sports newspaper, however, which evoked this particular theme. This was the preview of the FC Barcelona-Real Madrid match in November 1942 which appeared in El Mundo Deportivo where only two or three Falangists worked at any one time during the whole Franco period:⁵⁸

"Let us fervently hope that tomorrow's match will be an inspiring demonstration of typical Spanish passion, fury, virility, and, above all, a demonstration of the harmony and togetherness that has existed between the different regions of our beloved Spain since the "War of Liberation" put an end to the fratricidal conflicts and tensions, provoked by a tiny self-interested minority of malevolents, which once threatened to tear the country apart."⁵⁹

The fourth theme of this Fascist sporting rhetoric, the necessity of demonstrating the much-vaunted "rebirth" and "rediscovery" to the outside world, could only appear in the context of either an international match or a friendly game between a Spanish and a foreign club, of both of which, for reasons which shall be fully discussed in Chapter Seven of this thesis, there were extremely few during this "Blue Period".

57. Marca, 24 February 1942.

58. This information was revealed to the author by Juan José Castillo, journalist at El Mundo Deportivo from 1946, appointed editor in 1968.

59. El Mundo Deportivo, 8 November 1942.

This was the message of the DND to the Spanish national team which, in January 1941 was preparing to play its first game since the Civil War, having changed its traditional red shirts for more politically appropriate blue ones:

"Remember above all also that you are responsible for demonstrating, as the football team of the Patria, just how much of our former glory we have recovered in the two years that have passed since our glorious "War of Liberation"... Footballers of Spain, show to the world your virility, your fury, your impetuosity, your courage, so that they should know all about the "New Spain".⁶⁰

A very similar message was given by the DND to the Atlético Aviación players before their friendly match in Madrid, in November 1941, against the team of the German air force:

"This a perfect opportunity to demonstrate to a nation that has already travelled down the road that we are on how much progress we are making, in terms of recuperating the characteristics which originally raised us up to be one of the leading nations of the world and which must serve to raise us up to that elevated position again."⁶¹

In its report to this match, Marca claimed that the objective expressed above by the DND had been fully achieved:

"There can be absolutely no doubt that our distinguished German visitors will leave Madrid convinced that we Spaniards have made giants strides since our "War of Liberation". Strides towards a greater physical power, towards improved discipline, towards more effective impetuosity and fury, virtues which were all fully displayed on Wednesday afternoon by both teams..."⁶²

In April 1942, the Spanish national team left the Iberian Peninsula for the first time since the Civil War, to play exhibition matches in Berlin against Germany and in Milan against Italy, in the presence of

60 This message was published in Marca, 11 January 1941.

61. Published in Marca, 15 November 1941.

62. Marca, 22 November 1941.

which the natural courage, passion, commitment, physical power and

Hitler and Mussolini respectively. The DND message to the Spanish players who made this trip constitutes the most virulent piece of Fascist rhetoric surrounding the national team during the whole of the Franco period:

"An immense responsibility is resting on your strong shoulders. It is your responsibility to demonstrate to these two mighty nations, magnificently rejuvenated since their "National Syndicalist Revolutions" and brilliant examples which we are attempting to follow in so many ways, that Spain is, in effect, a nation reborn...This task you must fulfill by playing like real men, like real Spaniards, which is to say in an aggressive but sporting way, with courage, passion, impetuosity, determination and virility, the leading virtues of the "New Spain" which you are charge with representing."⁶³

The fifth and final way in which Fascist influence over Spanish football exerted itself during the "Blue Period" of 1939-1945 concerns the mystification of certain teams and players. This mystification was closely connected with the Fascist rhetoric discussed above, and mostly appeared in the same newspapers, namely Marca, Arriba and El Alcázar. The centre of this mystification tendency was the myth of the furia española, created, as seen in the Introduction to this thesis, by the Press during the Spanish national team's successful campaign in the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp. In the immediate post-Civil War years, this myth was resurrected by Falangist journalists and commentators, and those who sympathized with the ideals of the Falange. A good definition of the new, neo-Fascist interpretation of the furia was offered in Arriba:

"The furia española is present in all aspects of Spanish life, to a greater extent than ever since the "War of Liberation"...In a sporting, the furia best manifests itself in football, a game in

63. Published in Marca, 6 April 1942.

virility of the Spanish race can find full expression, usually imposing itself, in international contests, over the more technical but less aggressive foreign teams."⁶⁴

Throughout the history of Spanish football, two rival tactical "schools" have existed. On the one hand, there has been the "Bilbao School", always headed by the heavily British-influenced Athletic de Bilbao, practising a football of physical aggression, long passes and high centres for a tall centre-forward. In opposition, there has been the "Sevilla School" of talented individual, playing with tight dribbling and short passes, a style with practically no foreign influence. Despite its obvious foreign influence, it was the former style which was alleged best to represent the furia española, partly because of the claims to this effect by Eduardo Lasteragay, the Falangist Athletic de Bilbao director, claims which will be examined in Chapter Eight of this thesis. The identification of Athletic with the furia myth reached its peak in the period 1943-1945, when the Basque team completely dominated Spanish football. An example of this identification appeared in Marca's preview of the 1945 cup final between Athletic and Valencia:

"Our splendid capital city will today once again be the scene for an exhibition of the authentic furia española by the remarkable Atlético de Bilbao, bravely attempting to take away the prestigious Copa del Generalísimo for the third successive year...The Caudillo himself and 35,000 other fortunate spectators will surely witness a display of typical Spanish passion, courage, determination and virility from both teams. It is the vizcaínos (natives of Vizcaya province), however, who will best represent the furia española, with their physical power, controlled aggression and combative approach, virtues which are again making us Spaniards highly respected and even feared in the world."⁶⁵

64. Arriba, 30 January 1940.

65. Marca, 9 June 1945.

All Spanish teams playing against foreign opposition in this "Blue Period" were expected to copy Athletic de Bilbao's example and offer a demonstration of the furia española to the visitors. For example, this was the advice given by "Gilera" in El Alcázar to the Atlético Aviación players before their November 1941 match with the German air force team:

"It is your responsibility to demonstrate to our highly respected foreign visitors the sporting progress that we have made in the past two years, and this will obviously be best achieved by employing the traditional furia española, with courage, aggression, power, dynamism, virility and impetuousity."⁶⁶

The Spanish Press held up certain footballers to be the embodiment or personification of the furia española myth, especially the tall, powerful and aggressive Telmo Zarra, the Athletic de Bilbao centre-forward. According to Arriba, Zarra was:

"...the epitome of the furia española, impassioned, determined, courageous, impetuous, an inspiring example of the kind of virile young men who are charged with leading the Patria into a new "Golden Age".⁶⁷

This mystification of Zarra reached its peak when he led the attack of the national team. For example, after he had scored three of the goals in Spain's defeat of Portugal in La Coruña in May 1945, the Marca correspondent was moved to comment:

"Telmo Zarra proved beyond all doubt this afternoon that he is the personification of the furia española. He was magnificent, a real man, a real Spaniard, thrilling the crowd and destroying the enemy with his dynamism, passion, power and aggression...Zarra is a brilliant example of so many of the virtues of our race..."⁶⁸

66. El Alcázar, 18 November 1941.

67. Arriba, 8 September 1943.

68. Marca, 17, May 1945.

The only other player who came close to challenging Zarra's position as the embodiment of the furia española myth was the powerful national team and Español centre-half Angel Rovira. This is part of the eulogy of Rovira that appeared in Marca after he had captained Español to victory over Real Madrid in the 1940 cup final:

"The Español captain came close to epitomizing the furia española, with his courageous, responsible, aggressive, impassioned and manful performance...He is an inspiring example of Spanish masculinity."⁶⁹

This tendency towards mystification on the part of the Press, with its clear political significance, was not limited to the furia española myth. Another trend was to give a military title to the forward lines of the leading teams during this "Blue Period". The first example of this occurred when "Gilera" of El Alcázar, in his preview of the 1939 cup final, dubbed the Sevilla forwards Los Stukas:

"These furious, aggressive, impassioned Andalusian forwards are best described as Los Stukas because...they are clearly capable of swooping down on the opposing goalmouth and wreaking considerable damage and destruction..."⁷⁰

The forwards of the Español team which won the cup in 1940 were named Los Cinco Mosqueteros ("The Five Musketeers"),⁷¹ and the Athletic de Bilbao forward line lead by Telmo Zarra was titled Los Cinco Artilleros ("The Five Artillerymen").⁷²

One of the principal objectives of this thesis is to demonstrate that practically all of the political tendencies in Francoist Spain were

69. Marca, 3 June 1940.

70. El Alcázar, 25 June 1939.

71. See, for example, Marca 3 June 1940.

72. See, for example, El Mundo Deportivo, 21 February 1945.

reflected in professional football. The process of "de-Falangization" that occurred in the late 1940s and 1950s was no exception. The words of the historian Herbert Southworth unintentionally but nonetheless accurately illustrate what happened in football from 1948 onwards:

"The Fascist salute was no longer obligatory... The blue gradually faded from the Blue Shirts. The visible Falange was an embarrassment."⁷³

The "Blue Period" of Spanish football came to an abrupt end in August 1948, when the DND made the pre-match saluting and chanting discretionary rather than obligatory. This information was passed on to the football clubs by means of the RFEF's Circular No.4 of that month.⁷⁴ These Fascist gestures continued for one further season at only three professional clubs: Betis of Seville, Racing de Santander and Valladolid, all, as seen earlier in this chapter, under Falangist Presidents. From the summer of 1949 onwards, this saluting and chanting completely disappeared.

The national team did not continue to wear blue shirts. The traditional red shirts reappeared for the friendly match with Belgium in Barcelona in January 1949, without any DND or RFEF document being written about this change.⁷⁵

73. Herbert R. Southworth, "The Falange", in Paul Preston (ed.), Spain in Crisis, Sussex, 1976, p. 21.

74. Information revealed by the archives of the RFEF.

75. No written order or commentary about the return to the red shirts was discovered by the author in the archives of either the RFEF or the DND.

Even though the overt Fascist symbolism was swiftly dropped, Fascist influence in general over Spanish football declined only very gradually over the remaining three decades of the Franco period. The principal reason for this lingering Fascist influence concerns the abundance of Falangists in positions of power of the game. Approximately half of the staff of the RFEF continued to be Falangists.⁷⁶ In addition, the following Presidents of the RFEF, directly nominated by the Falangist DND, were all either active or former Falangists: the former "Blue Division" doctor, Armando Muñoz Calero, in the presidency from 1947 to 1950; Manuel Valdés Larrañaga, from 1950 to 1952; Sancho Dávilla, from 1952 to 1954; Alfonso de la Fuente Chaos, from 1956 to 1960; José Luis Pérez Payá, from 1970 to 1975; Pablo Porta, from 1975 to 1984. It has been estimated that approximately a quarter of the directors of the RFEF and of the various regional federations during the years 1948-1975, all of them appointed by the DND up to 1961, had connections with the Falange.⁷⁷ There were several Falangists in the presidency of these regional federations: Ramiro Valdez Sánchez at the Asturian federation from 1953 to 1964; Isidro Valdemoro at the Aragonese federation from 1955 to 1958; Juan José Ruiz Vázquez at the Extremeduran federation from 1966 to 1973; Jorge Martínez Fuentes at the Murcian Federation from 1969 to 1977.

The proportion of Falangists as President of the professional clubs

76. This approximation was made by the author after an examination of the RFEF archives, and after interviewing José Luis Pérez Payá, the Falangist RFEF director from 1968 and President from 1970 to 1975.

77. This estimation was made using the same sources as in the above footnote.

was substantially reduced after 1948, mainly because of the clubs being able to elect their own Presidents from that year onwards. rather than continue to have them appointed by the DND. Until 1959, each club was compelled to include two active Falangists who only very occasionally were sufficiently popular and respected to be elected President: Luis Martínez Villa at Recreativo de Huelva from 1950 to 1963; Juan Carlos Santamaría at Burgos from 1954 to 1959; Roberto Alvarez Sosa at Elche from 1955 to 1963; Angel Domínguez at Sevilla from 1957 to 1965; José María Arroyo at Oviedo from 1962 to 1969; Carlos Castañeiras at Español of Barcelona from 1964 to 1968; Antonio Díaz Camacho at Valladolid from 1970 to 1978. It has been estimated that the proportion of Falangists as Presidents and directors of the professional football clubs during the period 1948-1975 was approximately 10%.⁷⁸

In addition to these Falangists at the RFEF, the regional federations and the clubs, there existed a small minority of Falangist players throughout the Franco years. The most notable of these players were: Manuel Sanchís of Real Madrid and the national team; José Luis Pérez Payá of both Atlético and Real Madrid, later to become RFEF President; Lorenzo Purchades of Valencia and the national team; José Antonio Reija of Zaragoza; Mariano Benítez of Sevilla.

78. This approximation was made using the information revealed in the archives of the DND, the RFEF and the major football clubs, and also in interviews with club officials during that period, for example Agustí Montal, former President of FC Barcelona, Julio de Miguel, former President of Valencia, and the former and current Real Madrid Vice-President Raimundo Saporta.

Fascist influence over Spanish football continued to be reflected through the compulsorily-changed foreign-influenced club names. FC Barcelona continued to be Club de Fútbol de Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao Atlético de Bilbao and Spórting de Gijón Deportivo de Gijón, until the DND allowed Barça to revert to its original title in April 1974, the other two clubs obtaining the same permission immediately afterwards.⁷⁹

The Fascist rhetoric that surrounded Spanish football gradually decreased more in quantity than in quality after the end of the "Blue Period". Such rhetoric continued to be reproduced by the newspaper Marca, Arriba and El Alcázar, each with a majority of Falangist writers, but to a far lesser extent than in the immediate post-Civil War years. In addition, only a small minority of the football commentators of the many private radio stations that commenced in the late 1940s and early 1950s and of national television indulged in this rhetoric. For example, the virulently nationalist football commentator of both state radio and television from 1949 to 1978, Matías Prats, was instrumental in the utilization of the occasional victories of the national team as the catalyst for aggressive nationalism, rather than as a symbol of the superiority of the Spanish race. In July 1950, Prats excitedly claimed to approximately fifteen million national radio listeners that Spain's World Cup victory over England was revenge for the continued British occupation of Gibraltar. He never crossed the thin line, however, between this type of aggressively nationalism and Fascist rhetoric

79. For further details of these name changes, see Barrabás, (Barcelona) No. 84, 18 May 1974.

based on claims of racial superiority.⁸⁰

The success of the Spanish team in the 1950 World Cup tournament in Brazil, however, did provoke some pieces of Fascist rhetoric. This was how Marca reacted to the defeat of England:

"This is the greatest sporting achievement since our "War of Liberation", and...a splendid demonstration to the whole world that the traditional Hispanic virtues of passion, aggression, fury, virility and impetuousity have been completely recovered in the "New Spain" born out of that bloody conflict."⁸¹

Arriba also based its preview of the Spanish team's crucial match against hosts Brazil on these allegedly "traditional Hispanic virtues":

"Tomorrow, playing against the host team and 150,000 Brazilian supporters in the Maracana Stadium, our team will have again to display all the Spanish masculine characteristics that have so far destroyed the United States, Chile and England: courage, passion, determination, aggression, discipline, virility and fury."⁸²

From 1950 onwards, the Fascist rhetoric surrounding the national team declined gradually, mainly because of the almost complete lack of success enjoyed by this team. Ironically, the defeats of the national team served as a bigger opportunity for this kind of rhetoric than did the occasional victories. With every defeat, Marca, Arriba and El Alcázar would produce invective about the furia española having been diluted by the adoption of foreign tactics and by the inclusion in the team of nationalized South American players such as Alfredo Di Stéfano of Real Madrid. For example, this was the reaction of El Alcázar to the

80. This was the defence of Prats himself, supported by the veteran sports journalists Juan José Castillo and Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera".

81. Marca, 3 July 1950.

82. Arriba, 8 July 1950.

elimination of the national team in the qualifying competition for the 1954 World Cup finals tournament by unfancied Turkey:

"This is the consequence of the introduction into our traditionally manful, aggressive, impassioned football of alien foreign tactics and methods... We Spaniards play best when we play in our own style, not one borrowed from overseas..."⁸³

This was the judgement of General José Villalba, the assistant to both General Moscardó and José Antonio Elola Olaso at the DND, after Spain had been beaten 3-0 by Portugal in June 1956:

"Today's match has been an authentic example of lost courage. The surfeit of technique has made Spanish football effeminate. We have always won on the basis of courage. It's loss has brought today's reverse..."⁸⁴

The Spanish team for the 1962 World Cup finals tournament in Chile contained four overseas-born players, and was coached by the controversial Argentine Helenio Herrera. When the team lost to Brazil and was eliminated from the tournament, this high level of foreign influence was vehemently criticized. Marca led the way in this criticism:

"Spain has been eliminated from the World Cup because our team was not sufficiently Spanish... For more than ten years now, we have quite rightly been applauding the introduction into Spanish football of outstanding, spectacular foreign players such as Alfredo Di Stéfano, Ferenc Puskas and Ladislao Kubala, and talented foreign coaches like Fernando Daucick, Helenio Herrera and Rubén Fleitas. They have added colour and excitement to our domestic football, and helped our clubs to win the European competitions. But this foreign influence has now extended too far. Our leading club teams are so full with imported players that Spanish youngsters are not given the chance to impress. Even worse, the national team is now so full of foreigners and so conditioned by foreign tactics that it no longer plays like a team of real Spaniards, with passion, with aggression, with courage, with virility, and above all, with fury... Without intending any disrespect towards these distinguished players, we are compelled

83. El Alcázar, 18 March 1954.

84. Quoted in ABC, (Madrid) 6 June 1956.

repeatedly to ask ourselves: how can Di Stéfano and Puskas feel sufficient patriotic pride when they pull on the famous red shirt and line up for the national anthems?.. It is time to construct a completely new national football team, with eleven wholly Spanish players, playing with Spanish tactics and the sadly almost forgotten furia española."⁸⁵

Arriba, which had warned against excessive foreign presence in the national team before the journey to Chile,⁸⁶ actually suggested afterwards a prohibition on the further importation of foreign players:

"What happened in Chile did not surprise us at all... Even if the team called "Spain" had won the trophy, always an unlikely prospect, then it would still not have been occasion for unconditional satisfaction, because this team was hardly Spanish at all... What is needed is a truly Spanish national team, an impassioned, manful and courageous team. It seems to us that the best way to achieve this is to stop the flood of imports into our domestic game, in order to recover the traditional Spanish style of play and build a national team of powerful and aggressive young Spaniards."⁸⁷

The DND did impose a ban on the further importation of foreign players in August 1962, which pleased Marca, Arriba and El Alcázar,⁸⁸ and caused the allegation that this ban signified a resurgence of Fascist influence in Spanish football.⁸⁹ This accusation is only partly true. As explained at the time by José Antonio Elola Olaso, the

85. Marca, 17 July 1962.

86. See, for example, Arriba, 23 June 1965.

87. Arriba, 20 July 1962.

88. See, for example, Arriba, 7 August 1962, and El Alcázar and Marca, 8 August 1962.

89. This allegation was made in Carzola Prieto, op. cit., p. 239, and in Marco, op. cit., p. 88.

Delegado Nacional de Deportes, the decision had been affected by the criticisms about the allegedly excessive foreign influence in the team which failed in Chile.⁹⁰ Elola Olaso admitted, however, that the major reason for the prohibition was that the world football governing body FIFA had, as a result of protests from several countries about Spain and Italy playing with foreign-born players in Chile,⁹¹ tightened up its regulations about imported players being incorporated into the national team of their new country.⁹² The Delegado Nacional pointed out that, in consequence, it would be extremely difficult to form a decent team for the 1966 World Cup finals without an import ban, and that such a ban had been adopted two weeks earlier in Italy, for this reason.⁹³

It is logical to assume that if the import prohibition had been based on essentially Fascist principles, then the DND would have upheld it in the strictest possible manner. From the late 1960s until the termination of the ban in 1973, however, the DND turned a blind eye to the entry into domestic football of an abundance of South American players with dubious documents claiming Spanish parentage, as shall be fully discussed in Chapter Eight of this thesis.

Before this import ban, the international successes of Real Madrid were accompanied by extremely little Fascist rhetoric, because of these successes being obviously the result of the expensive purchases of the

90. This was implicitly revealed by Elola Olaso in an interview with El Mundo Deportivo, 18 August 1962.

91. For details of these protests, see World Soccer, August and September 1962.

92. See El Mundo Deportivo, 18 August 1962.

93. Ibid.

Argentine Alfredo Di Stéfano, the Uruguayan José Santamaría, the Hungarian Ferenc Puskas and the Frenchman Raymond Kopa. The Delegado Nacional Elola Olaso raised many eyebrows when he attempted to apply such rhetoric after seeing, in December 1958, an Atlético de Madrid team containing four foreigners beat the Bulgarians CDNA of Sofia in the European Cup:

"Apart from the result, which fully satisfies me, what impressed me the most was appreciating that the racial virtues of the Spaniards continue, when placed under examination in... undertakings of major historical transcendency."⁹⁴

Short of their foreign stars, the Spanish clubs, especially Real Madrid, were far less successful in the European competitions, and therefore provided little opportunity for Fascist rhetoric. A rare opportunity presented itself in May 1966, when a rejuvenated and wholly Spanish Real Madrid won the European Cup for the sixth time. The Spanish Ambassador in Bonn, José Sebastián de Erice O'Shea, watched the final against Partizan Belgrade in Brussels, along with several other of Franco's ministers and diplomats, and was moved to comment:

"I wear the badge that I received from the club (Real Madrid) with pride and joy, because, as a representative of my country, I realize that the presence of Real Madrid across the world is an authentic expression of our virile, young enthusiastic reborn Spain."⁹⁵

The only occasion that the new, young, wholly Spanish national team provided for this kind of rhetoric was the victory in the 1964 European Nations Cup, staged in Spain. Before the final against the Soviet Union, the man who had constructed this new team, Colonel José

94. Quoted in Marca, 19 December 1958.

95. Quoted in the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 193, June 1966.

Villalonga, a young officer in Franco's army in the Civil War and afterwards head of the "Military School of Physical Education" in Toledo, commented to the Press:

"Tomorrow's match will be the culmination of two years' hard work, building a young, impassioned, aggressive, virile team based on typical Hispanic racial virtues... Two years ago, in Chile, we had a team of foreigners and Spaniards playing to foreign tactics. That situation could not last. Today, we have a team of real Spaniards once more, a team we can all be proud of."⁹⁶

Like the Fascist rhetoric in general, the myth of the furia española enjoyed a brief resurgence in the period following the prohibition of foreign players in 1962. This myth had hardly been applied to the five European Cup triumphs of Real Madrid from 1956 to 1960, because of both the immense foreign presence in the team and the sophisticated, short-passing tactics that it employed, in contrast to the direct and aggressive style of Athletic de Bilbao. The announcement of the ban on further players was enthusiastically greeted in this way by Marca:

"Let us fervently hope that this reduction in the foreign influence in our national game quickly leads to a complete recuperation of the furia española, out of fashion for far too many years..."⁹⁷

Practically every newspaper report of the 1964 European Nations Cup final contained several references to the furia, Arriba leading the way:

"The furia española has returned at last, and... triumphed in adversity yesterday, against the most difficult of opponents... Yesterday's victory demonstrated to the world that the furia española is invincible, when employed with passion, aggression, courage and virility."⁹⁸

96. Quoted in Marca, 21 June 1964.

97. Marca, 8 August 1962.

98. Arriba, 23 June 1962.

The resurgence of the furia myth was completed by Real Madrid's sixth European Cup win in 1966. Marca regarded this event as the dawning of a new are for the furia:

"Just four years ago, our football was dominated by foreigners, and our beloved furia española was in serious danger of extinction... Two years ago, the furia returned in the form of a virile, impassioned young Spanish team which defeated the Soviet Union. Now, after a rejuvenated and wholly Spanish Real Madrid has recaptured the European Cup, the return of the furia is evident. But this process should not be regarded as completed. Instead, we should look with optimism to the future, because the furia española is on the verge of a new Golden Age, when young, impassioned Spanish players will once again demonstrate to the world the Hispanic racial virtues."⁹⁹

Apart from the national team's triumph in the 1964 European Nations Cup and Real Madrid's victory in 1966 European Cup, there were to be no other international successes for these rejuvenated, all-Spanish teams, and therefore very little opportunity for the Fascist rhetoric and the furia española myth. One of the last examples of this kind of rhetoric occurred in June 1971, when the Spanish national team travelled to Moscow for a European Nations Cup match. Although this was not mentioned in any other newspaper, both Marca and Arriba carried grandiose, fulsome articles claiming that the whole Spanish party, upon departure after defeat by the Soviets, chanted Arriba España! and sang Cara al Sol.¹⁰⁰ It has been alleged by several of the players, however, that the chanting and singing was initiated by the Marca and Arriba correspondents, and carried out by the RFEF and DND officials without

99. Marca, 13 May 1966.

100. See Marca, and Arriba, 2 June 1971.

any substantial contribution coming from the players.¹⁰¹

It is appropriate at this stage to attempt to arrive at a conclusion about the extent of Fascist influence over Spanish professional football during the Franco years. A clear distinction has to be made between the "Blue Period" from 1939 to 1948, and the three decades that followed. During the "Blue Period", this Fascist influence over football was immense, indeed, every bit as strong over Spanish sport and society in general. The Falangist DND appointed an abundance of Falangists as Presidents and directors of the RFEF, of the regional federations and of the clubs, three of whom were compelled to change their foreign-influenced names, whilst every match began with Fascist saluting and chanting, and was largely reported in the Press in a language riddled with Fascist rhetoric. The "de-Falangization" of Spain from the late 1940s onwards was clearly reflected in football by the abandonment of the pre-match Fascist gestures and the blue shirts of the national team. Thereafter, the Fascist influence over football declined very gradually. The proportion of Falangists in positions of power was restricted firstly by the return, in 1948, of a limited degree of democracy to the football clubs, and secondly by the clubs taking part in the election, from 1961 onwards, of the majority of the directors of the RFEF and the regional federations. The Fascist rhetoric and mystification of the game was made difficult in the 1950s by the extremely high level of foreign influence in the internationally

101. This was alleged to the author by the following former players, present in Moscow: Carles Rexach of FC Barcelona, José Angel Iribar of Athletic de Bilabao, 1 July 1986; Manuel Velázquez of Real Madrid.

successful teams, especially Real Madrid.

This rhetoric and mystification enjoyed a temporary resurgence in the period 1962-1966, because of the prohibition on further foreign players and the brief successes of the national team and Real Madrid. By the end of the Franco period, the Fascist influence over professional football was limited to Falangist Presidents of the RFEF, for example José Luis Pérez Payá and Pablo Porta, and the occasional reappearance of the Fascist gesturing and rhetoric, such as occurred when the national team travelled to Moscow in June 1971.

The major obstacle to the application of Fascist concepts to Spanish professional football, and indeed to Italian and German professional football earlier, was the lack of a precise model for the professional game. The Fascist model for sport in general required mass participation in order, firstly, to "revitalize" the race, and, secondly, to impress the watching world. This model, however, was strictly confined to amateur sport. The world of professional football, with its immense passive support, millionaire players and imported foreign stars, was always going to have severe difficulties in harmoniously coexisting with this Fascist sporting model.

A veritable gulf existed between these two sporting worlds. This was illustrated by the events of every 1 May during the 1940s and 1950s, when the DND organized the annual "Sindicalist Sporting Games", in which members of the "Vertical Syndicates" would attempt to offer a multi-sports spectacular. This would take place in Real Madrid's Estadio Bernabeu, only half filled with non-participating members of the

"Vertical Syndicates" who had been coerced into attending, or members of the public who entered free of charge.¹⁰² The lack of interest in this annual event can be contrasted with the same stadium packed to 125,000 capacity to see the expensive foreign stars lead Real Madrid to another triumph in the European Cup.

To bridge the gap between these two distinct sporting worlds was to square a circle. There was absolutely no official attempt to do this by the leadership of the DND or the Falange.¹⁰³ The ambiguity was allowed to remain completely unresolved. The only serious attempt to close this gap was undertaken by the Falangist broadcaster Mariano Daranas of Radio Nacional when, in June 1954, Real Madrid staged a free exhibition match against a side of veteran national team players to celebrate the opening of the final section of the Estadio Bernabeu. This is a part of Daranas's appraisal of the event:

"Perhaps we talk too loudly and too well against Communism. But are we certain that we really comfort ourselves like anti-Communists? Are we sure that we apply all all the necessary, or, at least, possible means so that the horse-breakers of working-class meat do not manage to play the role of anxious sheperds? In order to respond with a categorical affirmative, it is necessary to place with the reach of the lower classes, the more frequently the better, not only certain essential biological demands, such as work, food, sleep, house and leisure, but also those other social imperatives that are the almost exclusive monopoly of certain economic classes. Bear in mind that, thanks to Real Madrid, thousands and thousands of poor children saw for the first time on Saturday a real football match; that Zarra and Di Stéfano changed in front of their eyes from legendary figures into men of flesh and bone; that the parents enjoyed seeing their children delighted.

102. For further details of these "Sindicalist Sporting Games", see Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 218-221.

103. No such attempt was discovered by the author in his examination of the archives of the DND, op. cit., nor was referred to by any of his interviewees.

Bear in mind that throughout the evening the gigantic and harmonious stadium was not, strictly speaking the property of Real Madrid, but that of thousands of humble families who cannot afford to buy tickets for every Sunday league match, to such an extent that the actual season ticket holders, powerless, and persuaded by the immense wave of new spectators, gave up their seats in the covered stand to the masses from the poor districts."¹⁰⁴

Apart from this rhetoric, there was no other attempt by the DND of the Falange to diminish the gulf which separated the Fascist sporting model and Spanish professional football.

104. This radio script was reproduced in the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No.48, July 1954.

CHAPTER THREE: FOOTBALL AND POLITICAL PASSIVITY

"For years, Spanish sport was effectively reduced to football, always employed as a drug to make the man in the street forget his everyday problems, and used systematically on the eve of the most conflictive public holidays. Manuel Fraga, specifically, combined the fiestas of football and bulls for all of the May Day public holidays, culminating a few years ago, on 30 April, in a television transmission of all of the goals ever scored by the Spanish national team, narrated by the epic voice of Francoism, that of the commentator Matías Prats."¹

This is the opinion of Javier Solana, the present Spanish Minister of Culture with responsibility for sport,² about the second aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain: the alleged manipulation of the game by the Franco regime to serve as a political soporific, "social drug" or "escape valve" that contributed towards the maintenance of a high level of political passivity. Together with the diplomatic and regional significance of football, which will be examined in Chapters Seven and Eight of this thesis respectively, this has been the most discussed aspect of politicization.

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1. Quoted in Antonio Alcoba, op. cit., pp. 254-255.
 2. In August 1977, the DND became the Consejo Superior de Deportes, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. This arrangement for the political control of Spanish sport remains intact at the time of writing.

The general allegation against the Franco regime with regard to this particular aspect, made largely by an abundance of both Spanish and foreign sports writers, is that it systematically manipulated football in order to help maintain a high degree of political passivity that was originally established by force of arms. These many critics of the Franco regime do not attempt to deny that there existed an immense genuine demand for professional football from a repressed and entertainment-starved Spanish public. They simply allege that this demand was cynically exploited. Their arguments centre on the contribution towards the popularity of the game made by the sections of the media most closely connected to the State: the daily sports newspaper Marca, a member of the Movimiento's extensive Press chain, and national radio and television. In particular, the latter institution is alleged to have been utilized during the May Day public holidays of the late 1960s and early 1970s in an attempt by the regime to reduce the attendance at the illegal demonstrations of the opposition parties and the independent trade unions.³

In defence of the Franco regime, it is argued, largely by a group of veteran, conservative Spanish sports journalists, that the enormous popularity of football during the Franco years had nothing to do with the regime. They point out that an explosion of interest in the game similar to the one that occurred in Franco Spain also took place in

3. This allegation has been made in the following publications: Alcoba, op. cit., pp. 253-255; Luis María Cazorla Preito, op. cit., p.163; Vicente Marco, Historias del deporte, Madrid, 1982, p.144; Julián García Candau, op. cit., pp. 51-52; Alex J. Botines, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

every European and South American country after the Second World War, and that this explosion produced allegations of football acting as a political soporific in most of these countries. In a specific Spanish context, this group of writers claims that the high level of coverage of the game by both the State-controlled and independent sections of the media was the effect rather than the immense public demand for the product rather than to any manipulation by the Franco regime, and that, in consequence, this media coverage should not be subjected to suspicion or investigation.⁴

This chapter has five objectives. The first is to demonstrate that football has been utilized as a political soporific not only in Francoist Spain, but also in many countries and at many times, especially in the South American military dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s. The second objective is to demonstrate that football was simply one part of the all-pervasive "culture of evasion", the concept employed with regard to the popular culture that prevailed in Francoist Spain.⁵ The third objective is to demonstrate that the critic's perception of football as a political soporific increased in intensity at approximately the same rate as the game itself increased in popularity. To examine the evidence that supports the view that football was systematically utilized by the Franco regime as a political diversion is

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4. The only publication in which these views have been expounded in any kind of systematic manner has been Marca, 17 February 1970. These views have been expressed to the author in interviews with the Marca journalists José María Lorente and Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo", 3 May 1986, and by the former RFEF Presidents José Luis Pérez Payá, and Pablo Porta.
 5. This concept was created by Sir Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, op. cit.

the fourth and most important objective of this chapter. The fifth and final objective is to evaluate to what extent football contributed to the high level of political passivity that existed in Francoist Spain.

There have been several newspaper and magazine articles about the alleged utilization of football as a political soporific, the most notable written by the celebrated Uruguayan novelist Mario Benedetti.⁶ No systematic monographic study of this phenomenon in the whole of South America, however, has been published. In these articles, it has been alleged that this manipulation of the game normally occurs when a military junta realizes that repression, or the fear of repression, is not sufficient in itself to maintain for an extended period the high level of political demobilization originally established by force of arms and also that it is incapable of attaining the economic and social progress which usually brings political passivity in its wake. In order to obtain this level of passivity, the junta is compelled to search for popular entertainments which could be promoted to be political soporifics, the Roman idea of "bread and circuses" appealing to the military mind. There is practically no viable alternative to football as the principal "circus" in the view of the junta, being a daily saga of dramatic and impassioned events, and indeed traditionally the major source of entertainment for the majority of middle and working class males in South America.⁷

6. See, for example, El País, 6 January 1981 and 29 June 1986.

7. See, for example, the articles of Benedetti mentioned in the above footnote, Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-275, and Janet Lever, Soccer Madness, New York, 1983.

In the course of these newspaper and magazine articles, it is alleged that the South American military dictators adopted several measures in order to ensure that football had the potential to distract popular attention away from the political situation. Extremely little definitive proof, however, is offered in support of these allegations. The principal allegation is that substantial sums of money from mysterious sources frequently permitted the almost permanently near-bankrupt clubs to be able to resist the lucrative offers from Europe for the most attractive and popular players. It is claimed that in this way the modest Santos club of Sao Paulo was able to maintain the world-famous player Pelé in their team for the whole of his career. The first headline-making offer for Pelé came from Real Madrid in June 1959, when he was still only nineteen years old.⁸ In June 1960, a mysterious "businessman" with a low public profile called Eduardo Antonio Coehlo gave financially-troubled Santos an interest-free loan of half a million United States dollars, on the condition that the lucrative offers for Pelé from the West German clubs Bayern Munich and SV Hamburg were rejected.⁹ It is alleged that Coehlo continued to give similar loans to Santos whenever it appeared possible that the player would be sold to a West German or Italian club, up until he retired from top-flight football in 1975.¹⁰ Much the same thing is alleged to have occurred with the immensely popular Uruguayan striker Fernando Morena of the Peñarol club of Montevideo, and also with Diego Maradona, who surprisingly remained in financially-troubled Argentine football, first with the

8. For further details, see Marca, 22-28 June 1959.

9. See, for further details, Lever, op. cit., pp. 113-114, or World Soccer, August 1968.

10. See Lever, ibid. op. cit., p.

Argentinos Juniors club and then with Boca Juniors, both of Buenos Aires until 1982.¹¹ It is claimed that mysterious sums of money have allowed many lesser-known Argentine, Brazilian, Uruguayan, Chilean and Paraguayan footballers to remain at home.¹² It is significant that after the fall of the military dictatorships in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil in the period 1983-1985, even the most popular clubs of these countries have been unable to resist the Italian, Spanish and French offers for their leading players.¹³

In a similar way, it is also alleged that the military dictators of South America materially contributed to football being able to serve as a political soporific by saving bankrupt clubs from disappearance with other mysterious sums of money. It is claimed that this occurred with special frequency in the Chile of General Pinochet, where the military regime has apparently realized that the collapse of professional clubs causes whole towns or suburbs to lose their principal source of entertainment, with matches cancelled throughout the country because of the withdrawal of these teams from the national league.¹⁴ It has been

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11. See, for further details, the two articles of Benedetti mentioned above, and World Soccer, September 1980.
 12. In addition to the two sources mentioned in the above footnote, see World Soccer, April 1977 and March 1982, and Don Balón, No.282, 10 January 1981.
 13. It was stated in World Soccer, March 1987, that there are 95 footballers from these three South American countries playing in the professional leagues of Western Europe. Indeed, the South American championship tournament for national teams, which took place in Argentina in July 1987, was severely weakened by the great majority of these 95 players having to remain with their European clubs.
 14. For further details of these allegations, see either Don Balón, No. 282, 10 January 1981 and No. 494, 7 April 1985, and World Soccer, March 1982 and September 1984

specifically alleged that the Pinochet regime stepped in to save the Everton club of Viña del Mar from extinction in 1979, and the Rangers club of Talca three years later.¹⁵ Of greater significance, however, appears to be the regime's constant preoccupation with the financial problems of Colo Colo Santiago, the most popular Chilean club. The regime realized that the disappearance of this famous club could have actually brought in its wake the collapse of the whole Chilean professional league. On two occasions, in 1981 and 1984, the Pinochet regime was so concerned about the Colo Colo situation that, echoing the governmental interference in Spanish football in the 1940s, it actually appointed its own nominee as club President, completely disregarding the wishes of the approximately 35,000 club members.¹⁶

It is claimed that the Stroessner regime in Paraguay was responsible for saving the Ascunción clubs Sol de América and Cerro Porteño from extinction, in 1983 and 1985 respectively,¹⁷ whilst the military junta then in power in Uruguay is alleged to have done the same with the highly popular Peñarol club of Montevideo in both 1978 and 1981.¹⁸

The various military regimes of South America have spent considerable amounts of money in preparing a successful national team, not only in order to have an obvious catalyst for aggressive nationalism, but, in addition, a political soporific that could assist

15. See Don Balón, No. 494, 7 April 1985.

16. Ibid.

17. See, for further details, World Soccer, April 1986

18. For details, see the two articles of Benedetti mentioned above.

in keeping the populace in front of their television sets instead of on the streets causing problems for the regime. The various Brazilian military juntas invested thousands of dollars in the preparation of their World Cup teams, with spectacular success in 1970, but considerably less in subsequent tournaments.¹⁹ The Uruguayan military dictators spent heavily on their national team in the period 1980-1982, were rewarded with the Mundialito victory in 1981, but in the same year failed to qualify for the 1982 World Cup finals tournament.²⁰ The Stroessner regime invested more than a million US dollars preparing the Paraguayan national team for the 1986 World Cup finals, in which they performed creditably.²¹

All of the money allegedly spent by the Brazilian, Uruguayan and Paraguayan regimes, however, pales in comparison with the two and a half million US dollars that the Argentine junta headed by General Jorge Videla invested in preparing a team for the 1978 World Cup finals, played on home soil.²² The young Argentine national manager César Luis Menotti reflected the general feeling that a good performance by the home team would contribute towards the maintenance of political passivity:

"If Argentina, apart from organizing the championship, manages a good classification, then many of the problems of the Argentine people will be resolved."²³

19. See, for further details, Lever, op. cit., pp. 32-55 and pp. 93-112.

20. See the two Benedetti El País articles for details.

21. This allegation was made in World Soccer, April 1986.

22. For further details, see World Soccer, October 1978, Don Balón, No. 282, 10 January 1981, and The Sunday Times, 21 June 1986.

23. Quoted in Interviú, 16 November 1977.

Menotti's team did win the tournament, playing open and attacking football, allowing the Videla junta to bask in the reflected glory.²⁴

The most obvious way, however, in which the South American military dictators attempted to promote football to be a political soporific was the same method as in Francoist Spain: an extremely high number of matches broadcast on State television, especially during the potentially dangerous May Day public holiday. This was the case in all of the dictatorships mentioned above, and especially in Argentina under the junta of General Onganía from 1966 to 1969, when as many as six matches a week were transmitted, the clubs being generously recompensated by the regime for the lack of paying spectators in the stadia.²⁵

Football has been manipulated as a political soporific not only in the South American military dictatorships. It is claimed that this has occurred in most of the dictatorships of the World, in Central America, in the one-party states of Black Africa, in South East Asia, and even in Eastern Europe.²⁶ Unlike South America, however, the areas mentioned above are not wildly enthusiastic about the game, being largely underdeveloped rural societies. Furthermore, there is no pluralist

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24. For details of how the Videla regime took advantage of the 1978 World Cup triumph, see: Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 308-310; Benedetti, op. cit.; World Soccer, October 1978; Don Balón, No. 282, 10 January 1981; The Sunday Times, (London) 21 June 1986.
25. See Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 297-298, and Vicente Verdú, El Fútbol: mitos, ritos y símbolos, Madrid, 1980, p. 205, and La Nación, (Buenos Aires), 6 May 1969 for details of this television coverage.
26. For brief details of all of these allegations, see the special report in Don Balón, No. 131, 8 April 1978, and Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 161-187.

democratic tradition in these areas, and the regimes in power have usually possessed neither the economic means nor the inclination to promote professional football as a political soporific, mainly because their problems have been more immediate.

It has even been asserted that football has served as an instrument of political diversion in Western Europe. In particular, it has been claimed by several Italian journalists and sociologists that Giovanni Agnelli, the largest shareholder of the Fiat car empire, is financier and President of the powerful Juventus club of Turin partially in order to distract the attention of his workers away from labour problems.²⁷ It is alleged that the same objectives are held by Fritz Scherer, the President of the leading West German club Bayern Munich and employer of approximately 40,000 Bavarians in various furniture factories.²⁸ Another example of a local capitalist allegedly directing the local football club with the intention of contributing towards passivity is the shipping magnate Claude Bez, President of the champion French club Girondins de Bordeaux.²⁹ One of the theoreticians of professional football as a political soporific in the Western pluralist democracies is Professor EW Hunt, who wound up his controversial article "Karl Marx versus the Stretford End," published by The Guardian in February 1981, in the following way:

"Professional football is also a powerful drug. Karl Marx called religion "the opium of the masses"; words to be inscribed later on Lenin's tomb. He was referring to Christianity which, so he believed, drugged the proletariat so effectively that they were not

27. For details, see Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 164-165.

28. Ibid.

29. See World Soccer, October 1981 for details.

conscious of their miseries. Were he alive today, he would still say the same. But he would hardly leave it there; he would no doubt add the names of the other narcotics that are corrupting Western society, among which he would not fail to include professional football.

It reminds you of the most pungent words of one of the most celebrated satirists of the ancient world:

"The Roman people crave only two things: bread and the circus games".

Is it any different today?"³⁰

A strong counter-argument can nevertheless be presented against applying this neo-Marxist theory of "false consciousness" to football, in consequence regarding the game as a political soporific in both military dictatorships and pluralist democracies alike. It can be argued that football fanaticism in all societies is more likely to be the effect rather than the cause of political passivity. In military dictatorships, political demobilization is established and subsequently maintained by repression, or the fear of repression, rather than by enthusiasm for football. This game frequently increases in popularity after the establishment of a dictatorship, but partially because of the general drabness of life and the lack of liberty to participate in many other activities.³¹ With regard to the pluralist democracies, there is absolutely no conclusive evidence whatsoever to suggest that football fanaticism can lead to political and industrial passivity. For example, there were far more strikes and conflicts at the Turin Fiat factory in the 1970s, when the Juventus team of Agnelli completely dominated Italian football, than in the relatively peaceful 1980s, when the domination of Juventus has been successfully challenged by

30. The Guardian, (London), 13 February 1981.

31. For further details of how football increased in popularity in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay after the military takeovers of the late 1960s and early 1970s, see Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., pp. 161-163, or Lever, op. cit.

Internazionale of Milan, Roma, Verona and Napoli. The American sociologist Janet Lever, who researched into the social and political significance of Brazilian football in the early 1970s, arrived at the conclusion that, when put to the test, football was incapable of serving as an agent of political passivity:

"We can condemn a regime's cruel tactics of social control and restrictions on civil liberties without condemning soccer. Few are fooled by the government's manipulation of sport for its nationalist goals; it is not "false consciousness" that makes people support their teams...Nor is soccer an opiate that would stop the revolution; a contest that dramatizes real social conflict could not continue in a time of extreme unrest and might even prompt civil disorder."³²

The second objective of this chapter is to demonstrate that football should be regarded as simply one part, albeit a large and important part, of the immense "culture of evasion" that existed in Francoist Spain. This was the concept created by Sir Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi in Spain: From Dictatorship to Democracy in order to describe Spanish popular culture in the Franco years, and was defined as "an escape from immediate reality".³³

This "culture of evasion" was mainly the product of the general desire in post-Civil War Spain to attempt to forget both the traumas of that conflict and the subsequent hunger, misery and repression. This desire to forget was largely responsible for the failure of the "heroic cinema" of the 1940s, heavily subsidised by the State, which offered epic films about the Nationalist struggle in the Civil War and

32. Lever, op. cit., p. 159.

33. Sir Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, op. cit., p. 118.

exaggerated exploits of the Falangist "Blue Division" on the Russian front. The other major casualty was the "social literature" of the 1950s, a largely failed attempt by young writers such as Miguel Delibes, Juan Goytisolo and Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio to bridge the extremely wide gap between the limited number of intellectuals who chose to remain in Francoist Spain and the largely indifferent masses. As sadly concluded by the Falangist poet Dionisio Ridruejò, who joined the anti-Francoist opposition in 1955, "intellectuals have never known a time when their influence has been so restricted"³⁴

Apart from football, the major manifestations of this "culture of evasion" were: the cinema, dominated by trivial Andalusian musicals starring the immensely popular Conchita Piquer,³⁵ Lola Flores and Carmen Sevilla, and American and Italian importations; tear-jerking "photo-novels" bought at the newspaper kiosks, of which the best-selling Simplemente María series was the undisputed market leader;³⁶ from the early 1960s onwards, the hugely popular trivial serials and game shows

34. Dionisio Ridruejo, Escrito en España, Madrid, 1962, p. 176.

35. It was a song of Conchita Piquer which perhaps best epitomised the general desire to ignore the immediate past and contemporary reality which was fundamental to this "culture of evasion":

" I don't want to find out
Don't tell me, neighbour
I prefer to live dreaming
Than to know the truth."

This song was quoted in Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Crónica sentimental de España, Barcelona, 1971, p. 28. In this stimulating work, all of the manifestations of the "culture evasion", including football, are discussed in depth.

36. For further details of the Simplemente María phenomenon, see Manuel Campo Vidal, Simplemente María y su repercusión en las clases trabajadoras, Madrid, 1979.

broadcast by State television.³⁷ During the last years of the Franco period, television almost completely dominated this "culture of evasion", a situation that caused Josep Plá to observe, in 1972, that "everybody is watching television serials with open mouths, such is today's culture",³⁸ and his fellow Catalan writer Manuel Vázquez Montalbán to claim, a year later, that "to talk about a mass culture in Spain practically reduces the subject to television and songs".³⁹ None of these manifestations of the "culture of evasion" made any serious attempt to reflect the social and political reality of Francoist Spain, instead offering the public the opportunity temporarily to escape from the reality of long working hours, low pay, poor nutrition and the fear of repression.

Football was not the only sport which formed a part of this "culture of evasion". It has been alleged that basketball, by far the second most popular sport in Francoist Spain.⁴⁰ was also exploited by the Franco regime as a distraction that could contribute towards the maintenance of a high level of political passivity.⁴¹ The estimated television viewing figures for basketball matches in the early 1960s

37. For complete details of television's role in this "culture of evasion", see Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, El libro gris de Televisión Española, Madrid, 1973.

38. Quoted in Triunfo, 23 December 1972.

39. Vázquez Montalbán, El libro gris de Televisión Española, op. cit., p. 161.

40. For details of basketball's popularity in Francoist Spain in terms of paying spectators and television audiences, see Marco, op. cit., pp. 167-169.

41. This allegation has been made in the following publications: Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., p. 341; Marco, op. cit., p. 167; García Candau, op. cit., p. 108.

were extremely high, on occasions reaching ten million,⁴² which obviously encouraged State television (RTVE) to combine this sport with football in its special transmissions allegedly designed to reduce attendance at the illegal May Day demonstrations. The first May Day basketball broadcast consisted of the Real Madrid-Caja de Zaragoza match in 1964. The following year, there was no room for basketball because, as shall shortly be seen, RTVE transmitted no less than four football matches during the May Day public holiday period. For the May 1966 holiday, the FC Barcelona-Real Madrid basketball clash, which would decide the league championship, was brought forward by three days and seen by an estimated 14 million viewers, the record for a Spanish basketball match until 1980.⁴³ From 1966 onwards, there was at least one basketball match broadcast by TVE during the May Day holiday, top domestic matches supplemented by the occasional foreign clash, for example the Soviet Union-Yugoslavia international in 1972.

The only other sport which possibly served the Franco regime as a political diversion is bullfighting, which is in fact not, strictly speaking, a sport. There was a large number of bullfights broadcast by RTVE in the summer months, when there was neither football nor basketball. Furthermore, as commented by Javier Solana at the beginning of this chapter, bullfights were also transmitted by RTVE during the

42. It was claimed in the estimated viewing figures offered in Hola!, (Madrid) for example, that the Real Madrid-FC Barcelona basketball match of February 1964 attracted a television audience of almost twelve millions. It was claimed by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, however, in El libro gris de Televisión Española, op. cit., that all estimated viewing figures in the 1960s tended to be exaggerated because of the imprecise methods employed to gather the data.

43. Information taken from Hola!.

May Day public holiday.

The third objective of this chapter is to explain the process by which the view that football was being manipulated by the Franco regime was born and gradually gained widespread acceptance.

After the conclusion of the Civil War, there was an immense popular demand, reflected in the Press, for the league and cup competitions immediately to recommence.⁴⁴ The demand for cheap entertainment and distraction from the miserable reality of the immediate postwar years was enormous, and consequently the football stadia were practically always filled to capacity.⁴⁵ In addition, there were practically no other forms of mass entertainment, apart from bullfighting during the summer months.

These capacity crowds were certainly not attracted by the prospect

44. This demand was reflected in interviews with the Presidents of the RFEF, Julian Troncoso Sagredo, in Marca, 2 May 1939, with the Falangist Zaragoza President Antonio Rodríguez in El Mundo Deportivo, 10 June 1939, and in the editorials published in Marca, April 1939 and 22 May 1939, and in El Mundo Deportivo, 28 May and 4 September 1939.

45. A special report published in Marca, 19 June 1942 estimated that for approximately 80% of the first and second division, ie. professional, and Copa del Generalísimo matches played in the three seasons since the Civil War there had been a capacity crowd, and that at the remaining 20% of matches only on very rare occasions had the shortfall of spectators been more than 20%. In consequence, Marca called upon the DND to initiate a policy of stadia construction, beginning with a 100,000-capacity national stadium in Madrid. This call was taken up by both El Alcázar and Arriba, because of lack of State investment, however, the DND was only able to offer a tiny amount of financial assistance to the private football clubs to construct their own stadia. By 1944, the Press campaign for public stadia had terminated.

of seeing spectacular football. Several leading players had died in the conflict, for example Luis Montañés of Valencia and Enrique Urquizu of Athletic de Bilbao. Many others preferred to remain in exile in South America rather than return to Francoist Spain, for example practically the whole of the El Euzkadi combined Basque team and of the FC Barcelona team that toured Mexico. It was not until the mid-1940s that a new generation of attractive Spanish players came to the fore, featuring Telmo Zarra and Piru Gainza of Athletic de Bilbao, Estanislao Basora and César of FC Barcelona and Luis Molowny of Real Madrid. This lack of attractive players in the early 1940s, however, did not matter overmuch to the entertainment-starved and war-weary Spanish public.

The popularity of Spanish football increased considerably in the 1940s.⁴⁶ This increase was largely due to the attractive young players mentioned above, and the fact that no single team dominated the game, the honours being distributed between the leading clubs. This state of equality continued until Real Madrid, inspired by the Argentine forward

46. Using information gathered from the archives of El Mundo Deportivo, of Marca, and of the major football clubs, it can be estimated that football crowds for professional matches increased by approximately 50% from 1940 to 1950. More accurate figures cannot be given because, due to the membership system operated at all Spanish clubs, no exact records of the numbers of spectators at any match are kept. In addition, this increase would surely have been far higher if any other clubs, apart from Real Madrid in 1947, had constructed completely new stadia, instead of merely increasing the capacity of their old grounds. The only definitive statistics available are those of the the increase of members at the leading clubs, obtained by the author examining their separate archives: in July 1940, Real Madrid had 11,766 members, a figure which had risen to 35,642 by July 1950; the increase at FC Barcelona during the same period was from 4,307 to 33,860; at Atlético de Madrid, from 7,539 to 14,024; at Athletic de Bilbao, from 7,875 to 16,127; at Real Sociedad de San Sebastian, from 5,548 to 11,831.

Alfredo Di Stéfano, began to dominate in the mid-1950s.

This increase in popularity was also reflected in the sharp increase in the football pools revenue,⁴⁷ and in the number of listeners to the match commentaries broadcast on the radio. In the immediate post-Civil War years, a radio receiver was something of a luxury, and practically the only stations broadcasting belonged either to the State or to the media chain of the Movimiento. By 1950, however, the majority of Spanish homes possessed a receiver, and usually spent Sunday evenings listening to the exciting football commentaries broadcast by the new private radio stations, with their pools coupons in front of them⁴⁸

The popularity of football in Francoist Spain received another considerable increase because of the creditable fourth place achieved by the national team in the 1950 World Cup finals tournament in Brazil. The media coverage of the tournament was immense, whilst the city councils of Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia and Sevilla erected large screens and showed to the enthusiastic public 8mm films of the Spanish victories two days afterwards. The media coverage and the film shows caused several people connected with the game to suspect that the Franco regime might be exploiting football in order to maintain a high

47. During the season 1939/1940, the three private football pools companies which recommenced after the Civil War had joint revenues of 2,868,750 pesetas, which was inferior to the 1935/1936 total of 3,011,427 pesetas. By season 1949/1950, his total had spectacularly risen to 26,478,348 pesetas. This information was revealed by an examination of the archives of the DND.

48. This was claimed to the author by Vicente Marco, the founder and former director of the Cadena SER' highly popular Sunday sports programme Carrusel deportivo, which attracted an estimated fifteen million listeners by 1950.

level of political passivity, although this suspicion, for obvious reasons, was not put into print.⁴⁹

Eight more years were to pass before this suspicion was printed inside Spain. The subject was originally broached by Spanish Republican exiles in Mexican and South American newspapers.⁵⁰ In November 1958, the Francoist writer Rafael García Serrano hinted in Arriba that the popularity of football could be a factor in the political demobilization of the country, without going so far as to suggest that this was the product of deliberate regime policy, nor even that such depoliticization was one of the objectives of the regime.⁵¹

By the time of Serrano's article, the popularity of football in Francoist Spain had ascended to new heights, largely because of the arrival of world-class foreign players such as Alfredo Di Stéfano, Raymond Kopa and Ferenc Puskas at Real Madrid, Ladislav Kubala, Eugenio Martínez and Sandor Kocsis at FC Barcelona, and Vavá at Atlético de Madrid. In order to accommodate the mass of spectators that were attracted by these foreign players, practically all of the professional clubs either increased the capacity of their stadia by major

49. This suspicion was felt at the the time by for example, the present FC Barcelona Vice-President Nicolau Casaus, and by Juan José Castillo, the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo, in 1950 a journalist on the paper.

50. See, for example, the special feature on the popularity of football in Francoist Spain which appeared in La Nación, 9 October 1956, and the column of José María Muguerra, one of the components of the El Euzkadi Basque team of 1938 who had remained in exile, in the Mexico City sports review Domingo Deportivo from June 1955 to November 1957.

51. See "Defensa del fútbol" by Rafael García Serrano in Arriba, 29 November 1958.

renovations, or constructed completely new stadia.

It was not until the advent of television, however that the suspicion that the Franco regime was attempting to use football as a political soporific began really to grow in strength. Because of the technological backwardness of Francoist Spain, largely due to its isolation from the other countries of Western Europe, Spanish national television (RTVE) was not established until October 1958. Furthermore, the outside broadcast facilities of RTVE were not sufficiently advanced to permit regular broadcasts of football matches until 1961.

The view of football as a "social drug" in Francoist Spain was publicly expressed for the first time in 1968, by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, who largely based his argument on the football coverage of RTVE:

"The fact that there are more football matches transmitted by television in Spain than in any other European country, says a lot in itself about the kind of popular culture that exists in this society, and even about our political system...One of the major effects of such an immensity of televised football, apart from reducing attendances at the stadia, is undoubtedly to contribute towards the creation of a general public that is passive in all respects."⁵²

Vázquez Montalbán's broaching of the subject in this way made an important contribution to encouraging a debate, albeit somewhat limited, about a possible connection between the "football fever" and the political passivity that existed in Francoist Spain.⁵³ Two months

52. Quoted in Barça, No. 664, 20 March 1968.

53. Alex J. Botines, for example, pointed out that Vázquez Montalbán's frank interview in Barça encouraged him to be so forthright in Dicen two months later.

later, in May 1968, Alex J. Botines went a step further than Vázquez Montalbán by referring to the football broadcasts during the May Day public holiday, and mischievously speculating about possible motives for these broadcasts:

"Once again, the armchair football supporter has been treated to a feast, seeing some of the most exciting domestic and international action. But one question repeatedly occurs to me: why so much televised football during this particular holiday? Do the authorities wish to keep us all in the living-room, away from the beach or the mountains?"⁵⁴

1969 was the year in which this debate increased in both quantity and quality. There were further contributions from both Vázquez Montalbán and Botines. In February 1969, the humorous writer Evaristo Acevedo published Carta a los celtíberos esposados, his amusing interpretation of contemporary Spanish history. Writing with an obvious touch of irony, Acevedo offered the first historical explanation of the increase in the popularity of football in Francoist Spain, linking it with the process of "de-Falangization" that was discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis:

"Politics began to be relegated to a discreet penumbra, leaving the biggest preoccupations for the economy. How was the gap filled between 1947, the year in which Spain began to despoliticize itself, and 1967, in which first by means of democracia orgánica and afterwards by means of other liberalizations, Spain began to reintegrate herself into the international coexistence, into "the world of our days"? Simple: by "footballizing" public opinion.

By means of a controlled Press, which dedicated pages and pages to the league matches, to the cup matches, to the declarations of coaches and footballers, to the financially fabulous transfers of the great figures of football, the country began to become impassioned about football."⁵⁵

54. Dicen, 2 May 1968.

55. Evaristo Acevedo, Carta a los celtíberos esposados, 1969, pp. 190-191.

The first important figure inside the football world to express his opinion on the matter was the Real Madrid President Santiago Bernabeu, probably because he was annoyed by the earlier comments of Vázquez Montalbán, Botines and Acevedo. In contrast to these commentators, Bernabeu found nothing either dangerous or suspicious about football serving as political soporific, without entering into the question of whether this situation was the result of a deliberate policy of the Franco regime. This is how he was quoted in the semi-official Real Madrid book 5,000 goles blancos, published in September 1969:

"We are in a moment of such great incomprehension and such a horrible bustle that what the people really want is tranquility. The people want to find refuge in their house with their wife, with their children, with their family, with their friends. Nothing else matters to them. It's pure tragedy. Football is the means by which the great mass of people forget their problems from time to time."⁵⁶

Bernabeu was by no means alone in his opinions. His counterpart at Atlético de Madrid, Vicente Calderón, was far more explicit when questioned about the subject on television in November 1969, the question itself reflecting how widespread this debate had become in such a short period:

" - Do you not think that football is making the country stupid?
- I wish that football would make the country stupid, and I wish that the people would think about football for three days before and three days after the match. In this way, they would not think about other, more dangerous things."⁵⁷

56. Quoted in Juan Matías and José Luis Muniain, 5,000 goles blancos, Bilbao, 1969, p. 326.

57. Reproduced in all of the Spanish sports newspapers, 17 November 1969.

This debate continued apace in the Press, with the great majority of contributions coming from the new generation of critical sports journalists, led by Alex J. Botines, Julián García Candau and José María García, in addition to non-specialist sports writers such as Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Francisco Cerecedo.⁵⁸ The next significant contribution to the debate came from Bernabeu, in February 1971. Instead of limiting himself, as before, to claiming that football helped the general public to escape from a sometimes unpleasant reality, he actually boasted that Real Madrid was doing a favour to the "nation" by keeping the people in a state of contentment:

"We are doing a service for the nation. What we want is to keep the people happy. I say to you that we are doing a service for the nation because people like football a lot, and with football the Spaniards make their daily problems more bearable."⁵⁹

The next distinguished person in the game to declare his opinion about the subject was the Athletic de Bilbao President José María Oraa, who objected to the RFEF requesting him to bring forward Athletic's home match against Valencia by three days in order to be broadcast by RTVE on May Day 1973. Despite the normal compensation offered to the clubs by RTVE for the reduction in paying spectators, Oraa insisted on protesting in the following way:

"There is altogether far too much televised football in this country. Furthermore, I am simply at a loss to understand why RTVE always has to broadcast a number of matches during the May Day holiday, as if it was really preoccupied with keeping about half of the country in their homes..."⁶⁰

58. See, for example: Dicen, 9 April 1970 and 12 September 1971; Barça, No. 765, 13 July 1970; As, 27 September and 3 January 1971; "Deporte, sociedad y política", Cuadernos para el diálogo, (Madrid), No. XXV, May 1971.

59. Quoted in Informaciones, (Madrid), 26 February 1971.

60. Quoted in As, 26 April 1973.

This debate was not completely confined to the Spanish media. In March 1974, the prestigious Paris newspaper Le Monde undertook a detailed study of the Spanish political situation, and one of the conclusions that it arrived at was that:

"Football has converted itself in Spain into the derivative of political passion."⁶¹

During the transition from dictatorship to democracy in Spain, this debate obviously acquired a historical approach, because, as shall be illustrated in the Epilogue to this thesis, all allegations about football continuing to serve as a political soporific stopped around 1977 due to the profound changes that were then occurring in the organizational structures of the game. Many historical overviews claiming that football had served the Franco regime as an agent of political passivity were published, including the one from Javier Solana offered at the beginning of this chapter.⁶² The most original of these overviews was perhaps the one given by Francisco González Ledesma in his biography of the world-famous Spanish goalkeeper Ricardo Zamora:

"When the Civil War finished, the national football panorama was as gloomy as the general horizon of the country... The people longed to return to normal, to return to the life that the war seemed to have destroyed for ever, and they especially wanted to forget. In this context, football has always been a kind of opium which has helped the bad times to pass, and has caused to be forgotten many situations which would have otherwise appeared unbearable. Conscious of this, the leaders of the "New State" dedicated a large part of their efforts to the reorganization of football, and there is no doubt that they were successful. For almost forty years, we Spaniards - in a general, mass sense - have preoccupied ourselves less with the realities of our country than with knowing how our favourite team would end up in the league classification. Without

61. Reproduced in Don Balón, No. 66, 10 January 1977.

62. See, for example, Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., p. 164-165, Marco, op. cit., p. 144, or Dicen, 20 March 1977.

the stadia filled, it would not have been possible to substitute, as in the phrase attributed to Fernández de la Mora, "the things of politics" for "the politics of things".⁶³

This above quotation introduces two points which are crucial for the fourth objective of this chapter, which is to examine whether there really existed a deliberate policy of the Franco regime to manipulate football to be a political soporific. The first point raised in the overview of González Ledesma is the debatable claim that "the leaders of the "New State" dedicated a large part of their efforts to the reorganization of football", with the objective of mitigating the misery and hunger of the immediate post-Civil War years. The second point concerns the well-known phrase of Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora, the Opus Dei diplomat who served as Minister of Public Works from 1970 to 1974, with its implication that the Franco regime possibly had a theoretical basis for attempting to use football as a political soporific.

It is appropriate to point out at this stage that there exists very little evidence to support the claim that the regime materially helped football to be in a position to serve as a political soporific immediately after the Civil War, as González Ledesma claims above. It is true that pressure was put on General José Moscardó, the head of first the Consejo Nacional de Deportes, and then, from 1941 onwards, the Delegación Nacional de Deportes, to have the national sporting competitions functioning again as soon as possible. This is evidenced

63. Francisco González Ledesma, Zamora: mito y realidad del mejor guardameta del mundo, Barcelona, 1978, pp. 211-212.

by Moscardó declaring, in October 1939:

"The leaders of the "New Spain" have placed upon me the weighty responsibility of ensuring that the sporting competitions of Spain return to full operation immediately..."⁶⁴

Moscardó, in turn applied pressure to his own appointed directors of the RFEF to reorganize the league and cup competitions with haste,⁶⁵ and this they managed to achieve the first post-Civil War Copa del Generalísimo, as it was renamed, commencing in June 1939, and the first league in October 1939. This pressure, however, certainly does not prove that the Franco regime was immediately aware of the potential of football to serve as a political diversion. It could be argued that practically every government, of whatever political character, is anxious, after a war, to help everyday life to return to the way it had been before the conflict. This return to normality is usually regarded by the populace as a demonstration of the competence of the government. This was one of the immediate post-Civil War objectives of the Franco regime, despite the transformation of the political system of the country and the massive repression unleashed against those connected with the Republic, the political parties that had supported it during the conflict and the trade unions. Furthermore, it has been alleged that had the Civil War concluded in a different way, then the Republican victors would have been equally zealous to have the league and cup competitions functioning again as soon as possible, both as a

64. Quoted in Marca, 24 October 1939.

65. In the archives of the DND, the author uncovered a letter from Moscardó, dated 5 June 1939, urging the RFEF President Julián Troncoso Sagredo, appointed by Moscardó only three weeks earlier, to "use all possible resources and efforts" in order to have the Copa del Generalísimo played in June and July, and the league in operation again from October.

demonstration of their competence and because there was practically no other cheap form of entertainment for the war-weary general public⁶⁶

González Ledesma's claim that the Franco regime "dedicated a large part of its efforts to the reorganization of football" , however, does not confine itself to referring to the pressure applied to both Moscardó and the RFEF in order to have the league and cup competitions functioning again. The phrase implies that the Franco regime materially helped the football clubs to reorganize themselves, in order for them to be prepared for the relaunching of the league in October 1939. The evidence to support this claim simply does not exist. The only concession made to the clubs in the immediate post-Civil War years was a privileged position with regard to the acquisition of petrol, an extremely scarce commodity at the time, for travel to away matches.⁶⁷ In February 1939, the Oviedo club received a negative response when they requested military assistance in the reconstruction of their stadium, damaged during the Nationalist conquest of the city in October 1936.⁶⁸ The same response was received by the Real Sociedad, Sporting de Gijón, Valencia and Cádiz clubs in the period April-September 1939, when they all individually, without any coordination of their efforts, requested a loan from the Consejo Superior de Deportes to finance their stadium repairs and other expenses until they received the gate money from their

66. This allegation has been made in the following publications:
González Ledesma, op. cit., p. 212; Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., 145;
García Candau, op. cit., p. 52.

67. As revealed to the author by an examination of the archives of the major football clubs, they were not subjected to any rationing whatsoever.

68. For further details, see Marca, 9 September 1939.

first home league match in October 1939.⁶⁹ In consequence, the clubs were compelled to prepare themselves for the recommencement of the national competitions with practically no assistance from the Francoist authorities.

In later years, the Franco regime was unwilling to offer the only form of material help requested of them by the football clubs: loans to construct new stadia. In April 1944, the Real Madrid President requested from the DND a ten-year loan of 25 million pesetas in order to implement his visionary plans for the construction of a 125,000 capacity stadium, but was immediately refused.⁷⁰ The DND instead gave Real Madrid one million pesetas out of its "Support Fund for the Construction of Private Sporting Facilities", but this amounted to less than 4% of the total cost of construction, the remainder of the money being raised by Bernabeu by offering the supporters a five years advanced membership scheme.⁷¹ As seen in Chapter Two of this thesis the DND ruled, in October 1951, that its "Support Fund" would contribute just 2.5% to the cost of all football stadia constructions and improvements. When the Sevilla club requested a loan of 40 million pesetas from the DND for

69. Information revealed by the archives of the DND: no information about these requests, or the subsequent refusals of the DND, was given by Marca or any newspaper.

70. This information was revealed by the archives of the DND, and of Real Madrid; again, no information about this matter was given by the extensive sporting Press, which, as seen in the Introduction to this thesis, was closely controlled by the DND's "Commission of Press and Propaganda".

71. Revealed by examination of the archives of Real Madrid. For further details about the financing of the construction of the Estadio Bernabeu, see El libro de oro del Real Madrid, Madrid, 1952, pp. 338-345.

their stadium plans, in October 1955, they were also promptly refused.⁷²

All of the above tends towards the conclusion that the Franco regime did practically nothing in material term to ensure that football was in a position to serve as a political soporific. The obvious reason for this lack of assistance was the poor financial position of the regime. Another possible reason was that the regime did not immediately recognize the potential of the game to serve in this way. The question of whether the Franco regime was aware of this potential, however, is somewhat hypothetical, because even if it had been aware right from the conclusion of the Civil War, then the difficult economic circumstances would still have prevented it from helping the clubs in any meaningful material way.

In fact, there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the Franco regime was aware of this potential of football until the 1960s, by which time the game was allegedly already to be a political soporific, with average attendances at the immense new stadia the highest in the world after Brazil,⁷³ with an estimated 50% of the population listening to the football commentaries broadcast on the radio, with their pools coupons in front of them,⁷⁴ with approximately 40% of the inhabitants of the large cities preferring to read one of the specialist sports newspapers rather

72. Once again, information revealed by the archives of DND, which was not given by the sporting Press.

73. According to World Soccer, August 1965, the average estimated attendance for a Spanish first division match was 42,300, and that for a Brazilian 39,800.

74. This estimate was made to the author by the radio broadcaster Vicente Marco.

than a general newspaper,⁷⁵ and with approximately 60% of the space in these sports newspapers dedicated to football.⁷⁶ It is logical to assume that this state of affairs, which the Franco regime had done practically nothing to promote, pleased the regime. This contentment, however, was not expressed in any documentary way, or even by a comment of satisfaction to the Press from General Moscardó or one of Franco's football-enthusiastic ministers, such as General Agustín Muñoz Grandes or General Camilo Alonso Vega.

The Franco regime first demonstrated its awareness of the potential of football to serve as a political soporific when RTVE began its policy of broadcasting an extremely high number of matches in 1960. It could be argued that this was the first opportunity that had presented itself to the regime to attempt to increase, or at least maintain at the same level, the immense popularity of football.

The first football match transmitted by RTVE was the June 1960 cup final between Real and Atlético de Madrid, with very poor quality pictures. In the following sixteen years, up to the summer of 1976, a total of 714 football matches were broadcast in their entirety by RTVE, at an average of 4.46 matches per month on the basis of the football season lasting for ten months of the year.⁷⁷ This total was far higher

75. This estimate, which corresponded to Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia, Sevilla and Zaragoza in 1960, was made by Luis María Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

76. This estimate was made by the author, on the basis of having examined an abundance of sports newspapers published in Francoist Spain.

77. This total was gathered by the author from the daily newspapers, because of the lack of such statistics in the archives of RTVE.

than the corresponding figure for any other country in the world during this period, apart from Argentina from 1967 to 1969. After Spain, the country with the third highest television coverage of football was Italy, where an average of almost three matches a month were screened.⁷⁸ In both Argentina and Italy, however, a proportion of the matches were broadcast by private television stations, whereas in Spain the RTVE had a complete monopoly. The breakdown of these 714 matches transmitted in Francoist Spain is as follows: 285 league matches, with usually one a fortnight being screened during the period 1961-1968, and thereafter one practically every Saturday evening during the league season, from September to April; 67 domestic cup games, usually the semi finals and final, played in May and June; every single international match, both competitive and friendly, played by the Spanish national team during this period, which amounted to 92; 109 games featuring Spanish teams in the three European club competitions, 37 of which were Real Madrid matches in the European Cup; 161 other assorted matches in which there was no Spanish participation, mostly foreign international matches from the World Cup and European Nations Cup final tournaments, along with the finals of the European club competitions.⁷⁹

Francisco Cerecedo described the amount of football coverage offered by RTVE as "saturation level",⁸⁰ whilst Manuel Vázquez Montalbán claimed that there existed a policy of "transmitting the kicking of practically every football, everywhere in the world".⁸¹ The editors of

78. Information gathered from the archives of World Soccer.

79. Information gathered by the author from Spanish daily newspapers.

80. Francisco Cerecedo, *op. cit.*

81. Quoted in Barça, No. 765, 13 July 1970.

the world's two most prestigious football publications, Keir Radnedge of World Soccer, London, and Jaques Ferran of L'Equipe, Paris, both recalled that it was well known on the international football scene during the 1960s and early 1970s that RTVE would buy up the right to broadcast international games that were usually transmitted only in the countries of the two competing national or club teams.⁸² Domestic league matches were broadcast simultaneously in very few countries, and practically no European country, during the period 1960-1975, the main obstacle being the collective opposition of the clubs because of the consequent fall in paying spectators at the stadia. This problem was overcome in Francoist Spain by means of an agreement between the RFEF and RTVE, originally formulated in August 1961 and renewed in July 1966 and August 1972, by which RTVE would compensate the difference in gate receipts between the televised match and the same fixture the previous season, or on the previous occasion when that particular fixture had not been broadcast. The policy of transmitting a league match practically every Saturday night proved to be extremely expensive for RTVE. It can be estimated that RTVE spent approximately 600 million pesetas, approximately three million pounds sterling, on compensating the professional clubs for their fall in paying spectators because of the presence of the television cameras.⁸³ Exactly 183 million pesetas of this money, slightly less than a third, went to the Real Madrid club for the broadcasting of between four and seven of the league matches in the Estadio Bernabeu every season, whilst FC Barcelona received 103 millions

82. Author's interview with Keir Radnedge, and with Jacques Ferran.

83. Because of the lack of information offered by RTVE, this approximation was made by the author.

during this six teen-year period for permitting the transmission of between two and four matches per season.⁸⁴ It has been claimed that this expenditure of approximately 600 million on compensating the football clubs constituted more than half of RTVE's total spending on sport.⁸⁵

In addition to the 714 domestic league, cup, international, World Cup, European Cup and European Nations Cup matches broadcast in their entirety by RTVE from 1960 to 1976, a two-hour programme called Estudio Estadio and consisting of highlights of all of the first division matches played earlier that day was transmitted on Sunday nights from September 1968 onwards.

Despite, or possibly because of, this saturation coverage, the estimated audiences for football in Francoist Spain were consistently high. Only on very rare occasions did the estimated viewing figure for a televised game fall below the ten million mark. Approximately 80% of matches were watched by a television audience of between ten and fifteen million. The most important league matches, especially between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, Real Madrid's games in the European Cup and the matches of the Spanish national team almost always achieved an audience in excess of 15 million, approximately half of the Spanish population during the later Franco years. The television audience for a football

84. Information revealed by the archives of the two clubs.

85. This claim was made by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán in Barça, No. 765, 13 July 1970, although he did not attempt to make any approximation of the expenditures of RTVE on sport in general and compensation for the football clubs in particular, because of RTVE's refusal to offer him information.

match in Francoist Spain exceeded 20 million of five occasions: the European Cup final between Real Madrid and Partisan Belgrade in May 1966; the decisive World Cup match between Spain and West Germany in July 1966; the July 1968 cup final between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona; the World Cup final of June 1970 between Brazil and Italy; the league match between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona in February 1974.⁸⁶ It is logical to assume that these viewing figures for football would have been even higher if every Spaniard had had access to a television set.

The conclusion to be drawn from all of the above material about televised football in Francoist Spain is that there was more of it, it was extremely expensive for RTVE, and that it achieved very high estimated viewing figures. These facts have generally been accepted as evidence that the Franco regime did have a policy of systematically promoting football to be a political soporific.⁸⁷ The responsibility

86. All of this information about estimated television audiences was taken from the magazine, Hola!. It should be borne in mind, however, as pointed in Footnote 42 of this chapter, that the accuracy of these figures has been called into question.

87. These facts have been accepted as evidence of the existence of this policy in the overwhelming majority of books and articles mentioned in the footnotes throughout this thesis, and by the overwhelming majority of the author's interviewees, even by, for example, the former RFEF President Pablo Porta. It is more convenient to list the interviewees who were not in agreement with this interpretations of the facts: José Luis Pérez Payá, the former RFEF President, the former Delegado Nacional de Deportes Benito Castejón, the Marca journalists José María Lorente and Rodolfo Belarmo "Belarmino". It is significant that all of these dissenters were either high-ranking officials in the Francoist sporting system, or formerly Falangist employees of the sports newspaper of the Movimiento.

for this policy has usually been attributed to Manuel Fraga, the Minister of Information and Tourism from 1962 to 1969.⁸⁸ Fraga demonstrated his awareness of the social importance of football by commenting after seeing Real Madrid, the club of which he was a paid-up member, defeat Internazionale of Milan in the 1966 European Cup semi finals:

"The immense social significance of football in this country has again been amply shown up by tonight's exciting match... In how many other countries in the world would the stadium be packed by 120,000 supporters, with thousands more outside desperate to enter but unable to do so, and with more than half of the nation following the game on the television?"⁸⁹

This awareness of Fraga was demonstrated by his actions as well as by his words. As shall be seen in detail in Chapter Seven of this thesis, he successfully integrated the staging in Spain of the final stages of the 1964 European Nations Cup into his vast propaganda campaign entitled "Twenty-Five Years of Peace", the Franco regime's celebration of a quarter of a century of power. In addition, as shall be illustrated in Chapter Six, he persuaded several famous footballers and other sportsmen to take part in his campaign in favour of an affirmative vote in the December 1966 referendum on the "Organic Law of State". With regard to using television to promote football to be a political soporific, it has frequently been alleged that Fraga achieved this by means of giving his personal nominees and men of confidence Eduardo Elorriaga and Luis Ezcurra, appointed as Director General and Director of Programming at RTVE respectively within two months of Fraga becoming Minister,

88. This attribution has been made in the following studies, as well as in an abundance of newspaper and magazine articles too numerous to list: Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 165; Alcoba, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-255; Marco, *op. cit.*, p. 146; García Candau, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53; Botines, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

89. Quoted in Marca, 14 April 1966.

instructions to broadcast as much football as possible.⁹⁰

More specifically, it is alleged that Fraga instructed his two nominees to transmit a large amount of football, combined with basketball and bullfighting if necessary, during the May Day public holiday.⁹¹ Although there is no documentary evidence to prove that these instructions were given, it is difficult to believe that it is merely a coincidence that such an abundance of football matches were broadcast by RTVE during the public holiday which posed the biggest potential problems for the Franco regime.

It is appropriate at this stage to offer the fullest details of RTVE's football coverage during the May Day holiday from 1960 to 1976. In May 1960, RTVE's broadcasting of matches had still not commenced. On the May Days of both 1961 and 1962, the "Syndicalist Sporting Games" of the "Vertical Syndicates", held annually on this date in Real Madrid's Estadio Bernabeu, were screened by RTVE. After the arrival of Elorriaga and Ezcurra at the head of RTVE in September 1962, these "Syndicalist Sporting Games" ceased to be broadcast by RTVE, presumably because of the low number of viewers, even though figures of estimated audiences were not published until 1964. In place of these games on May Day 1963, Real Madrid's cup victory away to Granada was transmitted. The following year, Real's European Cup semi final match away to Zurich

90. This allegation was made in all of the studies listed in Footnote 88, with the same page references, except the Alcoba book, op. cit., which made no reference to Elorriaga and Ezcurra.

91. All of the studies listed in Footnote 88, including the Alcoba book, made this allegation about basketball and bullfighting.

was broadcast on the night of 30 April, whilst on May Day itself the cup match between Atlético de Madrid and Murcia was brought forward two days and screened. Establishing a practice that would be normal for the following thirteen years, with the only club President to complain being, as seen already José María Oraa of Athletic de Bilbao in 1973, Atlético de Madrid were requested to bring the match forward by RTVE through the RFEF, and duly complied.⁹² In this year, the first May Day basketball match was broadcast by RTVE, between Real Madrid and Caja de Zaragoza, in addition to the two football games.

Before and during the May Day holiday of 1965, the remarkable number of four matches in four days were transmitted by RTVE, two of which had no Spanish participants. On the night of Wednesday 28 April, the European Cup-Winners Cup match between Zaragoza and West Ham United was transmitted. The following night, the testimonial match of the English player Stanley Matthews in London was broadcast by RTVE, even though there was no Spanish player taking part in the match. The following evening, Friday 30 April 1965, the European Cup semi final between Benfica of Lisbon, who had previously eliminated Real Madrid, and Vasas of Budapest was screened. A series of four live matches in four days was completed when, on May Day itself, RTVE transmitted FC Barcelona's home game against Valencia.

On 30 April 1966, the Spanish national team's friendly match with Belgium, part of the preparations for the 1966 World Cup finals

92. Information obtained from the archives of Atlético de Madrid.

tournament, was broadcast by RTVE. The following day was dominated by Real Madrid, their cup match away to Malaga being transmitted, followed immediately by the FC Barcelona-Real Madrid basketball game. From 1966 onwards, there would always be a televised basketball match to complement the football on May Day. In 1967, the basketball match was between FC Barcelona and Joventut de Badalona, whilst the football broadcast by RTVE was the cup tie between Murcia and Valencia.

On 30 April 1968, the cup match between Sevilla and Español de Barcelona was broadcast by RTVE, and on May Day itself the tie between Atlético de Madrid and Hércules de Alicante, specially brought forward two days. On 30 April and 1 May 1969, two other domestic cup matches were screened by RTVE: Real Sociedad de San Sebastián versus Sporting de Gijón, and then the most attractive game of the competition, the Madrid "derby" match between Real and Atlético.

On the night of 30 April 1970, for the first time RTVE broadcast one of the compilation programmes that it made specially for the May Day public holiday: a two hour-long collection of every goal scored by the Spanish national team, narrated, as recalled by Javier Solana at the beginning of this chapter, by the ultra-nationalist commentator Matías Prats. The following day, May Day, the cup match between Real Madrid and Castellón was transmitted.

From 1971 onwards, RTVE's football coverage during this public holiday became even more intense. On the night of 30 April 1971, the cup match between FC Barcelona and Betis of Seville was screened. On May Day itself, a two-and-a-half hour special history of Real Madrid's

performances in the European Cup was followed by the transmission of Real's cup match with La Coruña.

On 30 April 1972, another match between Real Madrid and La Coruña, on this occasion a league match played in the Galician seaport, was broadcast by RTVE. The following day, the league match between Valencia and FC Barcelona, of crucial significance with regard to the league title, was transmitted, followed by the Soviet Union-Yugoslavia basketball game.

On the night of 30 April 1973, RTVE broadcast another of its special programmes with the narration of Matías Prats: On May Day of that year, the normal basketball and bullfighting transmissions were complemented by the Athletic de Bilbao-Valencia league match, despite the protests, observed earlier in this chapter, of the Athletic President.

The friendly match between the West German and Yugoslav national teams, both in preparation for the 1974 World Cup finals tournament, was broadcast by RTVE on the night of 30 April of that year. The following day, a special two-hour German programme about the history of the World Cup competition was transmitted, followed immediately by the broughtforward league match between Atlético de Madrid and Oviedo.

On 30 April 1975, the league match between Zaragoza and Real Madrid was conveniently brought forward and broadcast by RTVE. On the last May Day during the life of Franco, however, there was no domestic or international match available to be transmitted, and therefore RTVE

complemented the usual basketball and bullfighting broadcasts by screening the two-hour Brazilian film "The Thousand Goals of Pelé", the world-famous player who had just retired from first-class football.

As shall be illustrated in greater detail in the Epilogue to this thesis, the manipulation of football as a political soporific during the May Day public holiday did not end in 1975. For the May Day of 1976, the government of Carlos Arias Navarro insisted on the Real Madrid-Barça match being brought forward by two days and televised, in order to reduce attendance at the Comisiones Obreras rally in Madrid's Casa de Campo and other demonstrations of the forces and parties in favour of transition to plurarist democracy.⁹³

In the light of the above evidence, there has been no attempt whatsoever to deny that the Franco regime attempted to use football as an agent of political passivity during the May Day public holidays.⁹⁴ It is a completely separate question, however, whether the same conclusion can be reached with regard to the extremely high level of football transmitted by RTVE throughout the year. The policy of RTVE can be defended by claiming that the remarkably high level of interest in the game in Francoist Spain demanded a remarkably high level of

93. For further details, see the whole of the Spanish sporting Press, especially the Barcelona newspapers, from 24 April to 2 May 1976, and also the comprehensive account offered in García Candau, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

94. This was not even attempted by the four defenders of RTVE's general policy of football coverage discussed in Footnote 95, all of whom remained silent about the question of the annual May Day transmissions.

television coverage. This was the predictable response of Luis Ezcurra when questioned about the matter:

"Our aim is to satisfy all the appetites, to satisfy the millions of supporters which football has in Spain, always taking into account the big teams...We televize football it is a necessity in our coverage, given the importance of this sport in Spain."⁹⁵

This is the argument normally employed to explain the existence of a "culture of evasion" by the very persons responsible for promoting this culture: that their only objective is the satisfaction of a genuine public demand, rather than the promotion or stimulation of this demand. As remarked by an abundance of Spanish sports journalists and writers, however, this is by no means a satisfactory answer to the question of why there was such a high level of televised football in Francoist Spain.⁹⁶ There can be a little doubt that there was almost as much public demand to see a large amount of televised football in, for example, Britain, Italy and West Germany during the period 1960-1976, and that if the same amount of televised football had been broadcast in these countries as in Francoist Spain, then approximately the same high viewing figures would have been achieved. Moreover, it is impossible to imagine that there was any Spanish public demand beforehand to see, or even awareness of the existence of, matches such as the Stanley Matthews testimonial or the West Germany versus Yugoslavia friendly match, both mentioned above in connection with the May Day RTVE coverage, or other games shown at other times of the year without any Spanish participation or major international significance, for example the English FA Cup

95. Quoted in Barça, No. 434, 19 March 1964.

96. This type of remark was made, for example, in Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, p. 165, Marco, *op. cit.*, p. 146 and by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán in Barça, No. 765, 13 July 1970.

Final in May of practically every year, or the semi finals and final of the South American club championship every October. As a consequence of this major flaw in the defence of RTVE's policy during the Franco years, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the public demand for televised football in Francoist Spain was partly artificially stimulated and promoted by RTVE, acting on instructions from the Franco regime, in the person of Manuel Fraga.

What the fourth objective of this chapter, which is to examine the evidence that the Franco regime had a policy of systematically promoting football to be a political soporific, demands above all else is an illustration of the official attitude of the regime to the popularity of the game. Unfortunately, such an illustration simply does not exist in documentary form.⁹⁷ The best evidence regarding official attitudes about the connection between football and political passivity is contained in the three quotations which follow.

The first of these quotations is the much-cited desire of Franco's Minister of Public Works Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora to substitute "the things of politics for the politics of things". This desire, expressed in his revealingly-titled book El crepúsculo de las ideologías ("The Twilight of the Ideologies"),⁹⁸ constituted one of the clearest calls by the group of Opus Dei "technocrats" brought into the cabinet in the

97. The author expected to find such an illustration of official attitudes in his examination of the archives of the DND, or of the RFEF.

98. Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora, El crepúsculo de las ideologías, Madrid, 1965.

1960s for a politically demobilized and passive consumer society within the institutional framework of the existing dictatorship. Fernández de la Mora's call has been interpreted as a suggestion that the Franco regime should attempt to promote football and other popular sources of entertainment as agents of political passivity not only by González Ledesma, the biographer of the goalkeeper Zamora, as seen above. For example, Vicente Marco alleged that this phrase of the Opus Dei Minister was the inspiration for the regime's attempts to use football as a political soporific:

"The desire of the Franco government to change "the things of politics for the politics of things" naturally had its effects in Spanish sports, where football in particular began to be employed, by means of an unprecedented level of television coverage, as a means of alienating and insulating the Spanish man-in-the-street from the not completely favourable political and social reality."⁹⁹

The second quotation comes from the Delegado Nacional de Deportes, Jose Antonio Elola Olaso, on the occasion of the Spanish national team's defeat of the Soviet Union in the final of the 1964 European Nations Cup, played in Madrid. As commented already in this chapter, the staging in Spain of the semi finals and final of this competition conveniently coincided with the "Twenty-Five Years of Peace" propaganda campaign organized by Manuel Fraga. Elola Olaso linked the football triumph with the propaganda campaign in the following way:

"This is the great sporting triumph of peace. It is our offering to the Caudillo for the "Twenty-Five Years of Peace".¹⁰⁰

99. Marco, op. cit., p. 145. This phrase of Fernández de la Mora was used as an illustration of the Franco regime's in three other publications: Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., p. 166; by Alex J. Botines in Dicen, 2 May 1968; by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán in Barça, No. 765, 13 July 1970.

100. Quoted in ABC, 23 June 1964.

It can be argued that this comment from the Delegado Nacional implied that the Franco regime's interpretation of "peace" was a social and political passivity, built partly on the foundations of intense football enthusiasm, which would facilitate the continued dictatorship of the regime. This interpretation of Elola Olaso's comment was expressed by, among others, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán:

"What our former honourable [sic] Delegado Nacional intended to say was that he longed for a country where a certain type of peace is maintained by everyone being passively stuck in front of their television sets marvelling at the breathtaking exploits of Real Madrid."¹⁰¹

The third quotation which illustrates the attitude of the Franco regime to the connection between the popularity of football and political passivity is somewhat clearer and less ambiguous than the two offered above, which have been interpreted in different ways. In December 1970, during the tension of the Burgos military trials, a curious motion was presented to the Cortes by the little-known Martín Fernández Palacios, requesting that all football matches be played on Saturday in order to leave Sunday free for religious and family activities. The response of the Franco regime's spokesman to this motion is extremely revealing:

"The issue which Señor Fernández Palacios brings up is very interesting, but difficult to establish in the present organization of our sport, which already authorizes matches to be celebrated on Saturday when both participants are in agreement, and in any case the organization of matches on Sunday has two objectives. One is economic, due to Sunday being holiday, whilst playing the games on Saturday would mean the major part of the productive and working population being unable to go and watch their favourite sport. In addition, the second motive is that football constitutes an obvious

101. Quoted in Barça, No. 664, 20 March 1968.

solace and relaxation for thousands and thousands of Spaniards, that support in the country is immense and that we are obliged to sustain and increase it, granting access to such spectacles to the largest possible number of citizens."¹⁰²

This statement from the Franco regime, revitalized the debate, already outlined in this chapter, about whether football was acting as a political soporific. This debate about the Cortes motion was sparked off by this radical critique from Néstor Luján:

"Football is a ludicrous sport from all points of view, although important with regard to panem et circenses... We would like the Spaniards to become passionate about other problems, but as we don't have the slightest possibility of influencing them, we accept the facts with a painful and very long, too long, silence."¹⁰³

The usual critics of the alleged manipulation of football by the Franco regime took their cue from Luján and interpreted the regime's response to Fernández Palacios' motion as the clearest piece of evidence yet of the existence of a regime policy of systematically promoting football to be an agent of political passivity. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán was particularly incisive:

"And so now, at long last, we have the truth: the government of this country feels "obliged to sustain and increase" enthusiasm for football. Surely the government realizes that the cultural level, the level of political awareness of the Spanish man-in-the-street are still sufficiently low, and rising sufficiently slowly, for there to be little necessity to continue with the policy of employing our so badly-treated national sport as a means of alienation, as a means of social and political passivity."¹⁰⁴

There were several other critical interpretations of the Franco regime's statement.¹⁰⁵ Not every interpretation, however, was negative.

102. Reproduced in the Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Españolas, Madrid, No. 1129, 23 December 1970.

103. Sábado Gráfico, (Madrid), 6 February 1971.

104. Barça, No. 796, 16 February 1971.

105. See, for example: Alcoba, op. cit., p. 256; Botines, op. cit., p. 19; Dicen, 17 February 1971; El Mundo Deportivo, 21 February 1971.

Marca, perhaps not surprisingly given its status as the sports newspaper of the Movimiento, was eager once again to defend the regime, in so doing launching a counter-attack against the critical group of writers who believed that it was a systematic regime policy to utilize the game as a political soporific:

"We see nothing peculiar or suspicious in the official response to the motion presented in the Cortes in December by Señor Fernández Palacios, and therefore we are slightly perplexed by all the fuss that has surrounded it. This appears to us to be no more than the thoughtful, considerate statement of a government that obviously wants to avoid the situation whereby a large proportion of its subjects would be unable to enjoy their favourite sport and source of entertainment... In a more general context, all of this stuff about football acting as a "social drug" and an "escape valve" is a cliché as old as a cathedral. Football has been impassioning the people both in Spain and elsewhere for almost all of this century, because it is something like an island of refuge in a sea of everyday concerns and worries, not because any government has promoted it for their own specific purposes."¹⁰⁶

Marca's point of view was supported by the former El Alcázar correspondent "Gilera", who claimed in ABC that it was "ridiculous to suggest that there was any possible political significance" in the response of the Franco regime to the Cortes motion.¹⁰⁷

It is appropriate at this stage to arrive at a conclusion about the question of whether there existed a regime policy of promoting football to be a political soporific. Given the very limited evidence available, this conclusion must be as follows. The Franco regime was not sufficiently perceptive to realize the potential of the game as a possible agent of political passivity until the 1960s, by which time Spain had become the European country with the highest level of football

106. Marca editorial, 20 February 1971.

107. ABC, 22 February 1971.

enthusiasm. Because of this lack of perception, allied to a lack of economic means, the regime did practically nothing to assist the clubs in preparing for the relaunching of the league in October 1939, and in constructing new high-capacity stadia. In the early 1960s, the regime, led by the astute Real Madrid member Manuel Fraga, became aware that television was the perfect way to ensure that the enthusiasm for football remained at the same high level or even increased. It is not satisfactory to claim that the transmission of such an abundance of matches, more than in any other country except Argentina from 1967 to 1969, was justified by immense public demand. This demand was partly artificially stimulated and promoted, especially with regard to the many matches screened without any Spanish participation or special international significance. In the light of the immediate popularity of televised football, the regime realized that such transmissions could contribute towards reducing attendances at the illegal May Day demonstrations of the anti-Francoist opposition. This utilization of the game as a political soporific was very much a manipulation on the cheap. In the same way as the regime had been unwilling to emulate Hitler and Mussolini in the investment of huge sums of money in the Spanish sporting infrastructure, it wanted the game to serve as an agent of political passivity without giving financial assistance to the clubs, as the military regimes of South America felt obliged to do.

The fifth and final objective of this chapter is to evaluate to what extent the Franco regime's utilization of football as a political soporific actually contributed towards the maintenance of the high level of political passivity that existed in Francoist Spain. This particular question has been treated with far less debate and discussion

than the question of whether there existed a regime policy to employ football as a political soporific. Both the critics and defenders of the Franco regime with regard to the latter question are basically in agreement that the immense popularity of football in Francoist Spain was partly the effect rather than the cause of this political passivity. These critics and defenders simply differ with regard to details, for example whether the televised football on May Day actually reduced attendance at the illegal demonstrations.¹⁰⁸

In the light of the limited evidence available, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the political significance of the high level of football enthusiasm in Francoist Spain consists in this enthusiasm being a consequence rather than a cause of political passivity. After the end of the Civil War, the Spanish population was politically passive because the anti-Francoist leaders and militants, of whatever political grouping, had either died in the conflict, had left the country or had been eliminated in the subsequent purges. Those that survived were obliged to accept the new regime, and to struggle to avoid political suspicion and repression, and to maintain employment in order to support themselves and their dependents. Given the harsh social

108. It was claimed to the author by Alex J. Botines, for example, and by Julián García Candau, that the May Day football transmissions by RTVE probably fulfilled the regime's desired effect of reducing attendances at the demonstrations. Other critics of this regime, however, for example, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and leading historian Juan Pablo Fusi, respectively, in this case agree with habitual defenders of the regimes's sporting policy, such as Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera", and the great majority of the author's interviewees in doubting that these broadcasts had a substantial effect on the attendances. This question has never been discussed in print.

conditions that existed and the lack of other forms of cheap popular entertainment, it should be no surprise that football became a hugely popular form of refuge or escape from the grim reality of the post-Civil War years.

The abundance of televised football during the later Franco years delighted the average Spaniard, although there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that the policy initiated by the nominees of Manuel Fraga caused persons who would otherwise have demonstrated their opposition to the Franco regime to refrain from doing so. In particular, there exists no proof that the feast of televised football served up during the May Day holidays restrained any opponents or potential opponent of the regime from attending the illegal demonstrations. If any Spaniard were prepared to subject himself and his family ^{to repression and hardship} by attending these demonstrations, then it should be presumed that his political consciousness and commitment were sufficiently developed to both see through ^{the regime's tactic} and miss a football match broadcast on television on the same day, even assuming that he was a football enthusiast.¹⁰⁹

109. Several former opponents of the Franco regime, mostly members of the Comisiones Obreras, have testified to the author that these May Day transmissions did not cause them even to consider staying at home, even if a match of the club which they supported, mostly either Atlético de Madrid, FC Barcelona or Athletic de Bilbao was screened.

CHAPTER FOUR : FOOTBALL AND DICTATORSHIP

The third aspect of the political manipulation of Spanish football during the Franco years concerns the almost complete lack of democracy within the structures of the game both at national administrative level, in the DND and the RFEF, and at local club level.

This chapter has two objectives. Firstly, it aims to demonstrate to what extent the lack of democracy in football reflected a lack in all other aspects of Spanish society during the Franco period. Secondly, it discusses the frequently-made allegation that the Franco regime attempted to maintain this lack of democracy in the game in order to avoid an uncomfortable comparison with the lack in all other areas.¹

As illustrated in the Introduction to this thesis, Spanish football

1. This allegation has been made in the following publications: Alex J. Botines, *op. cit.*, p. 73; Vicente Marco, *op. cit.*, p. 25; José María García, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 92; *Dicen*, 14 October 1975, 2 February 1976 and 4 March 1981; *Don Balón*, No. 14, 6 January 1976; *Sport*, 10 April 1980. The following interviewees have also made this allegation to the author: the Catalan sociologist Joan Josep Artells, the celebrated writer Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, the sports journalist Alex J. Botines, the former *Barça* players Carles Rexach, the current FC Barcelona Vice-President Nicolau Casaus, the sports writers Julián García Candau and José María García, and the former Athletic de Bilbao players and coaches José Angel Iribar and Javier Clemente.

before the Civil War had been governed completely democratically. The RFEF was founded in 1902 by the first clubs, and its Presidents and directors were chosen in annual elections by the club representatives at the assemblies held in Madrid every July. In the same way, the directors of each club were voted for by the members on an annual basis.

This democratic situation immediately changed after the Civil War. The Consejo Nacional de Deportes (CND), formed in November 1938, whilst the Civil War was still raging, under the direction of General José Moscardó, was granted wide emergency powers to govern Spanish sport by its organizational overlord the Movimiento.² For more than two years, until the creation of a permanent DND in February 1941, also under the forceful leadership of General Moscardó, the CND exercised to the full its power of nominating the Presidents and all the directors of every national and regional sports federation, and of the many private clubs. With regard specifically to football, the CND appointed Julián Troncoso Sagredo to the RFEF presidency in January 1939 and, upon his death in April 1940, replaced him with Luis Saura del Pan, whilst at club level two examples of the CND's domination are nomination as President of the Zaragoza club of the Falangist Antonio Rodríguez in May 1939, and of the army colonel Juan Carlos Delgado as President of Cádiz in June 1939.³

The two-year domination of Spanish sport by the CND almost exactly reflected the Spanish political situation of the time by being a clear

2. For details of these powers of the DND, see Luis María Cazorla Prieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213.

3. For further details, see Marca, 9 May and 18 June 1939.

example of caudillaje, the concept originally used by the Franco regime in order to legitimize its dictatorial rule. Caudillaje is the Spanish equivalent of Führerprinzip, the almost mystical Nazi concept of the totalitarian rule by the dictator accountable only to history, derived from the Spanish word Caudillo, meaning all-powerful leader. This concept was adapted to the post-Civil War Spanish context by three of the leading Francoist intellectuals, the Falangist Javier Conde, Julián Permartín and Juan Beneyto.⁴

As shall presently be illustrated in detail, the administration of Spanish football clearly reflected the concept of Caudillaje in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s, however, the clubs managed to recuperate a small amount of their former power and influence within the RFEF, and, in addition, a limited degree of internal democracy was allowed to return to the administration of the clubs. These minor reforms to the organizational structure of football reflected, in return, the growing significance of Francoist Spain of democracia orgánica ("organic democracy"), the second concept used by the Franco regime in an attempt to legitimize its anti-democratic rule. Democracia orgánica was based firmly upon the rejection of universal suffrage as a formula for popular participation, instead proposing as an alternative the "organic" or corporative participation in the decision-making process of the various professional associations, the official "vertical" trade unions

4. See Javier Conde, Lucha de pasiones, Barcelona, 1950, Julián Permartín, José Antonio, Madrid, 1953, and the following three works by Juan Beneyto: Genio y figura del Movimiento, Madrid, 1940; Historia de las doctrinas políticas, Madrid, 1948; El nuevo Estado español, Madrid, 1939.

and the local town and city councils. The culmination of this process of democracia orgánica was the December 1966 Organic Law of the State, approved by 96% of the 88% of Spaniards who voted in a referendum about the Law, the result of which was guaranteed by an immense propaganda campaign organized by Manuel Fraga, the Minister of Information and Tourism, which included the collaboration of several famous footballers, as shall be seen in Chapter Six, in addition to preventive detentions, glass urns, transparent ballot paper and even the "stuffing" of the urns with "yes" votes in some areas.⁵ The Organic Law approved in this way stipulated the rules for the succession to Franco and the election of one fifth of the deputies to the Cortes by the heads of families and married women, making a total electorate of approximately 17 million.

The domination of Spanish sport by the DND from 1941 onwards continued to reflect the concept of caudillaje, with General Moscardó still the all-powerful Caudillo, in the same way as the domination of the CND had done previously. With regard to football, the hero of the Toledo Alcázar siege maintained a rigid control over the RFEF by regularly changing its leadership, as seen in the Introduction to this thesis with regard to the Presidents. In March 1947, for example, Moscardó was so dismayed by the humiliating defeat suffered by the national team against Portugal and Eire that he sacked the RFEF President, Jesús Rivero Meneses, the Vice-President and four of the directors.⁶ In addition, Moscardó was also empowered to veto any of the

5. For further details, see Edouard de Blaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-238.

6. See Marca, Madrid, March 3-10, 1947.

measures taken by his chosen men that were not completely to his liking, and this he did, for example in May 1950 with regard to the national team's preparations for the 1950 World Cup finals tournament in Brazil, considering the RFEF's planned one week training camp for the national team not sufficient.⁷ This use of the veto was very rarely resorted to by the Delegado Nacional, however, because the RFEF leaders were either usually sufficiently aware of Moscardó's wishes that they carried them out before he intervened, for example the introduction of the Fascist salute before every match and the blue shirts for the national team, discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, or they were eager to implement his every suggestion, about, for example, an exhibition match against the touring team of East European refugee players, again in May 1950, a suggestion that will be fully discussed in Chapter Six.

Moscardó maintained the same rigid control over the various regional football federations, responsible for the game at junior, youth and amateur level, as he did over the RFEF, regularly changing his own personally nominated Presidents and directors. In March 1943, for example, he axed the whole of the executives committee of the Murcian federation because of their failure to have discovered that a referee in

7. Whilst examining the archives of the RFEF, the author discovered a letter from General Moscardó to the RFEF President Dr. Armando Muñoz Calero, dated 17 May 1950, expressing the former's "profound disappointment" at Muñoz Calero having planned only a week-long training camp for the national team at El Escorial before leaving for Brazil. Moscardó suggested a camp "of at least two weeks duration and of a tough, demanding physical nature, in order for the players selected to represent the Motherland to be in optimum condition for the World Cup finals tournament". Muñoz Calero obliged by arranging a two-week camp, beginning on 7 June 1950.

a local junior league had fought in the Republican army in the Civil War.⁸ In December 1948, the same fate befell the directors of the Cantabrian federation after a team composed of the best amateur players of the region had been thrashed 13-1 by a French amateur touring team.⁹

Moscardó's complete domination of the actual football clubs, however, only lasted until 1948. Up to that date, the annual club assemblies and presidential elections had been strictly forbidden,¹⁰ and the Delegado Nacional had continued frequently to nominate his own men as club Presidents, usually in an attempt to resolve an internal crisis at that particular club. In March 1940, for example, Moscardó appointed his good friend and former Civil War comrade Enrique Piñeiro, the Marqués de la Mesa de Asta to the presidency of FC Barcelona, and subsequently replaced him with Colonel José Vendrell in June 1944, an appointment which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Eight. Barça was not the only club to have its President nominated by the Delegado Nacional. In February 1945, for example, Moscardó attempted to resolve the crisis at the Betis club of Sevilla^(a) by appointing the Falangist Eduardo Ramírez to the presidency,¹¹ and the same at Valladolid in October 1946 by the nomination of Juan Antonio Pérez García.¹² The

8. See Murcia Deportiva, No. 7, 21 March 1943, Marca, 19-20 March 1943, for further details.

9. For further details, see Marca, 5 December 1948.

10. A brief note signed by Moscardó and published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 1, April 1943, explained this prohibition:

"It is hereby stated that all official gatherings, assemblies and elections of officials at the sporting clubs of Spain shall remain under prohibition until such time as this Delegación Nacional de Deportes considers their celebration opportune."

11. See Marca, 8-11 February 1945, for details.

12. See, for further details, Marca, 27-28 October 1946.

Delegado Nacional was sufficiently satisfied with the character and performance of the other club Presidents to allow them to work without undue intervention, and to arrange for their successors to be chosen from amongst the incumbent club directors.¹³

The many commentators who have alleged that the Franco's regime was eager to maintain a lack of democracy in football and other sports in order to avoid an uncomfortable comparison with lack of democracy in all other aspects of Spanish society, claim that the rigid control which Moscardó exercised over the RFEF and the football clubs in the 1940s, closely reflecting the concept of Caudillaje in vogue in Spain at the time, was demanded of the Delegado Nacional by the regime itself.¹⁴ There is no documentary evidence to prove that any of Franco's ministers were concerned about preventing the return of democracy to football. The DND itself, nevertheless, was a part of the Franco regime, albeit a comparatively insignificant part, and Moscardó was fully aware of the way in which the higher echelons of the regime wanted him to govern sport. This awareness is illustrated in a letter that he wrote to the RFEF in February 1945, a formality to explain the appointment as Betis President of Eduardo Ramírez:

"As you well know, one of the primary objectives of this regime, and of this Delegación Nacional de Deportes, is to maintain firm

13. In this way, Santiago Bernabeu, for example, became President of Real Madrid in September 1943 and Javier Borroso assumed power at Atlético de Madrid in March 1948, without the need either for elections or for Moscardó to intervene.

14. This specific allegation has been made in the following publications: Botines, op. cit., p. 73; Marco, op. cit., p. 25; and to the author in the following interviews: Alex J. Botines; Manuel Vázquez Montalbán; Nicolau Casaus; Julián García Candau.

order and authority in all institutions, and for this reason I feel obliged to effect these necessary changes at the Real Club Betis de Balonpié."¹⁵

This letter constitutes sufficient evidence to permit the claim that Moscardó's refusal to allow democracy to return to football was largely motivated by an awareness of the Franco regime's preference for a dictatorial style, even if there exists no proof that any significant regime personality was concerned about the possible negative effects of allowing the game to revert to its former democratic ways.

Moscardó's policy of rigidly controlling the clubs' leadership, however, began to cause him problems in 1947, because of ignoring the wishes of the club directors and members and appointing incompetent Presidents. These problems commenced in March 1947, when his nominee for the presidency of the Elche club, the Falangist Ricardo Galván, who insisted on retaining the unsuccessful Juan Reverte as team coach, resigned after a vociferous demonstration by the supporters and a unanimous vote of no confidence against him by the directors.¹⁶ In June 1947, the Falangist President of the Castellón club, Miguel Rodríguez Blanco, appointed by Moscardó eighteen months earlier, was forced to resign when serious irregularities were discovered in the club's accounts.¹⁷ A third problem for the Delegado Nacional occurred in January, 1948, when the supporters of the Cultural y Deportivo club of León demonstrated against, and three directors resigned in protest at,

15. This letter from Moscardó to the RFEF President, dated 9 February 1945 was discovered by the author in the archives of the RFEF.

16. For further details, see Murcia Deportiva, Murcia, Nos. 217-219, 18 March - 1 April 1947, and Marca, 29-29 March 1947.

17. See Marca, 3-4 June 1947, for details.

the presidency of the retired army colonel Juan Sánchez Cabello, who persisted with the same manager despite a series of humiliating defeats for the team. He did not resign, but was compelled to appoint a new coach.

The Delegado Nacional realized that more competent club Presidents would emerge if he allowed a very limited amount of democracy to return to the game. In March 1948, therefore, he allowed the annual club assemblies to recommence, but with the bizarre and unprecedented stipulation that only 200 members drawn out of a hat be allowed to attend.¹⁹ These 200 would be able to vote for the President only, who would then choose his own directors, every four years. Moscardó retained the right, however, to veto as presidential candidate any club member with a dubious political record,²⁰ and, in addition, the right to cancel the elections and again appoint his own man, "if the circumstances demand such action".²¹

As a consequence of this limited reform, more competent and popular

18. For details, see Marca, 4-16 January 1948.

19. The precise rules and regulations for these assemblies and elections were published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 61, April 1948.

20. The current FC Barcelona Vice-President and former militant of the Catalanist party Esquerra Republicana, Nicolau Casaus for example, was frequently vetoed by the DND as a potential presidential candidate or director, as shall be fully illustrated in Chapter Eight of this thesis.

21. Quoted in Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 61, April 1948. It should be pointed out at this stage that this reform was humorously identified by Francisco Cerecedo, writing in Posible, No. 2, 1 December 1974:

"And after twelve years without being allowed to hold general assemblies at the clubs, the Federation (sic, should read DND) conceded the benefits of democracia orgánica to the football institutions, by means of limited elections, in this way avoiding the resurrection of the dreaded universal vote."

club Presidents came to power from 1948 onwards, and Moscardó did not feel compelled to intervene in this process at any professional club. His problems with the choice of club leaders, however, had not been completely resolved. Because of the kind of bureaucratic mistake that frequently occurred in Francoist Spain, the officials of both DND and the RFEF omitted to make this new system obligatory by requiring every club to change their own regulations accordingly. The 1948 reforms were, in effect, simply recommendations for the clubs to follow rather than the binding rules that Moscardó had intended.

The general impression, however, was that this system was compulsory, and was consequently automatically adopted at practically every club.²² When presidential elections were necessary at FC Barcelona in October 1953, nonetheless, following the resignation of Martí Carreto over the controversial selling to Real Madrid of all rights over the Argentina player Alfredo Di Stéfano, an issue that will be fully discussed in Chapter Eight of this thesis, club secretary Albert Malaquer discovered that the 1948 system had not been incorporated into the Barça statutes, meaning that the club was within its rights in holding an election with every adult member voting. The interim committee of former Barça Presidents decided to arrange such a mass election, although knowing, as will be illustrated in detail in

22. This was the impression received by Julio Lamana, general secretary of Athletic de Bilbao from 1949 to 1983. Lamana alleged that, had he been aware of the loophole in the 1948 regulations, he would have advised the club directors, when presidential elections were necessary in July 1951, to hold a mass vote of all the 13,000 adult members, instead of the election by just 200 that appeared obligatory.

Chapter Eight that this decision would infuriate General Moscardó. The Delegado Nacional, surprisingly to many, did not attempt to prevent the election.²³ After a month-long campaign, more than 17,000 Barça socios exercised their right to vote, a right that they would not enjoy again for 25 years.

Moscardó was predictably annoyed at these events in Barcelona, and vehement in his criticism of the officials whose errors had caused them.²⁴ In order to prevent any further such exhibition of local democracy, he demanded that the RFEF make the 1948 system compulsory for every club.²⁵

The lack of real democracy at the football clubs, however, was only a half of the total lack of democracy in the game during the caudillaje-like dictatorship of General Moscardó, the other half being the clubs' complete lack of influence within the RFEF. Whilst Moscardó was Delegado General, the DND irresistibly dominated the RFEF. In the years following his death in 1956, however, the clubs began to express

23. The following interviewees confessed to the author their surprise at the time at General Moscardó not intervening to prevent the Barça election: the former FC Barcelona President Agustí Montal; Nicolau Casaus; the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo, Juan José Castillo; Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera", the veteran football correspondent of ABC. Perhaps the explanation for the Delegado Nacional's surprising lack of intervention is the influenza that confined him to bed for three weeks from 17 October to 8 November, revealed by Marca, 21, 26 and 29 October, and 2 and 10 November.

24. The annoyance of the Delegado Nacional was disclosed to the author by various veteran officials of the DND, interviewed during examination of the archives of that institution, March and April 1986.

25. The RFEF obediently did this, by means of their Circular No. 9 of January 1954, published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 129, February 1954.

their frustration at their lack of influence. This frustration was felt most acutely by Real Madrid, spectacular European champion and, as shall be seen in detail in Chapter Seven, praised to the skies by many of Franco's ministers for their diplomatic significance, but nonetheless unable to influence the RFEF's decisions about, for example, the calendar of league and cup matches or the number of players that could be substituted in the course of these games.²⁶ In consequence, a rare example of unity between the two giant sporting clubs of Spain occurred at the RFEF assembly of July 1958, when the Real President Santiago Bernabeu seconded a motion proposed by his Barça counterpart Francesc Miró Sans, requesting that the clubs elect the Vice-Presidents and directors of the RFEF, leaving the post of President still to be filled by the nominee of the Delegado Nacional. The motion was overwhelmingly passed at the assembly, but vetoed without any explanation when sent on to José Antonio Elola Olaso, Moscardó's successor, for the DND seal of approval.²⁷

Three years later of the RFEF assembly, a similar motion, this time proposed by the Valencia President Julio de Miguel and with the difference that three directors in addition to the President should continue to be nominated by the DND, was again passed overwhelmingly and then approved by Elola Olaso, who realized that this minor reform was

26. This frustration is clearly reflected in the editorials of the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, for example Nos. 43, 52, 79, 92 and 95, of February 1954, November 1954, February 1957, March 1959 and June 1959.

27. For further details, see either Marca or El Mundo Deportivo, 8-14 July 1958.

necessary in order to pacify the frustrated clubs.²⁸ As had been the case with the 1948 reform of the clubs' presidential election system, this reform of 1961 has also been interpreted as a step towards the introduction of democracia orgánica into Spanish football.²⁹

The football clubs quickly discovered, however, that their influence over the direction of the game had not been substantially increased by the alteration in the method of electing the majority of RFEF directors. In May 1962, these newly-elected directors clashed with the RFEF President Benito Pico Martínez, the nominee of Elola Olaso, about the arrangements for the national team's participation in the forthcoming World Cup finals tournament Chile.³⁰ In the wake of the Spanish failure in Chile, the general sentiment among the clubs was that

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28. See either Marca or El Mundo Deportivo, 11 July 1961 for further details. The motives of Elola Olaso were revealed to the author by Benito Castejón, secretary the the Delegado Nacional from 1959 onwards.
 29. This interpretation was offered by Francisco Cerecedo in Posible, No. 3, 15 December 1974, in Botines, op. cit., p. 72, and Marco, op. cit., p. 25.
 30. Pico Martínez, presumably following the instructions of the Delegado Nacional wanted a two-week preparatory training camp at El Escorial, whilst the club representatives on the executive complained that this would interfere with the final rounds of the Copa del Generalísimo. The former President of Valencia and RFEF director Julio de Miguel recalled to the author that he led the complaints of the club to Pico Martínez' plan, on the grounds that the clubs who provided most players for the national team would be disadvantaged by having to play their cup matches without these players. After a lengthy debate, a compromise was reached whereby the training camp would last for only ten days, and all of the cup games would be brought forward so that the national team players could participate. De Miguel also expressed the opposition of the majority of the clubs to the controversial former FC Barcelona coach Helenio Herrera being placed in charge of the national team only a month before the start of the tournament, and of his plans to base the team on the injury-prone veterans of Real Madrid Alfredo Di Stéfano, José Santamaría and Ferenc Puskas, aged 35, 34 and 34 respectively, and all foreign-born.

the blame lay with the DND for having ignored their suggestions before the tournament.³¹ The FC Barcelona representative on the RFEF executive, the former club President Francesc Miró Sans, expressed his annoyance most clearly, but nonetheless still pulled short of risking punishment by explicitly criticising the DND:

"I believe that the responsibility for what happened in Chile lies with those who refused to listen to us before the event, those who never seem to listen. Let's hope that, henceforth, our voice, which is the voice of the clubs, the real experts in Spanish influence, will count for more at the RFEF. Otherwise, it's possible that the same will happen again."³²

Miró Sans' hopes, however, were to remain unfulfilled. The next clash between the clubs and the DND for the control of the RFEF occurred in June 1963. Following a series of further poor results for the national team, the RFEF directors persuaded both Pico Martínez and national manager José Villalonga to resign. Elola Olaso, however, resenting the clubs attempting to establish their influence in this way, refused to accept the resignations and persuaded the two men to continue. The clubs reacted indignantly to what they regarded as unwarranted interference by the DND in the internal affairs of football. The most indignant club was Real Madrid, whose club magazine, in an angry editorial, effectively demanded a return to the pre-Civil War situation of the clubs controlled by an RFEF that was completely free from State control:

"...we want all of the responsibility for the direction of Spanish football, but also a total independence and complete autonomy, within the obvious limits of subordination to the sporting authorities."³³

31. This sentiment is reflected, for example, in the editorials which appeared in the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 147, August 1962, and in Barça, No. 348, 25 July 1963.

32. Quoted in Dicen, 26 July 1962.

33. See Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 159, August 1963.

The conclusion that Real Madrid, along with several other clubs, drew from the unaccepted resignations affair was that, as long as the rigid control of the DND was maintained, then the participation of the clubs in the affairs of the RFEF was practically useless:

"Simply to arrange the fixtures and impose fines on the players, this much-vaunted participation of the clubs in the RFEF is hardly worth the trouble."³⁴

The Real Madrid President Bernabeu decided to put this conclusion into practice, and attempted to organize a complete club boycott of the July 1963 RFEF assembly and executive committee meetings. He sent a letter to the President of every professional club, calling for action against "this unnecessary and dishonourable interference (of Elola Olaso) in the organization of football, a matter which should be left to ourselves".³⁵ There was not enough time to arrange the boycott before the assembly, indeed some Presidents claimed that the Bernabeu letter did not arrive until after they had made the trip to Madrid.³⁶ In the event, only Valladolid and Racing de Santander, clubs with very close relations with Real, supported Bernabeu's boycott. At the beginning of the assembly, Elola Olaso made an emotive speech in which he accepted that he acted in a "heavy-handed manner" over the resignations affair,

34. See Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 159, August 1963.

35. Copies of this letter were discovered by the author in the archives of the FC Barcelona, of Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián, and of Atlético de Madrid.

36. This claim was made to the author by Julio de Miguel and by the President of Salamanca José María Domínguez in Marca, 19 July 1963. The copies of Bernabeu's letter discussed in the above footnote, however, all arrived approximately a week before the assembly, and therefore it could be argued that De Miguel and Domínguez simply wanted to avoid taking sides in the confrontation and thus earn the enmity of either Bernabeu or Elola Olaso.

promised "less direct interference" in the internal affairs of the game, and concluded with a plea to "maintain the unity and discipline that is the cornerstone of Spanish sport, ignoring those who seek to undermine this unity in order to further their own selfish interests".³⁷ The Delegado Nacional was given a warm ovation, and Bernabeu's boycott had been struck a powerful blow. Despite the complete lack of support from the other clubs, who largely believed in Elola Olaso's promise,³⁸ the Real President, a proud, arrogant man, continued with the unprecedented boycott of the RFEF annual assemblies and executive committee until Elola Olaso's fall from power in December 1966.

The next source of friction between the clubs and the DND concerned Elola Olaso's unilateral decision to renew his ban on foreign players for a further four years in August 1966. Bernabeu attempted to revive support for his boycott with the following kind of attack on the

Delegado Nacional:

"This demonstrates once again the complete lack of importance of the clubs. It seems to me ridiculous to suggest that the presence of leading foreign players at Real Madrid or FC Barcelona is capable of preventing the emergence of exciting young Spanish players in, for example, León, Bilbao or Sevilla, players who will form the future the national team. If anything, these youngsters will learn from the example set by foreign players in Spain."³⁹

The indignation of Bernabeu was shared by the other leading clubs,

37. Quoted in Marca, 17 July 1963.

38. For examples of this belief, see either the many favourable comments from leading club Presidents in Marca or El Mundo Deportivo, 17-18 July 1963, or the editorials in Barca, No. 399, 25 July 1963 and Aúpa Atlético!, No. 24, August 1963.

39. Quoted in Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 196, September 1966.

especially FC Barcelona.⁴⁰ The modest clubs, however, benefited from this ban because it took away the advantage that the likes of Real and Barça had with their foreign stars, whilst the Basque clubs were content because they have not used foreign players for almost fifty years, and therefore support for the RFEF boycott of Bernabeu again did not materialize.

At this juncture, it is necessary temporarily to leave the question of the struggle between the clubs and the DND for the control of the RFEF in order to return to the lack of democracy at the football clubs. FC Barcelona launched a vociferous campaign against the 1948 system of just 200 members drawn out of a hat electing the club President, but, almost to the same extent as Bernabeu's anti-Elola Olaso campaign, support from the other clubs was weak. The main reason for this lack of

40. The Barça magazine, No. 560, 10 August 1966, carried an editorial which effectively used the foreign player prohibition issue as an excuse for a vitriolic attack on the style of government of both the DND and the RFEF:

"In the first place, the lack of representation that the clubs have in the RFEF is lamented. It could be argued that various clubs and regional Federations are present. But as long as the DND has the right to appoint directly the President and a certain number of directors, then the Federation (RFEF) will not have the same representative nature as it would with officials voted for by the clubs. The statutes of the Federation were improved a few years ago (1961). But reality has demonstrated that this is useless, that something more effective has to be achieved, with people who live for football, who live it, and are prepared to dialogue with the clubs. The RFEF doesn't carry out a dialogue. On the contrary, it is a master of monologue. And the same occurs with the DND ... The RFEF has wasted magnificent opportunities to talk with the clubs. The only contact that it maintains with the latter are the assemblies, which turn out to be the saddest and most pathetic spectacle that one can see. Four hours a year listening to impressive speeches and then home again. That is all the dialogue that the RFEF offers to the clubs. Such a state of affairs simply cannot continue."

support was that the majority of incumbent club Presidents were content to see the 1948 system continue because it granted them the power to choose the directors, guaranteed them at least four years in office, and made it more difficult for them to be voted out of power than would have been the case if all members were enfranchised.

The Barça campaign began when the Catalan club was forced to conform to the 1948 system for their December 1957 elections, provoking this scornful comment in the club magazine:

"This method of election seems as absurd to us as if the name of the President was actually drawn out of a hat."⁴¹

Many similarly bitter attacks on the 1948 system appeared in the club magazine during the 1960s, culminating in this powerful editorial during the stunted Barça presidential election campaign of November 1969:

"It is a pity that an election of this type should be decided by a vote in which 283 people take part, in the event that everyone turns up. This system simply has to be scrapped and a profound revision of the whole matter undertaken."⁴²

Another method used by the FC Barcelona directors to demonstrate their contempt for the 1948 system and their preference for inner-club democracy was to make significant democratic gestures whenever possible. In January 1962 for example, every adult Barça member was invited to attend and vote at a special assembly organized by President Enric Llaudet to decide the fate of the old Les Corts stadium. In August 1965, on the initiative of the same President, the members were asked to vote for a name for Barça's new stadium. At every other club, such decisions were strictly confined to the boardroom. The

41. See Barça, No. 104, 12 December 1957.

42. See Barça, No. 730, 11 November 1969.

directors of FC Barcelona, however, had an important point to prove.

The efforts of the Barça leadership were largely responsible for the modification of the 1948 system. Before a special gathering of the sixteen first division club Presidents in April 1967, arranged by the new RFEF president José Luis Costa, Llaudet made the following connection between the introduction of democracia orgánica by the Franco regime and the need to allow democracy to return to the football clubs:

"All the talk at the moment is about permitting a greater degree of public participation in the organization of the country. There was even a referendum held about this issue recently. Our request for football club democracy is consistent with the necessary changes taking place in Spain as a whole."⁴³

At this special April 1967 meeting, support for Llaudet's proposal for every club to be allowed to choose their own electoral system only received the support of the Presidents of the two Basque clubs, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad.⁴⁴ The Presidents of the other thirteen first division clubs were unwilling to see the 1948 system change, mainly for reasons already outlined in this chapter. The opposition to Llaudet's motion was led by Real Madrid President Bernabeu, by then having finished his boycott of the RFEF after the replacement of Elola Olaso as Delegado Nacional, who declared that:

"There are always people who want to change things just for the sake of changing. The system that we have for the election of club Presidents has worked very well for about thirty years, and therefore I see absolutely no reason at all to change it."⁴⁵

43. Quoted in Dicen, 3 April 1967.

44. For further details of this special meeting, see either Marca or El Mundo Deportivo, 5 April 1967.

45. Quoted in Marca, 5 April 1967.

Because of this heavy defeat in April 1967, Llaudet decided not to table a motion about the subject at the RFEF assembly of three months later. Llaudet's successor, Narcís de Carreras, was, as shall be seen in detail in Chapter Eight, too preoccupied with the consequences of the stormy 1968 cup final to bring up the issue of club democracy at the RFEF assembly of that year. During the football season 1968/1969, however, two incidents increased both the momentum of and the support for Barça's campaign for change. In December 1968, it was widely expected that, because of the team being bottom of the first division and the club being heavily in debt, the Córdoba President José Luis Romero would be convincingly beaten in the club elections. Romero, however, surprisingly won the elections, amidst accusations of "treating" the 200 members allowed to vote and even of "ballot-rigging", a result that provoked angry demonstrations by the supporters.⁴⁶ Three months later, similar accusations and demonstrations followed the re-election of the incumbent Celta de Vigo President Antonio Correira.⁴⁷

The Barca delegate at the July 1969 RFEF assembly Agustí Montal, present in place of the indisposed Carreras, referred to these two incidents when proposing a motion in favour of the dissolution of the 1948 system. Montal concluded his speech thus:

"For more than thirty years now, the football clubs of Spain have been unable to function as they should do, with the full participations of all of the members. We are convinced that this full participation must return, in order for our clubs to be a credit to the communities from which they spring and a credit to Spanish sport in general."⁴⁸

46. For further details, see either Marca or As, 7-16 December 1968.

47. See either Marca or As, 18-22 March 1969, for details.

48. Quoted in all of the above sports newspapers, 14 July 1969.

The FC Barcelona motion split the assembly into three groups: the small section in support of Montal, led by the other Catalan clubs, with the exception of Español of Barcelona, the Basque clubs and the Catalan regional federations; the majority of the assembly, in favour of a compromise solution extending the franchise at the clubs, but not to every adult member; the group led by Real Madrid that was opposed to all reform of the 1948 system. A compromise motion established a special committee to draft reform proposals, proposed by the Valencia President Julio de Miguel, was accepted. Both Bernabeu and Montal presented themselves for membership of this committee, but neither gained the necessary votes, the assembly's choice being the Presidents of Valencia, Real Sociedad, Spórting de Gijón, Hércules de Alicante, Huelva and the President of the Galician regional federation.⁴⁹

In May 1970, this committee simply recommended that the number of club members to be drawn by lot, and allowed to vote, be increased to 5% of the total, a suggestion that, predictably, disappointed the campaigners for complete club democracy. Montal, by then Barça President, complained that:

"This recommendation seems to us to be neither one thing nor another, an extremely unsatisfactory compromise by men who could possibly be considered to be reluctant to contest a popular election at their clubs."⁵⁰

The President of Athletic de Bilbao, José María Oraa, a man, as shall be seen in Chapter Eight, at the time increasingly influenced by the

49. For further details, see As, 14 July 1969.

50. Quoted in Barça, No. 759, 2 June 1970.

clandestine Basque National Party, declared himself to be:

"...somewhat disappointed. I really can't understand why so many people in football are opposed to every member being allowed to vote at his club."⁵¹

It has been alleged that this ad hoc committee was advised by the Delegado Nacional de Deportes Juan Antonio Samaranch against recommending a one-member-one-vote system, although the evidence to support this claim is rather circumstantial. Between May 1970 and the RFEF assembly of the year, the issue lost much of its topicality because of the Guruceta affair, another subject that will fully discussed in Chapter Eight of this thesis. At the assembly, the committee's proposal was almost unanimously accepted, with Real Madrid and the other opponents of reform in favour and the only dissenters being FC Barcelona, most of the other Catalan clubs, the Catalan regional federation, most of the other Basque clubs, including Athletic de Bilbao, and the Basque regional federation.⁵³ The proposal was approved by the DND, and came into effect in August 1970.⁵⁴

It has frequently been claimed that this reform reflected the various democracia orgánica reforms instituted by the Franco regime in the late 1960s.⁵⁵ The new system allowed, for example, 1,228 Atlético de Madrid members to vote in the club's presidential elections of June

51. Quoted in El Mundo Deportivo, 29 May 1970.

52. This allegation has never been made in print, but rather to the author in interviews with Alex J. Botines and Julián García Candau.

53. For further details, see As, 11 July 1970.

54. This reform was implemented by means of RFEF Circular No. 10 of August 1970, and published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 325, September 1970.

55. This allegation has been made in the following publications: Francisco Cerecedo in Posible, No. 5, 15 January 1975; Botines, op. cit., p. 72 and Cazorla Prieto, op. cit., p. 35.

1971, 2,034 in the Real Madrid elections of June 1972, in which Santiago Bernabeu was once again the only candidate, 1,127 in the Athletic de Bilbao elections of July 1973 and, at FC Barcelona in December 1973, 1,585.⁵⁶ The campaigners for the return of complete democracy to the football clubs frequently complained publicly that the system had not qualitatively changed since 1948, whilst privately noting that the process of democratization of the Spanish political system had commenced.⁵⁷

At this point, it is appropriate to return to the other half of the issue of the lack of democracy in Spanish football during the Franco years; the struggle between the DND and the clubs for controls of the RFEF. As seen earlier, Delegado Nacional Elola Olaso had consented, in 1961, to the clubs' request for all but three of the RFEF directors to be elected at the annual assembly, but had subsequently disappointed many clubs, and earned the enmity of Bernabeu, by refusing to accept the resignations of Pico Martínez and Villalonga, and then by continuing with his unilaterally-imposed prohibition of foreign players. The FC Barcelona magazine had insisted, in August, 1966, that "such a state of affairs simply cannot continue".⁵⁸ The influence of the clubs within the RFEF, however, continued to be severely restricted by the DND for

56. Information revealed by the author's examination of the archives of these clubs, op. cit.

57. See, for example, interview with José María Oraa, in Dicen, 20 July 1973, and with Agustí Montal in El Mundo Deportivo, 28 November 1973 and in Barça, No. 942, 4 December 1973. Montal recalled to the author, that after the disappointing 1970 reforms, he realized that it would be impossible to achieve a one-member-one-vote system whilst the Franco regime remained in power.

58. See Barça, No. 560, 10 August 1966.

the remainder of the Franco years.

The replacement as Delegado Nacional of Elola Olaso by Juan Antonio Samaranch in December 1966, the reasons for which were discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, was largely received with satisfaction by the football clubs, especially by Real Madrid, who immediately ended their boycott of the RFEF. Upon hearing the news of his personal enemy's fall from power, Real President Bernabeu declared:

"I am not surprised at all, I have been expecting this news for some time now. Let's hope that Mr. Samaranch, in whom we have every confidence, will permit us the control of the game that is necessary if Spanish football is to remain one of the leading powers in the world."⁵⁹

The hopes that the clubs had of Samaranch allowing them to control the RFEF without excessive intervention from the DND, however, were to be quickly confounded. At the RFEF assembly of July 1967, Bernabeu proposed a motion to have all the RFEF directors elected at the assembly, with the influence of the DND reduced to choosing the RFEF President and "intervening in the internal affairs of football only when absolutely necessary".⁶⁰ This motion was unanimously approved by the assembly, despite the warning of José Luis Costa, the RFEF President appointed by Samaranch only seven months earlier, that it could "upset the harmony that has existed in the organization of football for the past thirty years".⁶¹ Samaranch, allegedly angry about the clubs

59. Quoted in Marca, 29 December 1966.

60. For further details, see any of the sports newspapers, 11 July 1967.

61. Quoted in all of the sports newspapers, 11 July 1967.

Bernabeu decided to protest against the appointment of Gich with another boycott of the assemblies and executive committee meetings of the RFEF, after apologizing to the new RFEF President José Luis Pérez Payá, former Real Madrid centre-forward, for the trouble that this boycott would cause him.⁶⁵ Pérez Payá, however, then provoked the indignation of Bernabeu and many other club Presidents by immediately clarifying who would exercise the greatest influence over his presidency:

"It is beyond doubt that I will always be taking the line of the Minister-Secretary of the Movimiento and of the Delegado Nacional because they are the leading rectors of Spanish sport."⁶⁶

The last attempt of the football clubs to increase their influence within the RFEF during the Franco years occurred at the RFEF assembly of July 1972. One motion, proposed by the FC Barcelona President Agustí Montal and supported in the Press by Bernabeu,⁶⁷ demanded the return of the foreign players, with the argument that the prohibition had actually been counter-productive because the national team had performed worse since the prohibition had been introduced ten years earlier. The second major motion of the assembly of 1972, again publicly supported by Bernabeu,⁶⁸ called once more for all of the RFEF directors to be elected at the assembly, rather than three by the DND. Both of the motions were almost unanimously passed, but then immediately vetoed by Juan Gich, with the minimum of explanation to the Press. The reaction of the clubs

65. This brief apology was made to Pérez Payá in a letter, dated 27 September 1970, uncovered by the author in the archives of the RFEF.

66. Quoted in Barça, No. 778, 13 October 1970.

67. See interview with Bernabeu in As, 17 July 1972.

68. See same interview.

to Gich's intransigence was predictably indignant.⁶⁹ Valladolid, Racing de Santander, Sevilla and Granada promised to join Bernabeu's boycott and stay away from the 1973 assembly.

In the event, however, all four of the clubs mentioned above sent delegates to the assembly, as a consequence of the Delegado Nacional surprisingly lifting, in May 1973, the ban on foreign players. The majority of clubs were pleased at this development because it seemed that Gich had been compelled to do their wishes. It has been alleged, however, both at the time and afterwards, that Gich's real motive in lifting the ban was to distract attention away from the national team's second successive failure to qualify for the World Cup finals tournament.⁷⁰

By the end of the Franco period, the football clubs had largely accepted defeat in their struggle with the DND for control of the RFEF. Representatives of the clubs were in the majority on the RFEF executive, and frequently caused problems for the President.⁷¹ The victories won by the clubs on the RFEF executive, however, were small and relatively

69. For examples of this reaction, see Mestalla, (Valencia) No. 126, September 1972, Aúpa Atlético!, No. 133, September 1972, Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 268, September 1972, and Barça, No. 881, 4 September 1972.

70. This allegation was made in Barça, No. 916, 19 May 1973, Dicen, 17 May 1973, Botines, op. cit., p. 96 and José María García, op. cit., p. 67.

71. In January 1974, for example, both Gich and Pérez Payá were prepared to extend the contract of national team manager Ladislav Kubala, despite the failure to qualify for the 1974 World Cup finals tournament, for four further years. The club representatives on the RFEF executive, however, wanted to engage a different coach. As revealed to the author by Pérez Payá, after a lively debate, a compromise of two more years for Kubala was reached.

insignificant ones. The DND continued to dominate the RFEF through the nomination of the President and three directors, and the right to veto any motion passed at the annual assembly.

The Presidents of the leading clubs demonstrated their disillusionment and frustration at the DND's continued domination by voting with their feet. At the July 1974 RFEF assembly, only eight of the eighteen first division club Presidents were present, the others, apart from Santiago Bernabeu, sending either a Vice-President or director as their representative.⁷² The following July, only six first division Presidents attended.⁷³ The motives for their absence were aptly summed up by the Valencia President Julio de Miguel:

"I see little point in attending an assembly that has practically no power. We either discuss trivia such as the fixture list and get bored to tears, or vote on some issue of importance, only to have our decision vetoed without any explanation."⁷⁴

Certain Presidents, for example José Antonio Eguidazu of Athletic de Bilbao and Agustí Montal of FC Barcelona,⁷⁵ privately concluded that democracy could only be fully restored at the RFEF, and the domination of the DND be broken, after the death of Franco and when the political system had begun to be democratized.

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate how the various stages of the Franco dictatorship were reflected in the governance of Spanish

72. Information revealed by the author's examination of the archives of the RFEF.

73. Information from the RFEF archives.

74. Quoted in Dicen, 10 July 1974.

75. Revealed by author's interviews with Agustí Montal and Julio Lamana, the former Athletic de Bilbao secretary and confidant of Eguidazu.

football. At first, the complete domination of this and every other sport closely reflected the concept of caudillaje that was being put into practice by Franco in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s, the democracia orgánica reforms introduced by the Franco regime were reflected by the introduction of a very limited degree of democracy both to the administration of the RFEF and the football clubs. In the 1970s, the general frustration felt by the country as a whole at the ineffectiveness of these reforms and the Franco regime's refusal to introduce other more meaningful ones was reflected by the specific frustration felt by the majority of football clubs upon realizing that they would not be able to introduce a one-member-one-vote electoral system until the Franco dictatorship itself had begun to be dismantled.

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that the general lack of democracy in Spanish football during the Franco period was a direct consequence of the regime's style of government. There is little explicit documentary evidence to support the allegation that the regime was eager to maintain a lack of democracy in football and other sports in order not to establish an uncomfortable comparison with the lack of democracy in general in Francoist Spain. It must be concluded, nonetheless, that the DND itself was part of the Francoist state machinery and that the various Delegados Nacionales de Deportes were fully aware of the way in which the regime wanted them to govern sport and the limited scope of football democracy which the regime would permit.

CHAPTER FIVE: FOOTBALL AND EXPLOITATION

The fourth aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain concerns the poor treatment received by the professional players from both the football clubs and the Francoist sporting authorities. This is the aspect which has been discussed the least by the select group of writers and journalists who have concerned themselves with the political significance of Spanish sports. The only two writers to have examined the poor working conditions of the footballers have been Tomás Martín Arrioriaga, in Los esclavos de oro del balón,¹ and Daniel Gómez Jiménez, who dedicated to the subject several of his weekly columns in the "vertical syndicates" newspaper Pueblo, signed simply "Daniel".²

Two explanations for the lack of treatment of this aspect of politicization can be put forward. Firstly, the poverty of the footballers' working conditions have generally not been recognized as such because the stereotyped image of the Spanish footballer has usually been that of a luxuriously-treated and extravagantly-paid young man, in

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2. See, for example, Pueblo, (Madrid) 17 September 1968.

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sharp contrast to the poorly-treated and ill-paid majority of Spanish workers.³ Secondly, even when this shabby treatment of the footballers has been occasionally recognized, by "Daniel", for example,⁴ it has usually been thought this was the normal treatment received by footballers throughout the world rather than the result of a deliberate policy of the Franco regime.⁵ In consequence, the political significance of the shabby working conditions of the footballers has simply not been recognized, not even in the standard works on the politicizations of Spanish football, written by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán,⁶ Julián García Candau,⁷ Francisco Cerecedo⁸ and Alex J. Botines.⁹

Despite all of the above, however, the treatment received by the players should be considered as another aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain, because the Franco regime was undoubtedly in favour of the footballers' working conditions reflecting those of the great majority of Spanish workers.

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3. This image of the footballers is best illustrated in: Martín Arnoriaga, op. cit., p. 159-162; in Marca, 18 November 1957 or 4 March 1969. The majority of veteran supporters interviewed by the author share this view, and consequently have little respect for the struggles of the players' union, the Asociación de Futbolistas Españoles. On the other hand, the majority of younger supporters interviewed have a sympathetic attitude towards the problems of the players, and appreciate the need for the Asociación, even though very few expressed support for the four strikes undertaken during the period 1979-1984.
 4. See, for example, Pueblo, 17 September 1968.
 5. See, for example, As, 1 December 1973, and El Mundo Deportivo, 20 February 1974.
 6. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit.
 7. Julián García Candau, op. cit.
 8. Francisco Cerecedo, op. cit.
 9. Alex J. Botines, op. cit.

The concrete evidence to support the above claim, however, unfortunately does not exist. In order to support this claim, therefore, it is necessary to fall back on the rational assumption that if the footballers' treatment in Francoist Spain had been qualitatively better, then, from the point of view of the Franco regime, an uncomfortable comparison would have been created with the generally poor working conditions of the large majority.¹⁰

The situation would undoubtedly have been even more uncomfortable for the Franco regime if the professional footballers had actually taken action to improve their working conditions, as occurred in every other Western European country in the same period. These Spanish footballers were consistently held up by the media as shining examples of discipline, courage, the much-vaunted "Spanish fury", commitment and self-sacrifice, qualities valued very highly in Francoist Spain.¹¹ The consequences for the Franco regime, in terms of political mobilization and industrial strife, could possibly have been serious if the example set by the footballers had changed to one of indignation at their poor working conditions, followed by solidarity, militancy and even strike action. Therefore, it is logical to assume that it was in the interests of the Franco regime to maintain the players in approximately the same situation as the majority of Spanish workers: docile, divided among themselves, loyal to their employer, and politically passive.

10. This assumption is shared by, for example, Juan Pablo Fusi, Julián García Candua, Manuel Velázquez, Luis Aragonés, the former FC Barcelona player Carles Rexach, Juan José Castillo, and José Angel Iribar.

11. See, for example, El Mundo Deportivo, 14 October 1942 and 30 March 1949, and Marca, 15 November 1957.

Before entering into a detailed study of the footballers' grievances, it is necessary at this juncture to point out both the differences and similarities between the working conditions of the players and those of the Spanish workers.

The most striking difference between the working conditions of the two groups was financial. Although it is a myth, a myth often sustained by the clubs themselves in order to turn public opinion against a rebellious player, as shall shortly be seen in detail, that every single player was paid a fantastic salary, it is nonetheless true that even a modest second division footballer earned more than the average Spanish worker during the Franco years. For example, José Luis Marín, the former player of Madrid second division club Rayo Vallecano, estimates that in 1960 he was earning approximately 1700 pesetas per month with bonuses included.¹² In this year, the Spanish average monthly income was approximately 1,500 pesetas, while the minimum pay established by the Ministry of Labour was fifty pesetas a day, approximately 1,200 pesetas monthly.¹³

It should be taken into account, however, that the salary of professional sportsmen has traditionally been relatively high because of the brevity of their active careers, and the consequent need for them to save money in order to commence upon a new career or set themselves up

12. Author's interview with José Luis Marín, 23 February 1987.

13. Information revealed by Miguel Martínez Cuadrado, Anuario Político Español 1969. Cambio social y modernización política, Madrid, 1970, p. 60, and Max Gallo, Historia de la España franquista, 1973, p. 436.

in business in their mid-thirties, or even earlier in the case of serious injury. Furthermore, the Spanish footballers were compelled to tolerate very difficult working conditions in return for these relatively high salaries, as shall shortly be seen in detail.

There were far more similarities than differences between the working conditions of the footballers and the majority of workers in Francoist Spain. To begin with, both groups were denied the right, enshrined in Article 23 of the Declaration of Human Rights, to form free and independent trade unions. Practically every Spanish worker was compelled to join one of the unpopular State-controlled "vertical syndicates". All attempts to form independent trade unions were met by the full weight of the Francoist machinery of repression, as Marcelino Camacho, Nicolás Redondo and the other leaders of the underground unions Comisiones Obreras, UGT and CNT painfully discovered. The footballers were officially regarded as "amateur sportsmen" rather than "genuine workers", and were consequently excluded from the "vertical syndicates" system.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the players were still prohibited from forming themselves into any other type of grouping or association.¹⁵

The second major similarity between the working conditions of the footballers and the majority of workers in Francoist Spain concerns the immense power held by the employers. In many large companies, workers

14. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND, in particular Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 37, April 1946 and No. 233, January 1963.

15. Revealed by examination of the archives of the DND, and of the RFEF, in particular Boletín Oficial de la DND, No.161, October 1955.

were systematically fined for lateness and other minor infringements of the company rules.¹⁶ In a similar way, the professional footballers were subjected to, in the words of the former Real Madrid and Spanish international player Manuel Velázquez, "all manner of petty regulations and restrictions, stipulating what we should eat and drink, at what time we should be in bed, and even, on which nights we should remain celibate."¹⁷ Large multinational firms such as Seat, Pegaso and Perkins Motors regularly used to expel workers who dared to complain about the poor working conditions,¹⁸ while the Spanish football clubs used to cancel unilaterally the contracts of players considered to be insufficiently obedient, or who had been injured too badly to continue playing.¹⁹ In both cases, the employers demanded a high degree of loyalty, and were normally very ruthless when their employees had ceased to be economically useful.

The Spanish footballers had no less than seven major grievances during the Franco period. Firstly, as seen above, they were forbidden by both the DND and the RFEF to form a trade union or association, and, moreover were excluded from the official "vertical syndicates" system. These "syndicates" were generally considered to be inefficient and ineffective due to being controlled by the Franco regime, but, as realized at the time by Manuel Velázquez and other footballers, to be

16. See, for example, Eduard de Blaye, op. cit., pp. 499-501, and Max Gallo, Spain under Franco: A History, London, 1973.

17. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez.

18. See, for example, de Blaye, op. cit., pp. 499-501, and Gallo, op. cit., p. 344.

19. Revealed by examination of the archives of Atlético de Madrid, Real Madrid, FC Barcelona, Atlético de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián.

excluded from the "vertical syndicates" was far worse than being compelled to join.²⁰ As seen briefly above, there existed no sindicato for professional sportsmen because they were deceitfully considered by the clubs, the RFEF, and the DND to be merely amateurs. Consequently, the compromising words salario and sueldo were always avoided by the clubs when drawing up the contracts of the players, in favour of the more innocent recompensación.²¹

The second major grievance of the players arose as a consequence of their not being considered professional sportsmen: their exclusion from the social security system, in clear contravention of Article 22 of the Declaration of Human Rights. This meant that when a player retired, he received no state pension, and had to live on money saved up during his playing days. Manuel Velázquez had few problems in establishing himself as a retailer of electrical goods upon retirement, because his earnings as a Real Madrid and national team star had been considerable²². There are many cases, however, of less fortunate players. José Luis Marín, for example, was unemployed and unable to support his wife and three children without help from his extended family when he retired in 1968. He eventually found employment as a waiter in a bar owned by a Rayo supporter.²³ Pedro Gil and Javier Garcia, two former colleagues of Marín at Rayo who retired at approximately the same time, were both

20. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez, and with several other footballers of the Franco period, for example Carles Rexach and José Angel Iríbar.

21. Revealed by examination of the archives of Atlético de Madrid, and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián.

22. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez.

23. Author's interview with José Luis Marín, Madrid.

unable to find work in Madrid, and consequently returned to their native towns to work with their families.²⁴

The plight of a badly injured player was even worse, even if he had sustained his injury as a result of a piece of courageous action on the field. His club would arrange a testimonial match for him, from which the proceeds would be considerable only in the case of a leading star, and then unilaterally cancel the player's contract and consider the matter closed. In certain cases, for example that of Miguel Martínez, the Atlético de Madrid midfielder who was in a coma for five years before dying in 1971, the clubs were generous with the injured player and his family. Such cases, however, were really exceptions to the rule of shabby treatment, because the clubs were simply not legally obliged to help in any way at all. José María Zubizarraín, for example, the former Atlético de Madrid goalkeeper, had his career terminated by injury in March 1970, and received so little compensation from his club that, as shall shortly be seen, he decided to take his case to the law courts.

The third source of indignation for the footballers of Francoist Spain was the clubs' right of retention, which meant that even when a player's contract had expired he could only move elsewhere if his present club gave its approval. According to the controversial Articles 99 and 100 of the RFEF's Regulations,²⁵ all that a club had to do in order to retain a player was to increase his salary by 10%. This

24. Author's interview with José Luis Marín.

25. Revealed by examination of the archives of the RFEF.

apparently unjust rule was designed to protect the smaller clubs from losing the players that they had developed and trained for years at great expense. This rule was invoked with particular frequency by the Basque clubs to prevent their international stars from moving to wealthy Real Madrid and FC Barcelona. In this way in July 1966, and again two years later, Athletic de Bilbao prevented their international goalkeeper José Angel Iríbar from joining Barça. Iríbar understood the need for such a rule, but nonetheless concluded that it was one more restriction on the liberty of the Spanish footballer:

"At the time, when my ambitions to join FC Barcelona were blocked twice, I was unable to understand the need for this retention of contract by the club. It seemed to me completely unjust. Over the years, however, and especially now that I am the coach of Athletic de Bilbao, I can appreciate that this rule was necessary in order to defend the modest clubs, who would otherwise have lost all their best young players on whom they had spent vast amounts of money in training. On the other hand, however, it must be said that this retention rule was one more example of the unjust treatment received by the footballers, denying us the right to freedom of movement. The smaller clubs should certainly be protected against losing their best young players, but not at the expense of the players' freedom of contract. The major consequence of this ruling was that the clubs had absolute control over the destiny of the players, especially so because they could sell or cancel a player's contract whenever they wanted to. All of the legal rights in the player-club relationship were zealously held by the clubs."²⁶

The fourth bone of contention for the footballers of Francoist Spain was the apparently endless list of petty rules and regulations which had to be obediently accepted at every club. The players were almost always treated like, in the words of the former Atlético de Madrid star Luis Aragonés, "irresponsible children who needed a stern father to keep them in order".²⁷ Indeed, the Real Madrid President

26. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

27. Author's interview with Luis Aragonés.

Santiago Bernabeu actually said on a number of occasions:

"The footballer, for both good and bad, is very much like a child, and really needs to be treated as such."²⁸

Practically every aspect of the players' lives was controlled and regulated, in clear contravention of Article 12 of the Declaration of Human Rights, concerning the right of the individual to his family and private life. This patronizing treatment occurred almost to the same extent in Italy and South America.²⁹ It was only in Francoist Spain, however, that the clubs expressly prohibited their players from making statements or gestures with a political significance.³⁰ The clearest example of this prohibition occurred in November 1974, when Bernabeu discovered that the politically conscious West German player Paul Breitner, newly arrived at Real Madrid, was considering giving financial help to the striking workers of the giant Pegaso Company. As Breitner explained.

"Bernabeu called me into his office and told me, in no uncertain terms, that what I planned to do could have serious consequences. He pointed out the importance of Real Madrid maintaining its supposedly "non-political" image, and said I would make myself very unpopular by interfering in Spanish domestic affairs. I was forced to climb down on the issue and swallow my pride, as so many other players apparently had to do when confronted by Bernabeu."³¹

28. Quoted in Pueblo, 17 September 1968.

29. Revealed by examination of the archives of World Soccer, January and February 1984, in particular the editions of June 1963, October 1969, June 1972 and February 1980.

30. Revealed by examination of the archives of World Soccer, of Atlético de Madrid, and Real Madrid, in particular Boletín del Real Madrid CE, No. 295, December 1974, with regard to the case of Paul Breitner.

31. Author's interview with Paul Breitner.

It would have been possible for the Spanish footballers to have opposed and even eliminated these five grievances listed above, if it had not been for the existence of the sixth and seventh grievances: the players' lack of representation within the RFEF, and the prohibition on them taking their grievances to the law courts. In consequence, the footballers were completely powerless to seek justice and fair treatment from the clubs.

Before 1968, there was not a single players' representative on the executive committee of the RFEF. In July 1968, a motion at the annual RFEF assembly was passed requesting such a representative, and was surprisingly approved by the Delegado Nacional Samaranch.³² This representative, however, was to be chosen only by the current and former international players, and usually turned out to be a man who had no intention of disturbing the status quo by taking up the grievances of the footballers. This was especially the case with regard to José Luis Pérez Payá, the first player's representative, before being appointed RFEF President in 1970.

This lack of influence within the RFEF, however, pales into insignificance alongside the seventh and final grievance of the footballers of Francoist Spain: the prohibition on the players seeking to redress any of their other grievances in the law courts. No other similar prohibition has apparently ever existed in any other footballing country.³³ This prohibition was on Article 5 of the statutes,

32. Revealed by examination of the archives of the RFEF, and the DND, in particular Boletín Oficial de la DND, No.300, August 1968.

33. Revealed by examination of the archives of World Soccer.

read:

"The RFF has full and exclusive jurisdiction over all matters within its concern."³⁴

In addition, the clubs would always include in a player's contract a clause which stipulated that he "expressly renounces the jurisdiction of all authority, court, right or procedure that is not established in the RFEF Regulations."³⁵

The RFEF usually ruled in favour of the club, on the few occasions when a player actually dared to complain about not having been paid, or about having been fined for infringing some petty club regulation. One player who who complained to the RFEF about the treatment received from his club was Juan José Tatono, the former Valencia defender who, in November 1969, denounced his employers for suspending him without pay for having argued with the manager. As recounted by Tatono himself:

"Perhaps I deserved to be suspended, but certainly not without pay, that was completely unfair. I had to borrow money from friends in order to keep my family. I complained to the RFEF, but they came down in favour of the club, agreeing with the suspension. It seems that this is what usually used to happen with players' complaints to the RFEF. My complaining to Madrid made matters worse with Valencia, who sold me, after a season on the sidelines, to second division club Elche. Looking back now, I regret having complained to the RFEF, because it only did me harm."³⁶

In addition, therefore, to the treatment of the footballers contravening Articles 12, 22 and 23 of the Declaration of Human Rights, this lack of a fair trial by an independent and impartial court was also in contravention of Articles 8 and 10 of that Declaration, as well as of the

34. Revealed by examination of the archives of the RFEF, and quoted in Martín Arnoriaga, op. cit. p. 125.

35. Revealed by examination of the archives of Atlético de Madrid, and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián.

36. Author's interview with Juan José Tatono.

Franco regime's own Fuero de los españoles which formally granted all workers the right to take their labour grievances to the special labour courts.

The first footballer to complain about these unique working conditions was the highly intelligent José Cabrera Bazán, who on several occasions threatened a personal srike while playing for Jaén in the 1950s. Upon retiring, he completed his legal studies, and then wrote El contrato de trabajo deportivo, which proved, among other things, that the contract of a professional was clearly a labour contract.³⁷ In the late 1970s, as shall be seen in the Epilogue to this thesis, Cabrera Bazán assisted in the foundation of the footballers' trade union, the Asociación de Futbolistas Españoles.

Cabrera Bazán, however, was a rare exception. For approximately thirty years, all of the other footballers remained silent, grateful to be doing the job they had dreamed of since childhood, and being relatively well-paid for doing it. The docility of the players in the 1940s and 1950s reflected the docility of the Spanish workers in general. This situation gradually began to change in the 1960s, when certain sections of the workforce began to take up the struggle for better pay and working conditions, and for the right to form independent trade unions. This change in climate eventually reached the footballers, despite, in the words of José Angel Iríbar, "all the efforts of

37. José Cabrera Bazán, El Contrato de trabajo deportivo, Madrid, 1961.

the clubs, the RFEF and the DND to isolate us players from the outside world".³⁸

The first serious attempt to form a players' union was made in April 1969, but was promptly abandoned in the face of the fierce hostility of the clubs and the sporting authorities. As recounted by Manuel Velázquez:

"The captains of all the first division teams planned to come together to discuss forming an association that would struggle to improve our working conditions. The problems began when the Press found out. The RFEF President José Luis Costa denounced the idea, along with practically all of the club Presidents. Our President, Bernabeu, was particularly angry because our captain, "Pirri", and other player, Bernardo Grosso, had made statements in the Press in favour of this association. Bernabeu forced the the two of them to make humiliating public retractions of their earlier statements. That was very much the end of the matter. It was to take another ten years for the footballers finally to form their own trade union."³⁹

This setback about forming a union, however, did not serve to silence all of the players. In June 1970, the Zaragoza centre-forward Marcelino Pérez famous for his winning goal for Spain in the 1964 Nations Cup final against the Soviet Union, demanded a transfer when his contract with the club ended, and complained more vociferously than any player had done before when this was refused him. The Zaragoza directors turned public opinion against the player by pointing out how high his salary was, and how it would be further increased by 10% in

38. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

39. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez.

order to retain him.⁴⁰ As pointed out by both José Angel Iríbar and Manuel Velázquez, however, Marcelino's stance served as an encouragement for other players indignant about their treatment.⁴¹

The Angolan-born forward José Mendonça went one step further than Marcelino in March 1971. Mendonça was so upset by the treatment received from the club Mallorca, in terms of lack of payment and refusal of transfer, that he engaged the lawyer Eduardo Ajuria to fight his case. As a veteran, Mendonça had no fear of a possible RFEF ban resulting from his taking legal action against Mallorca and thus infringing the controversial Article 5 of the RFEF's statutes. Ajuria skilfully managed to bring the case to the Supreme Court in Madrid, where, in accordance with the thesis of Cabrera Bazán,⁴² it was ruled that a labour contract existed between Mendonça and Mallorca, therefore compelling the club to make certain financial reparations.

Ajuria was to enjoy similar success two years later with the case of José María Zubizarraín, the Atlético Madrid goalkeeper whose career, as seen above, was cut short by injuries sustained in action. He was infuriated by the club paying him a small amount of compensation and then cancelling his contract. Ajuria fought the case in the grounds

40. The opinions of the Zaragoza directors about the Marcelino case are fully reproduced in Heraldo de Aragón, El Mundo Deportivo, Marca, and As, from 17 June to 8 July 1970. The opinions of the player, himself, in contrast, were paid very little attention by the Press, being confined to a few lines in Heraldo de Aragón, 17, 22, 24 June and 6 July, and a similarly brief treatment in El Mundo Deportivo, 17 and 24 June, and in As 17, 22, June and 7 July 1970.

41. Author's interviews with Manuel Velázquez and José Angel Iríbar.

42. José Cabrera Bazán, op. cit.

that the player's injury was obviously the result of a labour accident. The following statement of defence from the lawyer of Atlético, backed up by both the RFEF and the DND, perfectly illustrates the patronizing attitude of the Spanish clubs towards the footballers in Francoist Spain:

"It is absolutely inadmissible that a player who, as we all know, enjoys substantial payment, many paternalistic benefits, conscientious doctors of the first order, comfortably short working hours, and so many privileges, should try to seek the protection of the influence and benefits of a social security law created exclusively and logically for the genuine worker."⁴³

This defence, however, proved to be ineffective. In December 1973, the Supreme Court passed a verdict in favour of Zubizarraín, condemning Atlético de Madrid for not having registered the player in the social security system. For the second time, the argument that a footballer was not a "genuine worker" had been dismissed in the Supreme Court.

The two men most upset by the Zubizarraín verdict were Enrique de la Mata Gorostizaga and José Luis Pérez Payá. The former was both Director General of Social Security and Vice-President of Atlético de Madrid, but nonetheless still unable to prevent this personally humiliating verdict. Pérez Payá was equally humiliated, because besides being the RFEF President implicated in the case he was also the Subdirector General of Social Security.

Pérez Payá skilfully prevented other indignant players from taking their grievances to court by promising to resolve completely the whole

43. Revealed by examination of the archives of Atlético de Madrid, and quoted in Martín Arnorriaga, op. cit., p. 32.

issue of the nature of the footballers' contract and their possible affiliation to the social security system. In the same way as he had proved to be a docile players' representative on the executive committee of the RFEF, however, Pérez Payá had done practically nothing about these issues by the time of his fall from power in July 1975.

The obstructionism of Pérez Payá was supported by the majority of the football clubs, despite, as seen in the Introduction to this thesis, their opposition to the continued prohibition of foreign players and the further ailings of the national team. In consequence, the many grievances of the Spanish footballers remained to be resolved after the death of Franco. As shall be seen in the Epilogue, the players were not to be immune from the general desire for change in Spanish society after 1975. In the same way as the docility, obedience and political passivity of the players throughout the Franco period had reflected the situation of the workers in general, apart from the occasional wave of strikes, the spirit of solidarity and militancy among the footballers from 1975 onward reflected the increase in the general political consciousness of the majority of Spanish workers. This desire for change on the part of the players was described in the following way by Manuel Velázquez.

"By the time of the death of Franco, we players were desperate for a change in our working conditions. For far too many years we'd been treated like little children, especially here at Real Madrid. We were not allowed to form our own trade union, there was no social security protection for when you fell injured or retired, the club could hold on to you for as long as they wanted to, and you couldn't even resort to the law courts for justice. Such an unfair situation simply couldn't continue, and it was only to be expected that we footballers, like so many other groups and sections of Spanish society, would become militant during the transition from dictatorship to democracy."⁴⁴

44. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez.

CHAPTER SIX: FOOTBALL AND THE REFUGEES

The fifth aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain concerns the presence in Spain of various outstanding refugee players and coaches from Eastern Europe.

The majority of these refugees had fled from Hungary as a result of the failure of the October 1956 anti-Communist uprising, and were enthusiastically signed up by the leading Spanish clubs because of their immense playing and coaching reputations. As a result of the predictable oppositions, these Spanish clubs encountered a whole range of obstacles when they attempted to ratify the registration of these refugee players with the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA). Permission for them to play in Spain, however, was eventually conceded by FIFA. In addition, the East Europeans were all rapidly granted Spanish nationality under the special classification of "political exiles", which led to the two most famous refugees, Ladislav Kubala and Ferenc Puskas, playing for the Spanish national team until 1962.

These "golden refugees", as they were called by the Spanish Press,¹ can be divided into the following three categories: Kubala and Ferdinand Daucik, the player and coach partnership that arrived in Spain in 1950 at the head of a team of anti-Communist exiles from right across Eastern Europe; the world-famous Hungarian army team Honverd, which left Budapest after the defeat of the 1956 uprising; the Yugoslavia players and coaches who were prominent in Spanish football in the 1960s and 1970s.

It has been alleged that these footballing refugees were given every possible assistance to settle in Francoist Spain, in order for the Franco regime to convert them into "anti-Communist symbols" by using them to demonstrate both the harsh reality of Communism and the relatively liberal nature of Spain.² The objective of this chapter is to discuss this allegation, and in so doing evaluate the political significance of the presence of these refugees in Francoist Spain.

Before commencing upon an examination of the political significance of the entry into Francoist Spain of Kubala and Daucik, it is necessary to establish the context of this chapter with a brief discussion about East European exiles in other sports in Francoist Spain, and East European footballers in exile in other countries. There is extremely little to discuss in both cases.

1. This expression was first used to describe Kubala and Daucik in El Mundo Deportivo, 27 August 1950.

2. This allegation has been made to the author in interviews with Juan Pablo Fusi, and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, and in print by Vázquez Montalbán op. cit., p. 157.

Apart from the footballing refugees, the only other East Europeans in Spanish sport during the Franco period were a handful of Yugoslavian basketball players in the early 1970s. Only one of this group, Milan Adamovic, who played for the Caja de Ronda club from January 1975 onwards, after serving a worldwide two-year ban left without the permission of the Yugoslavian authorities.³ The other players who signed for Spanish clubs, thus earning vital foreign exchange for their country, had this official permission.

There are extremely few examples of East European footballers seeking asylum in the West, apart from the Hungarians in Francoist Spain. A small number of East German players have stayed in West Germany over the years while on tour there. Apart from the present Bayern Munich defender Norbert Nachtweih, however, they have been mediocre players without an international reputation. As will be illustrated in the course of this chapter, the sporting authorities of every West European country apart from Francoist Spain were extremely cautious about taking in dissident East Europeans, because of fear of damaging sporting relations with the whole of the Eastern Block.⁴ The Francoist authorities had no such fear because Spanish sporting relations with the East European countries were negligible, a reflection of the non-existence of diplomatic relations until after the death of Franco.

3. For further details of the Adamovic affair, see Marca, 10 February 1974 and As, 2 January 1975.

4. In March 1967, for example, the French authorities were reluctant to offer asylum to four members of the Romanian Under-21 football team who attempted to defect in Lyon. For further details, see World Soccer, April 1967.

The passage of the player Kubala and the coach Daucik from East European to Spanish football should be regarded as a kind of prologue to the more famous and controversial case of the Honved team. Nevertheless, the story of the flight of Kubala in particular is remarkable and romantic, all of which assisted in his later conversion into an "anti-Communist symbol" in Francoist Spain. Born in Budapest in 1927, his prodigious talent earned him a Hungarian international debut at the age of only 17. After the death of his father in 1945, he followed his Czech mother to Prague, played for the Czech national team and married the daughter of Ferdinand Daucik, the coach of his club Spartak Prague. He returned to Budapest in July 1948, only to flee across the Austrian border in January 1948, accompanied by several friends, all disguised as Soviet soldiers.

Kubala has always alluded to political events when explaining his decision to leave Hungary:

"I decided to leave Hungary because of the Communist takeover, which was on the point of culmination just then. I couldn't bear the thought of living in a Hungary dominated by the Soviets. My father-in-law was organizing a team of anti-Communist East Europeans players, mostly Hungarians, and we all came together in Milan in March 1948."⁵

It must be taken into account, nonetheless, that professional football, which afforded Kubala a relatively lavish lifestyle at the age of 20, was about to be dissolved in Hungary in favour of a rigid amateur structure. The players would have to find other work and leave football

5. Author's interview with Ladislav Kubala.

for evenings and weekends, a prospect which did not appeal to Kubala.

The team of East Europeans, united in their anti-Communism and their desire to seek fame and fortune, was called "Hungaria" because of the preponderance of Hungarians. They toured Italy, Switzerland, the Low Countries and France during 1948 and 1949, playing exhibition matches twice a week and hoping to be signed up by a leading club. Juventus of Turin, Milan, Anderlecht of Brussels and Stade de Reims were all enthusiastic to sign up Kubala, the inspiration of the touring team, but were apparently dissuaded by the sporting authorities of their respective countries, who did not want to damage relations with the Eastern Bloc for the sake of one footballer.⁶ It was coach Daucik who took the decision, in the spring of 1950, to move on to Spain, for the following motives:

"Spain seemed a good country to tour at the time, even though it was still substantially poorer than the rest of Western Europe. There was clearly a huge passion for the game there, and I expected there to be a lot of interest in a team made up of various nationalities because Spain had been starved of international football contacts since the Civil War... As to the political side it did cross my mind beforehand that our being a team of anti-Communists would help us to fill the Spanish stadia, even more so than in Italy and France at the height of the Cold War. In addition, it seemed that the Spanish authorities would be more disposed to help their clubs sign on any of our players that caught the eye, and the purpose of our tour, after all, was to find us all clubs in Western Europe."⁷

It is difficult to assess to what extent the political significance of "Hungaria" contributed to their success in Francoist Spain. The

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6. This explanation for the breakdown of the negotiations was offered to the author by both Kubala and Daucik.
 7. Author's interview with Ferdinand Daucik.

media offered them an extremely warm welcome. For example, upon their entry into Spain through Hendaya in May 1950, Marca greeted them with the headline "Welcome, Brave Footballers of Freedom".⁸ The stated radio station Radio Nacional de España immediately dubbed the visiting team "refugees from Communist terror", a label that was adopted by practically all other sections of the Spanish media.⁹ In this way, an institution under the direct control of the Franco regime established the manner in which the team of exiles would be treated.

With regard to actual official assistance to "Hungaria", the Delegado Nacional de Deportes, General José Moscardó, advised the RFEF to arrange a match between the visitors and the Spanish national team, preparing for the World Cup finals tournament in Brazil.¹⁰ The RFEF actually organized two such matches, in which the media's flattery of the East Europeans reached its height.¹¹ Daucik had previously attempted to play against the national teams of Italy, Switzerland and France, but without success.

"Hungaria" was wound up in July 1950, when the series of friendly matches had become a tedious, non-competitive grind. Most of the

8. See Marca, 8 May 1950.

9. Information revealed to the author by Matías Prats, the ultra-nationalist former football commenatator of State radio, television and NODO news reel.

10. During examaniation of the archives of the RFEF, the author discovered a letter from the DND, signed by General Moscardó May 13 1950, to the RFEF President Armando Muñoz Calero, in which the latter was requested to organize a game between "our glorious national football team and anti-Communist footballers from East Europe, currently on tour in our country".

11. For further details, see Marca, 21-26 May 1950.

players gave up their ambitions to be professional footballers, and left for France or Belgium, where they found other employment. Kubala, however, became the subject of another episode in the bitter "transfer war" between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, and signed for the Catalan club in August 1950. The Barça general manager Josep Samitier promised Kubala that the newly-elected Spanish representative on the FIFA executive committee, the Falangist doctor Armando Muñoz Calero, would secure approval for the player's registration in Spain.¹² FC Barcelona also signed on the coach Daucik, who expressed his gratitude by declaring to the delighted Press that:

"Spain is the land of freedom, for it has given us refugees from repression a new home and new hope."¹³

Daucik took charge of the Barça first team in January 1951, but Kubala had to wait for FIFA clearance to play in competitive matches. The matter was first debated at the FIFA executive meeting in December 1950, held as usual in Zurich. As expected by the player himself,¹⁴ the Hungarian demand that Kubala should be suspended worldwide until allowed to register with another club by his former club Vasas of Budapest, actually proposed by the Soviet representative, was accepted.

If the Hungarian authorities had not opposed Kubala's registration with Barça, then the matter would certainly not have assumed the political significance that it did. In the event, however, the

12. Revealed by author's interview with Ladislav Kubala

13. Quoted in El Mundo Deportivo, 22 August 1950.

14. Revealed by author's interview with Ladislav Kubala.

seemingly unjust suspension of Kubala, coupled with the frustration of Spanish football supporters at being denied the chance to see his supposedly phenomenal talents on display, caused the media to become indignant and aggressive. The player was presented to the Spanish public, in the words of the ultra-nationalistic Radio Nacional commentator Matías Prats, as a "victim of Communist spite, a man unjustly prevented from freely carrying out his profession".¹⁵

Mainly because of this politically-motivated campaign by the Francoist media, the Spanish public followed the course of the next FIFA executive meeting, in March 1951, with substantial interest.¹⁶ Muñoz Calero skilfully used the rule that a federation must give good reason for persistently refusing the re-registration of a player in another country, and swung practically all of the non-Communists onto his side by evoking the picture of poor Kubala having played only trivial friendly matches for three years. In the vote that followed the impassioned debate, only the Soviet and Czechoslovakian representatives opposed Kubala's ratification as a Barça player.¹⁷

The Hungarian made his debut six weeks later in a cup match in Seville, where he was offered a warm reception. He immediately transformed Barça into an unstoppable team, leading them to triumph in the cup with six goals.

15. Recalled to the author by Matías Prats, interview op. cit.

16. The newspapers El Mundo Deportivo and Marca both sent a correspondent to Zurich, along with Matías Prats of Radio Nacional.

17. For further details, see either Marca, or El Mundo Deportivo, 29 March 1951.

By the time of the June 1951 cup final, both Kubala and Daucik were Spanish citizens. Their applications were processed in only three months because the Interior Minister Blas Pérez González placed them in the scarcely-used category "political refugees", the clearest demonstration possible that the Franco regime was actively in favour of these "golden refugees" remaining in Spain.¹⁸

This granting of Spanish nationality, however, did not automatically qualify Kubala to play for the Spanish national team. The Hungarians, possibly conscious of the political significance that Kubala had acquired in Francoist Spain, were as resolutely opposed to him playing for the Spanish as they had been about his registering for Barça. It took Muñoz Calero until May 1953 to win over the majority of the FIFA executive committee on this issue, a delay which caused further media attacks against the East European attitude and, in consequence, an increase in the player's political significance.¹⁹ It has actually been alleged that the RFEF was ordered by the Franco regime to request permission for Kubala's inclusion in the national team in order deliberately to augment this political significance.²⁰ The truth is, however, that Kubala had quickly proved to be more richly talented than

18. The category of "political refugee" had previously been used to shelter, according to Edouard de Blaye, op. cit., pp. 203-204, "the entire world's stock of Fascist ex-dictators, right-wing extremists and collaborators on the run", such as, the former Argentine dictator Juan Perón, the Belgian Nazi leader Léon Degrelle and the in famous SS Colonel Otto Skorzeny.

19. See, for example, Marca, 21 October 1952 and 5 March 1953.

20. This was alleged to the author by both Juan Pablo Fusi and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, even though no evidence has been uncovered to support this, for example, no letter from the Delegado Nacional General Moscardó to the RFEF President requesting Kubala's inclusion in the national team.

any native Spanish player, and for this reason it was generally hoped that he would transform the mediocre national team,²¹ in which he made his debut in July 1953.

The political significance of Kubala reached its peak with the release, in March 1954, of a highly romanticized film based on his eventful life, entitled Los ases buscan la paz ("The stars search for peace"). The climax of the film is Kubala's reunion in Barcelona with his Czech wife, after five years of separation (an event which actually took place in Milan in July 1952). The film itself should be regarded as the climax of the process of presenting Kubala to the Spanish public as an anti-Communist symbol. It has been alleged by various commentators that Los ases buscan la paz succeeded in demonstrating the .

21. This hope was expressed El Mundo Deportivo, 26 May 1953, 1 July 1953, 4 July 1953, and in Marca, 3-4 July 1953.

harshness of Communism and the relatively liberal nature of Francoist Spain.²²

Kubala's political significance gradually diminished, partially because of being overshadowed from 1956 onwards by the Honved groups, and partially because of his own wild and irresponsible lifestyle, in contrast to the responsible family man portrayed in the film.

This significance did occasionally reappear, however. In March 1958, for example, Kubala was the subject of a tribute in Paris by his fellow anti-Communist Hungarian exiles, on the occasion of a France v.

22. This has been alleged to the author in interviews with the following: Juan Pablo Fusi; Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, the veteran El Mundo Deportivo editor Juan José Castillo, Alex J. Botines, the late Dicen columnist, and Miguel Vidal, the As journalist. In addition, the political significance of this film has twice been discussed in print, the first time. In Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., p. 157:

"The young visible leader of a team of fugitive Hungarian (sic) footballers from the "Red Terror", Kubala had the features of a political symbol, which if not cultivated too much at the beginning, later exploded with generosity in that ineffable film titled Los ases buscan la paz."

The second occasion occurred when Barrabás, (Barcelona), No. 237, 19 April 1977, attempted to explain why the true Kubala story had been altered in the film:

"The cinematographic plot, however, has, as usually happens in these cases, a large dose of fantasy. A logical political and social moment in which Spain was living, thus there was interest in showing a popular hero, with the characteristics of an idol, so that he could collaborate in the fierce anti-Communist Propaganda.

The figure of a beloved and admired footballer, for example, would influence the spirit of not a few spectators and supporters."

Spain friendly international match.²³ In August 1961, at Kubala's testimonial game in the Camp Nou the Hungarian became the first footballer to receive the Medalla de Oro al Mérito Deportivo, from the DND, an award which caused suspicion that the Franco regime was showing its gratitude to Kubala for having served as such a potent anti-Communist symbol.²⁴ In December 1961, the Spanish media enthusiastically covered Kubala's reunion with his mother, described for the NODO news reel, compulsorily shown before every cinema programme in Francoist Spain, by commentator Matías Prats as "the end of fourteen years of cruel separation caused by Communist tyranny."²⁵

In the years 1956-1958, the Kubala-Daucik story effectively repeated itself. In the same way as the aforementioned pair had done six years earlier, the Honved group arrived in Spain to popular acclaim, played a series of friendlies, were signed up by the top clubs, were portrayed as anti-Communist symbols by the media, were rapidly granted Spanish nationality, and received all the official help possible to obtain FIFA clearance to play for their new clubs and the Spanish national team.

The Hungarian Uprising of October 1956 was, by its very nature of being a nationalistic, anti-Communist and largely Catholic insurrection,

23. This homage was decribed, in Marca 11 March 1958, as "the tribute of patriots liberated from Communist oppression to Ladislav Kubala, a brilliant example of a courage and thirst for liberty for Hungarians on both sides of the Iron Curtain".

24. This suspension has been expressed in Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., p.158, and in Barrabás, op. cit.

25. Revealed by Matías Prats to the author.

hugely popular in Francoist Spain.²⁶ The insurgents were enthusiastically praised in the Press, while the attitude of the Franco regime is revealed by the anti-Soviet rhetoric of the Spanish delegate at the United Nations.

This official attitude is further demonstrated by the Spanish boycott of the Olympic Games held in Melbourne in November and December 1956. The Franco regime desperately wanted to show to the world its rejection of the Soviet invasion of Hungary, and was forced to do so by means of international sport because of the non-existence of its diplomatic relations with the Eastern Bloc. It has been alleged that the Franco regime hoped to impress the United States with this boycott and the strong anti-Communist rhetoric that accompanied it.²⁷ The decision to withdraw was taken by Franco's cabinet on 6 November. It was the task of the new Delegado Nacional de Deportes José Antonio Elola Olaso, only six months in the post, simply to offer the following verbose explanation:

"By taking this decision, we believe that we are interpreting the feelings of the Spanish people, who could not agree to participate in the Olympics in circumstances like the present ones, in which

26. Every Spanish newspaper of 29 October 1956 carried the following comments of Franco about the Hungarian situation:

"The countries that have known freedom and a better life cannot conform with living miserably beneath the tyranny and terror of Soviet Communism. There comes a moment when there is nothing to lose and in which death itself constitutes a liberation. They will be able to chain the bodies, but they will be able to subjugate the conscience. What has happened in one country and another was, for me, expected for a long time. I always considered the biggest weakness of Russia to be the impossible digestion of the occupied countries."

27. This allegation was made to the author by Juan Pablo Fusi, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, and the Catalan sociologist Joan Josep Artells.

the dignity and independence of sovereign countries are being trampled on, and which culminates in the sanguinary invasion of Hungary, decreed by the Communist Internationale, which reminds us so much of that which they attempted twenty years ago in our homeland..."²⁸

It should come as no surprise, in the light of this boycott, that the Francoist authorities were soon giving all possible assistance for the Honved group to settle in Spain. The chain of events which culminated in the Honved players and coaches remaining in Spain began in September 1956, when the Hungarian army team was drawn to play against Athletic de Bilbao in the European Cup. It is safe to assume, however, that even without this draw the Honved group would have ended up in Francoist Spain because, as admitted by the famous forward Sandor Kocsis,²⁹ they were well aware of the success story of compatriot Kubala, of how only Spain had been willing to give him citizenship and pursue his case with FIFA.

The Honved team had a clearer political significance than Kubala because they were the team of the Hungarian army, certain regiments of which fought against Soviet troops. Seven of the team joined in the fighting, and indeed it was erroneously reported by the world Press on 30 October that the famous Honved captain Ferenc Puskas had actually been killed in the conflict.³⁰

28. This explanation was reproduced in practically every Spanish newspaper of 7 November 1956.

29. Revealed by author's interview with Sandor Kocsis.

30. See, for example, any of the London newspapers of 30 October 1956.

Although the match with Athletic de Bilbao was not scheduled until 22 November, the Honved party left Budapest twenty days earlier, when it was obvious that the rising had failed, and just before the Soviets closed the frontier with Austria. The plans of the club secretary Emil Ostereicher were to play friendly matches across Western Europe, capitalizing on both the team's immense overseas reputation and political significance, then travel on to Bilbao, and afterwards, hopefully, join Spanish clubs.

As soon as news of Honved's arrival in Vienna reached Spain, FC Barcelona secretary Samitier left for the Austrian capital with the intention of signing up Puskas, Kocsis and Zoltan Czibor, the three stars of the team, before Real Madrid had acted. On arriving in Vienna, however, Samitier discovered that Puskas, along with Ostereicher, had already agreed to join Real after a telephone conversation with Santiago Bernabeu. The Catalan had to content himself with precontracts signed by Kocsis, Czibor and the centre-forward Andras Kazsas.³¹ In addition, the Español club of Barcelona agreed by telephone to engage the coach Jenoe Kalmar. Thus by the time that Honved left Vienna for friendlies in West Germany, six out of the party of 19 were effectively resigned to exiling themselves from Hungary and settling down in Francoist Spain.

The political alignment of Honved was made even more clear by a

31. According to Sandor Kocsis, this pre-contract, accompanied by 200 US dollars, stipulated that the three players would sign for no other non-Hungarian club but Barça.

moving speech by Ostereicher, invited to intervene in the French National assembly's debate on the Hungarian situation on 7 November. Ostereicher finished in this way:

"We wanted to leave behind a free Hungary. Unfortunately, this could not be, but we believe that Hungarian blood has not been shed in vain, and that our country will one day become a free country again, like France."³²

Partially because of the advance Press coverage, featuring this speech by Ostereicher, Honved were granted an emotional reception when they ran out to play Athletic de Bilbao. On the field before the match, the Bilbao club's chaplain offered a homage to the fallen Hungarian insurgents.³³ Upon arriving in the capital two day's later for an exhibition match against a Combined Madrid XI, the media coverage became intense. As had been the case earlier with Kubala, the Honved party were depicted as victims of Soviet repression who only wanted to exercise their profession in a free country.³⁴ The importance of money in the decision of the Hungarians to remain did not enter into the media treatment.

It has frequently been alleged that the size of the crowd for the game with the Combined Madrid XI, a capacity 110,000 in the Estadio Bernabeu, unprecedented for a friendly match, was influenced by this

32. Quoted in Arriba, 17 November 1956.

33. For further details, see any of the Madrid newspapers of 23 November 1956.

34. See, for example, Arriba and ABC, 25-30 November 1956, especially Arriba, 29 November 1956.

politically-motivated media coverage.³⁵ Four of Franco's ministers were present at the game, which also began with a religious homage: Captain Luis Carrero Blanco, General Agustín Muñoz Grandes, General Camilo Alonso Vega and Rafael Cavestany.

After being received by most of the Catalan Press and Kubala in Barcelona, the Honved party, six of whom planned to return and remain in Spain, left to tour Italy and South America in December 1956. In their absence, Doctor Muñoz Calero, encouraged by the DND,³⁶ attempted to ratify their registrations with the Spanish clubs at the FIFA executive committee. As had been the case with Kubala, the Spanish media followed these attempts passionately, indignant about the united East European intransigence.³⁷ Even the compromise solution of a year's worldwide ban

35. This was alleged to the author by Miguel Vidal, interview op. cit., and the veteran ABC football correspondent Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera".

36. A letter was discovered by the author in the archives of the RFEF, from the Delegado Nacional Elola Olaso to the RFEF President Alfonso de la Fuente Chaos, dated 4 January 1957, requesting the latter to direct Muñoz Calero to arrange with FIFA the registration in Spain of the four Honved players, "with the same enthusiasm and diligence as was displayed with regard to the player Ladislao (sic) Kubala of Club de Fútbol Barcelona".

37. The Spanish sports newspapers and Radio Nacional sent correspondents to the FIFA executive meetings in Zurich in both March and July 1957. A good example of this indignation at the East European intransigence can be found by Enrique Fernández in Barca, No. 64, 7 March 1957:

"The world sporting outcry is unanimous that the rights and sentiments of humanity triumph over the cold legality of some clauses, invoked by those who are accustomed to forget them when it suits them. The causes which motivated this "absence" from their homeland and their reluctance to return should not be undervalued."

on the four players, accepted in July 1957, did not satisfy the Press.³⁸

Accordingly, Puskas and colleagues had to confine themselves to further friendly matches for a year, during which time the Spanish media's attention on them continued. Kalmar and Ostereicher, in contrast, had begun work at Español and Real Madrid respectively in March 1957. It was in this month that all six of the Hungarians applied for Spanish nationality, which was granted by the Ministry of the Interior, with the same swiftness as with the Kubala application, in August 1957.

It was originally thought that there was no need to obtain FIFA clearance for the four former Honved players to be included in the Spanish national team because they were all in the veteran stage of their careers. Puskas's performances for Real Madrid, however, inspiring them to two further European Cups, were outstanding, and Muñoz Calero therefore made the request to the FIFA executive in March 1960. The East Europeans were once again adamant in their opposition to the Spanish proposal, because Puskas, unlike Kubala before him, was the world-famous former captain of the strongest ever Hungarian national team. Permission for him to line up for Spain, however, was granted at

38. The Spanish Press generally regarded the one-year ban as a malevolent attempt to prove that the Honved group had committed some wrong and so needed to be punished. The strongest rhetoric again come from Barca, in edition No. 85, 1 August 1957:

"The measure of FIFA, taken because of the pressuring of the Hungarian federation, does not constitute a simple footballing sanction, but rather an inhuman ruling, at odds with the most elemental norms of human rights, and with the respect owing to the people who fled from the "Red Terror" in the tragic events of last winter in Budapest."

Muñoz Calero's third time of asking, in November 1960.³⁹ Puskas consequently was able to play for the Spanish national team in the 1962 World Cup finals tournament in Chile.

The third group of East Europeans to play in Francoist Spain was a collection of Yugoslavs. Their political significance, however, in contrast to that of the Hungarians, was generally minimal. The majority of these Yugoslavs left their homeland with the approval of the authorities, for having both played in twenty international matches and having reached the age of 28. In 1975, there were seven such veteran Yugoslavs playing in the Spanish first division, in addition to the outstanding coach Milan Miljanic being in command at Real Madrid.

The only one of these Yugoslavs who settled in Francoist Spain with any clear political significance was Ljubisa Brocic, the coach of FC Barcelona during season 1960/1961, a man who had illegally left his own country. He arrived in Spain in February 1960, and by May of that year was a Spanish citizen, the Spanish Ministry of the Interior having followed the precedents established with the Hungarians and considered him a "political refugee". In October 1960, he was unable to accompany his Barça team to Zagreb for a European Fairs Cup match, an event the political significance of which was fully capitalized upon by the Spanish media.⁴⁰

39. For further details of this FIFA executive meeting, see Marca, 2 November 1960.

40. Marca, 14 October 1960, for example described Brocic's enforced absence from the Zagreb match as "a disgrace, another Communist assault against a man who has already suffered far too many".

It is now appropriate to draw conclusions about the political significance of the presence in Francoist Spain of these "golden refugees" from Eastern Europe. To begin with, it must be affirmed that these dissident players and coaches were given all possible official assistance to settle in Francoist Spain, assistance that would certainly not have been offered by any other Western European country.⁴¹

This assistance falls into two categories: firstly, a successful campaign but painstakingly organized by the DND to obtain FIFA clearance for these footballing refugees to register with the leading Spanish clubs and to play for the Spanish national team, in the face of determined East European opposition: secondly, the swift granting of Spanish nationality for all of these refugees, who did not have to fulfill the usual strict requirements of either ten years' residence or Spanish parentage because of being classified as "political exiles".

In addition to these two pieces of concrete assistance from the Franco regime to the "golden refugees", the extremely sympathetic media treatment of the East Europeans, which contributed towards their decision to settle in Spain,⁴² was largely due to the regime's latent anti-Communism. A considerable section of this media, for example national radio, television and the NODO news reels, was under the direct control of the Ministry of Information and tourism, while the

41. Renowned international football writers such as Keir Radnedge, editor of World Soccer, Brian Glanville, sports editor of The Sunday Times, and Jaques Ferran, editor of L'Equipe, have all alleged to the author that no other Western European country would have risked severely damaging its sporting relations with the Eastern bloc countries by taking in these Hungarian refugee players.

42. Both Ladislav Kubala and Sandor Kocsis, made this claim to the author.

independent section largely shared the Franco regime's interpretation of events.

The benefits obtained by the Franco regime through offering every possible assistance to these footballing refugees to settle in Spain were many. In the first place, they offered the regime the opportunity to demonstrate, in a domestic context, the liberal nature of Francoist Spain in comparison with the Communist countries. It is extremely difficult, however, to support this statement with concrete evidence. It is evidence of a kind, nonetheless, that this statement has widely been held as true, both inside and outside Spain, and it has practically never been alleged that the portrayal by the Spanish media of these refugees as "anti-Communist symbols", particularly in the hugely popular film Los ases buscan la paz, affirmed for many football supporters the Franco regime's perpetual message that the quality of life in their Spain was far superior to that behind the Iron curtain.⁴³

In addition to this domestic advantage for the Franco regime, it has also been alleged that the presence of these East European players in the Spanish club sides and national team had the international effect of making Francoist Spain appear, perhaps surprisingly, a tolerant and sympathetic country to many foreigners who had previously regarded it as the last bastion of Fascism.⁴⁴ Spain had been the only Western European

43. This allegation was made to the author by Juan Pablo Fusi and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. the latter comparing the political message of the film with that offered on his nightly national radio programme by the virulently anti-Communist priest Venancio Marcos.

44. This was alleged to the author by the international football journalist Keir Raine, Brian Glanville and Jaques Ferran.

country, after all, prepared to take in these poor refugees, give them a new home, an identity, and then allow them to practise their profession in full personal liberty.

It is further alleged that the Franco regime benefited in a third way from the presence of these "anti-Communist symbols". As seen in Chapter Three of this thesis, players such as Kubala and Puskas to the Spanish league contributed towards football being in a position to serve the regime as a political soporific.⁴⁵ It is certainly true that football crowds substantially increased in the 1950s.⁴⁶

This rise, however, can be attributed to a variety of factors, for example the increase in real wages or the presence in Spanish football of leading South American players like Alfredo Di Stéfano and José Santamaría of Real Madrid, making it practically impossible to evaluate how important a factor in this increase the entry onto the scene of the East Europeans really was. The claim has frequently been made that the crowd-pulling potential of Kubala obliged FC Barcelona to construct the

45. Juan Pablo Fusi, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Juan Josep Artells and Alex J. Botines, this allegation to the author, claiming that Kubala and Puskas in particular had a greater crowd-pulling capacity than any individual Spanish player.

46. Exact football attendance figures such as are recorded in Britain and elsewhere have simply never existed in Spain, due to the membership system employed by all Spanish clubs. Members are entitled to see every home match, and so no exact count of how many members take their seats is maintained, only of how many non-members buy tickets on the day. Consequently, crowd figures are all estimated, and differ from newspaper to newspaper. Juan José Castillo, interview op. cit., estimated to the author that first division football crowds increased by approximately 40% during the 1950s, while Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera" offered a more conservative estimate of 30-35%.

gigantic Camp Nou stadium in 1957,⁴⁷ ignoring the fact that Barça had been considering such a development long before Kubala's arrival, since Real Madrid gained worldwide prominence in 1948 with the unveiling of the impressive Estadio Bernabeu.⁴⁸ Indeed, it could even be argued that Spaniards Luis Suárez and César Rodríguez, along with South Americans Eugenio Martínez and Ramón Villaverde, were just as potent attractions for the Catalan public in the 1950s as Kubala.

No matter to what extent Kubala and his compatriots contributed to football being able to serve as a political soporific, there is absolutely no evidence to prove that this was one of the objectives in the Franco regime's policy of offering them every possible assistance to remain in Spain. There is, however, practically no concrete evidence whatsoever that sheds light on the objectives of the regime in this respect. Given the extremely limited evidence of official attitudes to the East Europeans that is available, the most incisive conclusion that can be reached is that the Franco regime did everything in its power to facilitate the settlement of the East European players and coaches in Spain, without, perhaps for obvious reasons with regard to the political soporific factor, explicitly expressing its objectives. There is no doubt that the Franco regime was pleased with the overall impact in

47. This claim has been made in El Mundo Deportivo, 11 April 1955, 28 February 1957, 10 November 1966, 23 November 1969, in Dicen,⁹ October 1967 and 14 June 1975, as well as in several unofficial histories of the club, for example CF Barcelona by Antonio Hernáez and José Luis Marco, Barcelona, 1974, p. 78.

48. This is evidenced by an interview in El Mundo Deportivo, 22 February 1948 in which the then Barça President Agustí Montal was quoted as saying that "our club has begun seriously to consider the possibility of constructing a larger stadium, in the light of the highly successful and imaginative project of Real Madrid".

Spain of the footballing refugees. This contentment was demonstrated by General Agustín Muñoz Grandes after having witnessed, in December 1960 at FC Barcelona's Camp Nou a thrilling match won 5-3 by Real Madrid, for whom Puskas scored four goals, while two of the Barça scorers were Kubala and Kocsis:

"Today's game illustrated for me once again the correctness of our decision to offer refuge to these victims of Communist repression. I'm convinced that only in a free country like ours can they fully express all of their remarkable talents."⁴⁹

This contentment was certainly not unilateral. All of the East European regularly expressed their gratitude towards Francoist Spain for having offered them a new life.⁵⁰ In addition, Puskas demonstrated his own personal gratitude by enthusiastically collaborating, along with other famous sportsmen such as tennis star Manuel Santana and boxer José Legrá, in the Ministry of Information and Tourism's campaign for a "yes" vote in the December 1966 referendum on the Organic Law of the State.⁵¹

49. Quoted in Marca, 5 December 1960.

50. See, for example, the interview with Ladislav Kubala in El Mundo Deportivo, 7 February 1951, 4 March 1953, 12 November 1957, 8 February 1961 and 29 September 1961, with Ferdinand Daucik in El Mundo Deportivo, 26 January 1951 and in Marca, 20 December 1965, with Zoltan Czibor in El Mundo Deportivo, 2 February 1957 and in Barça, No. 118, March 21 1958, with Ferenc Puskas in Marca, 10 October 1957 and 27 September 1963, and with Sandor Kocsis in El Mundo Deportivo, 19 October 1958.

51. Brief interview in which famous sportsmen, including Real Madrid stars Francisco Gento and Amancio Amaro, recommended a "yes" vote in the referendum appeared in Marca, every day during the ten days prior to the actual voting. The advice of Puskas appeared on two occasions, on 6 December and 12 December 1966. In addition, the former Honved captain appeared on a specially arranged television programme, on 11 December 1966, in which various personalities, including the Francoist writer Fernando Vizcaíno Casas, requested the Spanish people to demonstrate their support for the dictator in the referendum. For further details about the collaboration of Puskas and other sportsmen in the campaign of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, see "Deporte, sociedad y política", Cuadernos para el diálogo, No. XXV extraordinary, May 1971.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FOOTBALL AND DIPLOMACY

The diplomatic importance of Spanish football constitutes the sixth aspect of the politicization of the game during the Franco years. Together with the political diversion aspect and football's regionalist importance, this is one of the three aspects of politicization that has enjoyed a certain amount of critical treatment, albeit in a journalistic and anecdotal rather than systematic manner.¹ The generally accepted theory that has emerged from this critical treatment is that football considerably helped the Franco regime to improve both its poor general overseas image and diplomatic position.

The specific diplomatic significance of the Real Madrid club during the Franco period was discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, with the conclusion that Real had been both willing and proud to serve as one of the most effective ambassadors for Francoist Spain. That brief

1. Julián García Candau has been the writer most concerned about the diplomatic significance of Spanish football. His allegations about the manipulation of Real Madrid by Foreign Minister Fernando María Castiella, made mainly in his El País Semanal article, op. cit., and his book, op. cit., caused a great deal of controversy at the time of publication, partly because of the lack of evidence that he offers to support the claims. The subject had earlier been treated briefly and humourously by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, in Política y deporte, op. cit., and by Francisco Cerecedo, op. cit.

discussion in the Introduction was concerned with the Real's diplomatic importance with the specific objective of contributing towards an outline of that club's general political significance during the Franco years. The objective of this chapter, on the other hand, is to examine in detail how, and to what effect, football helped to improve the overseas image and diplomatic position of Francoist Spain.

It should be pointed out at this stage that two quite different concepts will be under examination in this chapter. These concepts have invariably been discussed together by the small group of writers who have dealt with the subject, either for the sake of convenience, or because of an inability to recognize any distinction between the two.² It is one thing to suggest that the style and success of a football team like Real Madrid of the 1950s and 1960s helped to improve the international image of Francoist Spain to an unquantifiable extent.³ It is quite another thing, however, to progress to the claim that such a team actually contributed to the establishment or strengthening of concrete

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2. These two concepts have failed to be differentiated in all four of the studies mentioned above.
 3. This has been suggested in all four of the studies mentioned above, and also in the author's interviews with, for example, the former Real Madrid footballer Manuel Velázquez, with the veteran Marca journalist Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo" and José María Lorente, and with Juan José Castillo, the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo. Furthermore, it was alleged by the former and present Real Madrid Vice-President Raimundo Saporta that the club considerably contributed towards improving the overseas image of Francoist Spain, "but in the service of Spain in general rather than that of the Franco regime in particular. Real Madrid would have behaved in the same way, and indeed still does, in order to have increased the prestige of our country abroad whatever government had been in power. That is the style of our club, and hopefully always will be."

diplomatic relations with any particular country.⁴ As shall presently be seen, there exists a veritable wealth of evidence to support the first of these allegations, but practically none for the second.

It is appropriate at this stage to place the diplomatic significance of football in Francoist Spain in its worldwide historical context. The potential of sport generally to improve the image of a country in the eyes of the outside world has been recognized since, approximately, the Second World War. There have traditionally been two major ways for a country to improve its international image through sport; the Olympic Games and the football World Cup, both in the form of month-long tournaments held every four years.

There can be little doubt that, because of the immense worldwide media coverage of the Olympic Games, the feats of the Soviet gymnasts, of the East German Swimmers and of the Black African runners have served to improve, to an unquantifiable extent, the overseas image of these countries. The World Cup has served a similar function. The spectacular Brazilian triumph of 1958 and 1962, for example, considerably helped to enhance the international image of that enigmatic country, perhaps even increasing foreign tourism.

There is a qualitative difference, however, between the diplomatic significance of Brazil's World Cup victories of 1958 and 1962 and that

4. This claim has only been made to the author, tentatively by Julián García Candau, with regard to relations between Spain and the Eastern Bloc countries.

of 1970. The latter triumph was systematically exploited by the military junta led by General Medici, with the objectives of improving the overseas image of the military dictatorship, of strengthening diplomatic links with certain countries, of assisting the campaign to attract foreign tourists, and even of boosting Brazilian exports.⁵

The advantage derived from the 1978 World Cup triumph for the Argentine regime of General Videla appear to have been even more substantial than those for the Medici junta in Brazil. In the wake of the 1976 military takeover, it seemed unlikely that the country would be able to stage the prestigious tournament awarded to Argentina back in 1972, because the preparations were so far behind schedule. The military junta led by Videla, however, realized both the international and domestic advantage that could be obtained from successfully staging the tournament, and consequently dedicated practically unlimited resources to the preparations, which were speeded up by cutting corners that would have been impossible for a democratic government to cut.⁶ Just before the tournament, there was a debate in Western Europe about how the staging of the World Cup could serve the Videla regime by distracting attention away from the "Dirty War" then being fought

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5. The exploitation of the 1970 Brazil World Cup triumph by the Medici regime is fully discussed: by the American sociologist Janet Lever op. cit., in World Soccer, April 1973; in Barrabás No. 176, 4 February 1976; and in Don Balón, No. 106, 20 October 1977.
 6. For details of the Vidal regime's preparations and hopes for the 1978 World Cup, see articles in: L'Equipe, 15 November 1977; World Soccer; April 1978; Don Balón, No. 134, 19 May 1978; As, 26 May 1978; El Mundo Deportivo, 28 May 1978; La Nación, 25 November 1983; the book Fútbol sin trampa, Buenos Aires, 1985, by the former Argentine manager César Luis Menotti.

against all opponent of the dictatorship.⁷ In April 1978, just two months before the actual tournament, it even appeared that the Dutch and Swedish teams might refuse to compete, because of the human rights issue. In the event, all of the countries attended, and practically all of the foreign visitors were surprised to discover hardly any trace of the military repression.⁸ Furthermore, the hospitality of the Argentine people was exemplary, and the young Argentine team won the tournament playing attractive, attacking football, instead of using violent and negative play as on so many occasions in the past. As a consequence of all of the above, the international image of Videla's Argentina improved immeasurably. Since 1978, it has been alleged on various occasions that the Argentine military junta bribed the Peruvian team to allow Argentina to defeat them by a remarkable 6-0 scoreline, and so progress to the World Cup Final instead of Brazil.⁹ At the time, however, these allegations were confined to the Brazilian media, whilst the watching world applauded the spectacular Argentine success.

It has been alleged that the Uruguay military dictators invented and staged the Mundialito or "Little World Cup" tournament of December 1980 and January 1981 between former World Cup winners in order to extract

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7. For details of this debate, see all the newspaper and magazine articles mentioned above.
 8. This surprise was shared by Ladislav Kubala, the manager of the Spanish national team in 1978, and by the following journalists who attended the tournaments: Keir Radnedge of World Soccer, Brian Glanville of The Sunday Times, David Lacey of The Guardian Jaques Ferran of L'Equipe, Juan José Castillo of El Mundo Deportivo and Miguel Vidal of As.
 9. Outside Brazil, this allegation has been debated in many newspaper and magazine articles, the most comprehensive appearing in: World Soccer, November 1983, El Mercurio, (Santiago de Chile) 13 June 1985; The Sunday Times, 22 June 1986; El País, 31 July 1987.

the same kind of domestic and international advantages as their Brazilian and Argentine counterparts had done previously.¹⁰ Like the Argentine three years earlier, the Uruguay team dropped their traditional defensive pattern, won the tournament, and thus presented the military regime with a considerable amount of much needed international prestige.

As shall presently be seen, the Spanish national football team did not regularly provide the Franco regime with the opportunity to enhance its international image in the style of the South American military dictatorships, for the simple reason that it achieved very few successes during the Franco years. Partly because of this lack of consistent success on the part of the national team, the Franco regime was keen to extract the maximum diplomatic advantages possible from the international triumphs of the country's leading club team, Real Madrid. There are many other examples of military dictatorships systematically using the international successes of their leading club team in order to improve their overseas image. Indeed, it has been alleged that the actual methods of the Franco regime in this respect have been copied by certain South American dictatorships.¹¹

One of the clearest examples of this kind of utilization is that of

10. For details of these allegations, see the following: World Soccer, January 1981; Sport, 4 January 1981; As, 6 January 1981; La Nación, 9 - 25 November 1983.

11. This allegation has been most fully discussed in: Janet Lever, op. cit., As, 6 January 1981; La Nación, 9-25 November 1983. This claim has also been made to the author by the following interviewees: Julián García Gandau, Miguel Vidal, Juan José Castillo, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

the Olympia club of Asunción, which has apparently served since the 1960s as the international flagship of the Stroessner regime in Paraguay. In the same way as Franco and the majority of his ministers were Real Madrid supporters, Stroessner and the other members of his junta have always been partisans of Olympia, whose players comported themselves in an exemplary manner when playing abroad, always running out, for example, carrying both the Paraguayan national flag together with that of the host country. Olympia's ambassadorial services to the Stroessner regime reached the peak of their effectiveness in the wake of their surprising and spectacular October 1979 triumph in the Copa de los Libertadores, the South American annual club championship.¹²

The most important Brazilian club in this respect was Santos, the club of Pelé, the world's most famous player in the 1960s and 1970s. During these two decades, Santos travelled to all parts of the world, making friends for a military-governed Brazil with their attractive and spectacular play. However, Pelé did not confine his controversial comment about Brazil not being ready for a return to democracy to the domestic stage. On three occasions, in Rome in 1969, in Mexico in 1970 and in Buenos Aires in 1972, he delighted the Brazilian military dictatorships by claiming that democracy had caused many problems for his country, and that an extended period of military rule was a possible solution to these problems.¹³

12. See, for example: World Soccer, April 1980; Sport; 7 November 1980; La Nación, 9-25 November 1983.

13. For details of Pelé's declarations, see the following: Janet Lever, *op. cit.*, World Soccer, November 1969 and May 1972; Goal, 7 May 1972.

It has been alleged that the Argentine military authorities gave specific instructions about how to behave when playing abroad to the powerful River Plate club, the favourite of the Buenos Aires middle classes, in opposition to the more popular Boca Juniors, generally considered to be the club of the city's lower classes, especially the Italian immigrants.¹⁴ Despite the huge spending by River Plate on leading Argentine and foreign players, however, the club never managed to please the military juntas by winning the Copa de los Libertadores. Boca Juniors, in contrast, managed to pick up that prestigious trophy in 1977 and 1978, and on both occasions the victory celebrations were the catalyst for furtive anti-regime demonstrations. Furthermore, these Boca triumphs gave extremely little international prestige to the Videla junta because the team played with a pragmatic defensive style and was often accused of systematically employing violent tactics in order to control the opposing star players.¹⁵

This utilization of a successful football team by a military dictatorship for ambassadorial objectives, however, has not been confined to Francoist Spain and South America. In the Egypt of Colonel Nasser, the international triumphs of the Zamalek club of Cairo were exploited in a quite blatant manner.¹⁶ The same happened with the Leopards club of Kampala during the dictatorship of Idi Amin, especially

14. This allegation has been most fully discussed in World Soccer, July 1983, and in La Nación, 9-25 November 1983.

15. See, for example: As, 27 November 1978; El Mundo Deportivo; 28 November 1978; World Soccer, January 1979 and July 1983; La Nación 9-25 November 1983.

16. See World Soccer, March 1975.

after their 1974 triumph in the African Champion Club.¹⁷

In the same way as the context for this chapter on the ambassadorial significance of football in Francoist Spain concerns the manipulation of the game in this respect in other countries, it must also concern the role played in this regard by other Spanish sports during the Franco period. It can be argued that basketball in Francoist Spain had at least as much of an ambassadorial function as football.¹⁸ The chief motive for making this claim is that Raimundo Saporta, the Real Madrid Vice-president who closely collaborated with his good friend Fernando María Castiella so that the Franco regime could extract the maximum benefits from the club's international football triumphs, was essentially a basketball man. He was originally recruited to the club's administration by President Santiago Bernabeu after splendidly organizing a national basketball tournament at the Liceo Francés in Madrid at Christmas 1952. It has been alleged that Saporta even convinced Castiella that basketball could make a greater diplomatic contribution than football if managed correctly.¹⁹ Castiella then proceeded to give Saporta detailed instructions regarding the journeys abroad of the Real Madrid basketball team, the large majority of which seemed to have been dutifully carried out. One of the priorities of the

17. See World Soccer, March 1975.

18. This has been the argument of several of the author's interviewees: Raimundo Saporta, Julián García Gandau and Miguel Vidal.

19. This can be alleged by Julián García Gandau, both in interview with the author, and in his El País Semanal article, op.cit., Raimundo Saporta himself, however, denied the allegation, yet nonetheless stated that he would have been pleased to have convinced Castiella on this point, but at the time did not completely realize the ambassadorial potential of basketball himself.

Franco regime's foreign policy in the early 1960s was the improvement of relations with the United States, and it is in this light that the signing of leading American basketball players by the top Spanish clubs, led by Real Madrid, should be seen.²⁰ Relations between Spain in the United States were obviously based upon common strategic and economic interests, but the fact that many top American players chose to go to Spain perhaps helped to improve the general image of Francoist Spain in the United States.²¹ In addition, it possibly also helped that Saporta arranged annual Real Madrid basketball tours of the United States, in which the players behaved almost like professional ambassadors, for example running out with both the Spanish and American flags, handing out Spanish oranges to the crowd, and then playing in an open and attractive manner.²²

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, basketball helped to improve the image of Francoist Spain in the Eastern Bloc and China. This was partly a consequence of Saporta finally accepting, in November 1966, the presidency of the Real Federación Española de Baloncesto, after earlier having refused it on several occasions on the grounds of excessive work

20. This first Americans arrived in Spanish basketball even before the national professional league began in 1965. The first big name player to arrive was Don Lawrence, who signed for Real Madrid in April 1964, followed by his friend Ben Davis two months later. FC Barcelona entered the American market in January 1965, signing up Robin Mortensen.

21. This possibility was tentatively supported by Raimundo Saporta, Julián García Gandau and Miguel Vidal, and also by Robin Mortensen, the former FC Barcelona basketball player, now coach at the Joventut club of Badalona.

22. For details of the ambassadorial behavior of the Real Madrid basketball players in the United States, see, any July or August edition of the Boletín del Real Madrid, or of Marca, from 1963 to 1972.

at Real Madrid. Saporta then proceeded to convert the Spanish national basketball team into an effective ambassador for the Franco regime, as he had earlier done with the Real team. In April 1968, he led the first Spanish basketball tour of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, with all of the goodwill gestures that Saporta had used at Real. Furthermore, he organized several tours of the Middle East, by-passing Israel, partly because good relations with the Arab States was another priority of Castiella.

The ageing Castiella was replaced as Foreign Minister in October 1969 by Gregorio López Bravo, another paid-up Real Madrid member and keen supporter. After a brief pause, the instructions to Saporta about the behaviour of all the Real Madrid Sports teams and the Spanish national basketball team when travelling abroad recommenced. In October 1972, López Bravo requested Saporta to undertake a national basketball tour of China. The tour duly went ahead, being hailed by the Press as an example of "basket diplomacy", similar to the more famous "ping-pong diplomacy" that was going on at exactly the same time between China and the United States.²³

The only other sport besides football and basketball which played a significant diplomatic role for the Franco regime was tennis. It has been claimed on various occasions that the leading Spanish player Manuel Santana was almost as effective an ambassador for Francoist Spain as

23. See, for example, Marca from 1963 to 1972.

were the various Real Madrid teams.²⁴ In the same way as Real Madrid, the ambassadorial significance of Santana was not simply due to his triumphs in tournaments all around the world, but also to the style in which he won. Off the court, Santana was always polite and well-spoken, whilst on the court he played stylish and attractive tennis. It has consistently been alleged that he was an admirer of Franco, particularly in the light of his participation in the Ministry of Tourism and Information's immense publicity campaign for a positive vote in the regime's referendum of December 1966.²⁵ Furthermore, Santana always seemed extremely pleased to receive the many medals and awards bestowed upon him with great ceremony, especially when Foreign Minister Castiella gave him the highest decorations for ambassadorial services, the Gran Cruz de Caballero de la Orden de Isabel la Católica, after his famous triumph in the men's single tournament at Wimbledon in July 1966.

In the late 1960's, Manuel Orantes emerged as a possible successor to Santana as the tennis ambassador of Francoist Spain. Orantes, however, unlike Santana, failed to win any major international tournament, and so his capacity to serve as an ambassador was strictly limited.

No other Spanish sportsmen or teams exercised a significant ambassadorial role during the Franco years, largely because, as seen in

24. This claim has been made in print by the satirical weekly Barrabás, No. 235, 4 April 1977, and to the author by Julián García Gandau and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

25. For details of Santana's intervention in the 1966 referendum campaign, see Barrabás, No. 235, 4 April 1977; Sport, 19 July 1977.

the Introduction to this thesis, Spain was a second-rate sporting nation in international terms.

In order to place the ambassadorial and diplomatic significance of football in Francoist Spain in its proper historical context, the previous six pages of this thesis have given examples of football teams having been used as effective ambassadors by other dictatorships eager to improve their international image, and examples of other sports in Francoist Spain having an ambassadorial significance. It should be borne in mind, however, as pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, that two distinct concepts are under examination here: the potential of sport to improve the general overseas image of a country, and the potential of sport actually to improve the concrete diplomatic position of a country. The latter is a far more doubtful concept than the former. The strength or weakness of diplomatic relations between two countries is the consequence of many political, economic and geographical factors. The ability of sport to assist in the improvement of actual diplomatic relations is almost always limited to acting as a kind of side-plate to the main course, which must necessarily consist of mutual political and economic interests.

An example more relevant to this study concerns relations between Francoist Spain and Tito's Yugoslavia. Sporting relations between the two countries were excellent, commencing with the European Cup matches between Real Madrid and Partisan Belgrade in December 1955. Yugoslavia, however, along with Mexico, Uruguay and the Warsaw Pact countries, was one of the fiercest diplomatic opponents of the Franco regime, as evidenced by her opposition to Spanish entry into the United Nations at

exactly the same time as the Real-Partisan games mentioned above. It was not until 1978 that the first steps were taken by Yugoslavia to establish formal relations with Spain.

These two examples given above demonstrate that sport alone cannot normally be sufficient motive for the establishment or improvement of diplomatic relations between two countries.

It is now necessary to examine in detail how football helped the Franco regime generally to improve its poor international image, but failed to materially assist in the establishment or improvement of concrete diplomatic relations with any other country, despite the efforts of Foreign Minister Castiella to this end.

In the period from the conclusion of the Civil War until the mid-1950s the ambassadorial significance of Spanish football was almost completely concentrated in the national team, chiefly because the European Cup tournament for the champion club of each country did not commence until 1955. Until that year, the Spanish club teams only played against foreign opposition on an irregular, non-competitive basis.

During the Second World War, the Franco regime blatantly used the Spanish national football team as an ambassador to assist in the maintenance of good relations with the Axis powers, Salazar's Portugal and Vichy France. The behaviour of the players, RFEF officials and journalists during these exhibition matches was subjected to the orders and advice of the Foreign Ministry, and passed on to the RFEF via the

DND. The existence of this chain of command is revealed by several documents discovered in the archives of the DND. Before every one of the Spanish national team's fourteen overseas journey to play international matches during the period 1939 to 1951, a message personally signed by the Delegado Nacional General José Moscardó was written for the attention of the teams's coaches and players. Although the actual wording of the message changed on every occasion, it basically demanded that all of the travelling party "be conscious of serving as sporting ambassadors for our glorious county", and as such "should behave in foreign lands in the way that will most benefit the prestige and respect of our beloved national flag". That this advice to the components of the national team originated in the Foreign Ministry is strongly hinted at by the affirmation that "several high organs of our States, especially that one concerned with our foreign relations, share the sentiments of this advice to you, and will be dependent on your behaviour once you pass beyond the frontiers of Spain." ²⁶

As a consequence of this political control by the Franco regime, the national team, as seen in Chapter Two of this thesis, changed their traditional red shirts to Falangist-inspired blue ones, ran out on to the field carrying both the Spanish flag and that of the opposing country, lined up alongside their opponents to give the Fascist salute

26. These messages, were reproduced in the monthly Boletín Oficial de la DND from 1941 to 1947. Thereafter, the note was simply passed on to the offices of the RFEF, and read out to the players before the match by the national manager, with the exception of the especially long message from Moscardó before the departure, in May 1950, of the national team to compete in the World Cup finals tournament in Brazil.

to the largely uniformed crowd before the match, and then proceeded to play, according to the instructions from the DND, which probably originated in the Foreign Ministry, "in as sporting and ambassadorial way as possible".²⁷ The RFEF and DND officials, for their part, dutifully gave out typical Spanish presents to the officials of the opposing country, and offered diplomatic opinions to the foreign sports journalists.

The first international match played by the Spanish national team after the Civil war was against Portugal in Lisbon in January 1941. The Foreign Ministry had as one of its leading priorities the maintenance of close relations with the neighbouring regime of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, and the RFEF consequently obliged by arranging no less than ten friendly matches with Portugal in the 1940s. The prominent Galician Falangist Jesús Suevos, acted as an effective master of ceremonies during these games.

In March 1942, the Spanish national team played host in Sevilla, to a team composed of the best players of Vichy France, a match that was later invalidated by the official French football federation. This policy of playing against the teams of the Axis Powers was continued. In the following month, the blue-shirted Spanish team carried out the suggestions of the Foreign Ministry by taking part in exhibition matches in Berlin and Milan, which served as rare opportunities for the

27. These words, or ones to the same effect, were always included in the message from the DND to the national football team before each of its matches overseas during the period 1939 to 1951, discussed more fully in the previous footnote.

mass expression of international Fascist sporting solidarity.²⁸ Again acting on the suggestions of the Foreign Ministry, the RFEF invited the German and Italian national teams to play return matches in Madrid in 1943,²⁹ but this proved to be impossible because the deteriorating military position of the Axis powers required their leading footballers to dedicate themselves to military duties.

During the period 1945-1950, the Western ostracization of Francoist Spain, which culminated in the rather ineffective United Nations diplomatic and economic embargo, caused Spain to be almost completely isolated from the international sporting community. Again acting upon the suggestions of the Foreign Minister, the RFEF regularly attempted to help the Franco regime ease its way out of the diplomatic strait jacket in which it found itself by trying to arrange friendly matches with the English, French and Italian national teams.³⁰ The football federations of these three countries also apparently acted upon the advice of their own Foreign Ministries, and consequently ignored the

28. The suggestion that the visit of the Spanish national team to Berlin and Milan in April 1942 to play against the national teams of Hitler and Mussolini were promoted by the Foreign Ministry for diplomatic reasons was made by Fernando Vizcaíno Casas in Contando los cuarenta, Madrid, 1978, p.156-147, and to the author by the following interviewees; Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Julián García Candau and Miguel Vidal.

29. It has been claimed that the Foreign Ministry encouraged the RFEF to invite the German and Italian national teams to play exhibition matches in Spain in the book and the three interviews mentioned in the previous footnote.

30. Revealed by the discovery of invitation letters of the football federations of these three countries in the archives of the RFEF, Madrid.

Spanish invitations,³¹ thus proving the point already made in this chapter that sport can usually only assist in the improvement of diplomatic relations between two countries when mutual political and economic interests already exist.

Because of the diplomatic boycott of Francoist Spain, the international football governing organization FIFA was forced to be extremely careful in arranging the qualifying groups for the 1950 World Cup finals tournament. FIFA were forced to place Spain with Portugal and the Irish Republic, the only two countries that had consistently accepted the RFEF's many invitations for the friendly matches in the 1940s.

The 1950 World Cup finals tournament, held in Brazil, was the first occasion of a Spanish sporting team coming under the scrutiny of the outside world since the Civil War, and therefore, as pointed out in the message to the chosen players from the Delegado Nacional General

31. The suggestion that the English football federation consulted the British Foreign Office before rejecting the four Spanish invitations of September 1946, February 1947, November 1947 and March 1949 was confirmed to the author by the late Sir Stanley Rous, the former secretary of the Football Association, Rous affirmed the receipt of the four letters from Madrid, and recalled that he then, aware of the Diplomatic embargo on Francoist Spain, telephoned the Foreign Office, where an official advised the Association politely to turn down the first Spanish offer of September 1946 and any subsequent ones that might arrive. With regards to the Spanish invitations to the French football federation, the veteran editor of the Paris sports newspaper Jacques Ferran, alleged that the French Foreign Ministry was probably consulted and like its British counterparts, gave a negative response because of the United Nations boycott. It is logical to assume that the same process occurred in connection with the Spanish invitations to the Italian federation.

Moscardó,³² the impression created by the Spanish team had to be a favourable one. The ambassadorial responsibility placed upon the players was huge,³³ as confirmed by one of the members of the teams, Luis Molowny.

"During the training camp at El Escorial before flying to Brazil, we were told countless times that we should think of ourselves as ambassadors for Spain, shunned by the rest of the world for daring to be different. We were instructed about how to behave ourselves in Brazil, for example, always to wear official suit, to say the right thing to foreign Pressman, and even to pick your opponent up off the floor with a smile if you had fouled him.³⁴

The national team dutifully carried out these instructions which originated from the Foreign Ministry. Off the field, the players were smart and diplomatic, whilst on the field they played in an open, attractive style and achieved a creditable fourth place, having surprisingly beaten the highly respected England of Stanley Matthews. These players certainly did more than any future national team generally to improve the overseas image of the Francoist Spain.³⁵

32. The content of this message from General Moscardó which was published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND No. 87, July 1950, and in the Marca and El Mundo Deportivo newspapers, was fully discussed in Footnote 27 of this chapter.

33. This ambassadorial responsibility on the Spanish national team in Brazil was commented upon in the following humorous, ironic way by César Alonso de los Ríos, writing in Cuadernos para el diálogo, XXV Extraordinario, May 1971:

"The Spanish players were charged with the responsibility of raising high the national flag in the face of those countries that necessarily had to recognize Spain, and integrate her into the international organizations and into the economic aid plans."

34. Authors' interview with Luis Molowny, the former Real Madrid and Spanish international footballer.

35. This opinion had been expressed in print by César Alfonso del los Ríos, op. cit., and in interviews with the author by the historian Juan Pablo Fusi, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Julián García Candau, Juan José Castillo, Miguel Vidal and Luis Molowny.

Evidence of the good impression created in Brazil by the Spanish national team is the election of the then RFEF President and former "Blue Division" doctor, Armando Muñoz Calero to the executive committee of FIFA, due to the combined votes of the South American countries, including those of Mexico and Uruguay, resolute diplomatic opponents of Francoist Spain.³⁶ This election, which was held in Rio de Janeiro during the tournament, undoubtedly delighted the Foreign Ministry, because it clearly demonstrated the fact that Spain had managed to transform itself from being an outcast into a full member of the international sporting community practically overnight, despite the opposition of the socialist countries. This transformation was boastfully recognized by Muñoz Calero himself in 1953.

"When I joined the FIFA executive in 1950, Spain only maintained sporting relations with Portugal and Ireland. Now, however, we have normal relations with all the countries of the world, except those that live without freedom behind the Iron Curtain. Now, the voice of Spain is heard and respected the same as that of the most powerful nation ...³⁷

The Spanish national team, however, failed to continue the good ambassadorial work that it began in 1950 because of a surprising lack of success on the field. The team failed to qualify for both the 1954 and the 1958 World Cup finals tournaments, being humiliatingly eliminated by first Turkey and then Switzerland. It did manage to qualify for the 1962 and 1966 tournament, but on both occasions performed extremely poorly when the crucial moment arrived. Even worse was to follow,

36. Information revealed by an examination by the author of the archives of World Soccer, January and February 1984, and of Mundo Deportivo, September and October 1984.

37. Quoted in Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 40, November 1953.

because the national team then failed to qualify for the 1970 and 1974 tournaments. This disappointing World Cup record during the Franco years obviously severely limited the ability of the Spanish national football team to play an important diplomatic role on behalf of the Franco regime.

Furthermore, the national team was also unable to fulfil an ambassadorial function in the inaugural European Nations Cup Tournament of 1960. On this occasion, however, the reason was a politically-motivated boycott by the Franco regime rather than another Spanish failure on the field. Spain was drawn to play against the Soviet Union in the quarter finals of the new competition, arranged on a home-and-away basis, a draw which shocked the regime. The DND, acting on instructions from the Ministry of Information and Tourism, prohibited any Press discussion of either the diplomatic or sporting consequences of the pairing until the matter has been discussed by Franco's cabinet.³⁸ At this cabinet meeting, the Interior Minister Camilo Alonso Vega put forward the proposal to boycott the matches with the Soviets, on the grounds that there were still some ex-commandants of the

38. Information revealed by the discovery in the archives of the DND of a letter from the President of the DND's Comisión de Prensa y Propaganda, dated 17 May 1960, to the editors of the country's sporting newspapers and the sports editors of the large general newspaper, requesting them "kindly to refrain from discussing the possible consequence of our national football team having been drawn to play the Soviet one in the European National Cup, until such time as the matter has been fully discussed by the highest organs of State."

Falangist "Blue Division" being held prisoner in Soviet labour camps.³⁹ The Foreign Minister, Fernando María Castiella and the Minister Secretary of the Movimiento, José Solís, more aware than any of their colleagues about the diplomatic and ambassadorial significance of sport, realized that such a withdrawal could only worsen the international image of the Franco regime, but their arguments against the boycott were defeated⁴⁰.

The worst fears of Castiella and Solís became reality. The RFEF, which had been ordered to withdraw from the competition by the DND,⁴¹ was largely regarded by the international footballing community as simply a tool of the Franco regime, whose rabid anti-socialism even extended as far as prohibiting a sporting contest.⁴² The incisive

39. There were no reports of this cabinet debate in the Spanish Press, simply the news that the match was cancelled. This information was given to the author by Benito Castejón, in 1960 secretary to Delegado Nacional Elola Olaso and later to become Delegado himself, who was informed in detail about the debate by his close friend José Solís.

40. Revealed by author's interview with Benito Castejón.

41. Information revealed by the discovery in the archives of the DND, of a letter from the Delegado Nacional de Deportes, José Antonio Elola Olaso, to the President of the RFEF, Alfonso dela Fuente Chaos, dated 21 May 1960. The letter informed the RFEF President that "the highest organ of the State have, after long and deep contemplation, decided that, in the present circumstances, the European Nations Cup match between the Spanish national football team and that of the Soviet Union cannot proceed". Elola Olaso then proceeded to instruct de la Fuente Chaos to "inform the media about this cancellation, and make the necessary arrangements within your own federation."

42. This view of the RFEF in the light of the cancellation of the matches with the Soviets is reflected in articles in, for example, The Times, May 1960, and L'Equipe of the same date. This view has also been expressed to the author in interviews with the following: Sir Stanley Rous, Brian Glanville Keir Radnedge, David Lacey, and Jaques Ferran.

response of the Soviet football federation was:

"This act of arbitrariness and coercion in respect of the Spanish footballers who wanted to play the Soviet Union shows that the Fascist dictator of Spain tramples over the principles of the international sports federations. Obeying the will of his bosses, the United States imperialists, he tries to bring into sport the elements of the Cold War."⁴³

Along with Castiella and Solís, another Spaniard who was disappointed about this withdrawal was Raimundo Saporta, the man largely responsible for the important ambassadorial services being rendered to the Franco regime by the Real Madrid club at exactly the same time:

"As soon as I learnt about Spain being drawn with the Soviet Union, I knew that there would be problems with the regime. If we had been drawn with any of the other Eastern Bloc countries, the game would have gone ahead. Indeed, Real Madrid has already played against Hungarian and Yugoslavian teams in the European Cup. The Soviet Union, however, was a qualitatively different case. Personally, I share the arguments of Castiella and Solís, thinking that the games should have been played. It was an opportunity for Spain to appear moderate and forgiving in the eyes of the international sporting community, rather than as the backward-looking isolated bastion of reactionarism that we seemed in the light of the mistaken withdrawal. This boycott probably undid a lot of ambassadorial good that Real Madrid was doing for Spain in that period. The most ironic thing about the whole sorry issue is that, at that time, we would almost certainly have beaten the Soviets and perhaps even won the competition, because we had an excellent team containing the likes of Di Stéfano, Kubala, Suárez and Gento".⁴⁴

The negative ambassadorial effects of this withdrawal for the Franco regime, however, were mitigated by the events of four years later. Because of the influence of Agustí Pujol, the Spanish representative on the executive committee of the European football governing body UEFA, and because of the excellence of the stadia of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, Spain was designated as the host for the semi

43. Quoted in The Times, 26 May 1960.

44. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta.

finals and final of the 1964 Nations cup tournament.⁴⁵ The fact that the Soviet Union, as defending European champions, was to be one of the visiting semi-finalists predictably caused unrest within Franco's cabinet, especially when most of the experts predicted a Spain-Soviet final. Another withdrawal was demanded by Alonso Vega, but on this occasion Castiella, aided by Solís, convinced the other ministers that the previous boycott had been a diplomatic failure, and that the matches were an excellent opportunity to offer to the watching world the image of a Spain gradually becoming more hospitable and tolerant.⁴⁶ It has even been alleged that Castiella claimed to his colleagues that the hosting of the matches could be of assistance to Spain's bid to enter the European Economic Community.⁴⁷

In addition to all of the arguments of Castiella, the staging of the 1964 Nations Cup matches was made to seem even more attractive to Franco and his cabinet by the new young Minister of Information and Tourism Manuel Fraga, who pointed out, at the same cabinet meeting in April 1964, that the games could be included in his plans for the "Twenty-Five Years of Peace" celebration, the supposedly spontaneous festivities to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dictatorship.⁴⁸

45. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of World Soccer, El Mundo Deportivo, Marca and the RFEF.

46. The course of this cabinet debate was revealed to Benito Castejón by Jose Solis. Accurate reports of the debate have also been offered, in Alex J. Botines, op. cit, p. 131, and in Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, op.cit., p. 73.

47. This was alleged in Botines, *ibid.*, but neither by Castejón nor Vázquez Montalbán.

48. All three of the sources mentioned in the above footnote made this allegation about the reservations of Franco, Alonso Vega and Muñoz Grandes.

In consequence, the matches went ahead in Spain despite the reservations of Alonso Vega, the Deputy Head of State General Agustín Muñoz Grandes, and even of Franco himself. The Spanish national team predictably beat Hungary in the semi finals, and then, in front of Franco, most of his ministers and 125,000 fans in an impassioned Estadio Bernabeu, triumphed 2-1 over the Soviet Union in a dramatic final.

The international prestige of the Franco regime received a much needed boost from this football match with a Soviet team, coming as it did just over a year after the controversial execution of the Communist Party agent Julián Grimau. This boost was not only due to the match being played rather than being cancelled again, but also because it was played in an excellent sporting spirit. As revealed by two of the Spanish players, José Angel Iríbar⁴⁹ and Jesús Pereda,⁵⁰ this sportsmanship was partially due to both Castiella and Solís having called at the training camp of the host team on the morning of the final to give a brief lecture about its ambassadorial and diplomatic importance. In addition, the immense crowd, partly inspired by appeals

49. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

50. Author's interview with Jesús Pereda.

for good behaviour in the newspapers,⁵¹ treated the Soviet anthem with respect, and then applauded each of the impressive moves made by the visiting team. The Soviet team left without the European crown they had won four years earlier, but nonetheless with plenty of good memories of their visit to Spain, which surprised them because they had been led to expect a hostile reception.⁵² Franco himself alluded to both the sporting attitude of the capacity crowd and the consequent surprise of the Soviet visitors in his glowing report of the final:

"I am content with the victory and with the behaviour of the crowd, which constantly encouraged the Spanish team, demonstrating its enthusiasm without failing to treat the foreign team correctly, and the same when listening to the Soviet Anthem. The enormous gathering which filled the Estadio Bernabeu could not have been more affectionate towards me, with its repeated ovations. Our unity and patriotism were evidenced in front of millions and millions of people who saw the big match on television in many countries of the world. I am sure that the team of the USSR, its directors and assistants took away from Spain an excellent impression, and will remember the sportsmanship of our team and of the numerous spectators who packed the stadium."⁵³

The great majority of the 6,000 international Pressmen who gathered

51. This appeal was, as revealed to the author by an examination of the archives of the DND, issued for publication in the newspaper by the Comisión de Prensa y Propaganda of the DND. The complete text of the appeal is as follows:

"It is to be hoped that the behavior of the crowd at the European Nations Cup Final, to be contested on Sunday in the Estadio Bernabeu, Madrid, between teams representing Spain and the Soviet Union, will be of exemplary nature. The football supporters should bear in mind that the attention of the whole sporting world will be focused on this match, and therefore they should demonstrate their good education, fair mindedness and sportsmanship."

52. The views of the Soviet team are reflected in interviews with several players, which appeared in all of the Spanish general and sporting newspaper on 23 and 24 June 1964, and in World Soccer July and August 1964.

53. Quoted in Francisco Franco Salgado-Araujo, Mis conversaciones privadas con Franco, Barcelona, 1976, p. 426

in Madrid for the final were as pleasantly surprised as the Soviets not to encounter a tense and hostile ambience surrounding the match.⁵⁴ Their reports of the final and friendly atmosphere undoubtedly contributed towards the improvement of the overseas image of Francoist Spain.⁵⁵ Furthermore, television coverage of the game was taken by fifteen European countries, offering to half of the continent, in the actual words of the RTVE commentary given by the ultra-nationalistic Matías Prats, "the image of a happy and hospitable Spain, basking in the social peace established by our good protector and Caudillo, Francisco Franco."⁵⁶ Indeed, most of the foreign television and radio commentators alluded to the impressive applause received by the dictator when he very astutely left the stadium just two minutes before the final whistle, with a historic victory assured.⁵⁷

It should be borne in mind, however, that the ambassadorial significance of the Spanish national team was confined to the successes achieved in Brazil in 1950 and in Madrid in 1964, and therefore almost pales into insignificance alongside that of Real Madrid.

Before examining exactly when and how Real Madrid improved the

54. This surprise was expressed to the author by the following sports journalists present: David Miller of the The Times Brian Glanville, David Lacey, and Jaques Ferran.

55. This is the view of the four journalists mentioned in the previous footnote, although they all pointed out that they were neither conscious of or keen to improve the image of Francoist Spain with their reports. This view is shared by Raimundo Saporta, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, and Juan Pablo Fusi, besides the majority of Spanish football journalists.

56. Author's interview with Matías Prats.

57. Author's interview with Sir Kenneth Wolstenholme, the BBC television commentator for the Madrid final.

international image of Francoist Spain, it is appropriate first to offer two examples of ministerial recognition of the club's ambassadorial importance, Foreign Minister Castiella was moved to declare, upon awarding the prestigious Gran Cruz de Caballero de la Orden de Isabel la Católica to Real's Argentinian star Alfredo Di Stéfano in December 1960, that the club "has constituted the best embassy that we have sent abroad".⁵⁸ In an interview with the newspaper ABC eight years later, Castiella was in a more expansive mood:

"Real Madrid, is furthermore, a complete style of sportsmanship, and they know how to dignify the name of Spain whilst travelling around the world. The club's players comport themselves like genuine ambassadors, contributing with their performance to the prestige of our country."⁵⁹

The other minister to pay tribute to the ambassadorial work of the club was José Solís, who, in October 1959 was the representative of the Franco regime at Real's banquet after the 5-0 destruction of the Luxembourg club Jeunesse d'Esch in the European Cup, and he was soon on his feet addressing the players in this fulsome way:

"You have done much more than many scattered embassies for this people of God. Foreigners who used to hate us now understand us, thanks to you, because you have broken down many walls.. Your victories constitute a legitimate pride for all Spaniards, both inside and outside our country. When you retire to the dressing rooms at the end of every match, to staunch your sporting wounds, you should know that all the Spaniards are with you accompany you, proud of your triumphs, which have lifted the Spanish flag so high."⁶⁰

It must be pointed out that Castiella and Solís have not been the only ministers to praise the ambassadorial importance of their country's

58. Quoted in the Boletín del Real Madrid, No. 128, January 1961.

59. Quoted in ABC

60. Quoted in the Boletín del Real Madrid CF No. 112, November 1959.

successful sportsmen. Such praise has been handed out, usually by Foreign Ministers, by governments of all political persuasion since regular international sporting competitions began. What makes the case of Real Madrid in Francoist Spain qualitatively different is that Castiella, as shall shortly be seen, did not content himself with the club simply improving the general international image of the country. The Spanish Foreign Minister went one step further, actually attempting to use Real for the fulfilment of specific diplomatic objectives.

Castiella would obviously have not been able to use Real in this way if the club had been unwilling to allow this to happen. As seen in the Introduction of this thesis, however, the club was both pleased and proud to be of assistance, as revealed by eternal Vice President Raimundo Saporta.

"Real Madrid... has always been so powerful because of being at the service of the vertebral column of the State."⁶¹

Castiella found in Saporta the perfect man to work with at the club. By both his own admission and the allegations of others,⁶² Saporta would have been almost as comfortable actually serving as a Spanish diplomat overseas, because his character was extremely pleasant and diplomatic, and, in addition, he spoke perfect French and competent English.

61. Quoted in El País, 3 December 1978.

62. This suggestion originates from authors interviews with: Raimundo Saporta, the former Real Madrid player Manuel Velázquez, Luis Molowny, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Julián García Candau.

The allegation that is central to the second half of this chapter is that Saporta used to receive specific instructions from Castiella before every journey abroad of either the Real football or basketball team.⁶³ Saporta himself was reluctant either to confirm or deny this allegation.⁶⁴ The majority of sporting journalists interviewed have expressed doubts that Saporta went to the Foreign Ministry before every single Real excursion overseas, to France or Belgium, for example, but admitted that it was highly probable that the Vice President was given advice by the Foreign Ministry before embarking upon a journey fraught with possible diplomatic problems, for instance to Eastern Europe or the Middle East.⁶⁵

It is now necessary to offer concrete historical examples of how Real Madrid both improved the general overseas image of Francoist Spain, and was used by Castiella in an attempt to attain specific diplomatic objectives.

63. This controversial allegation was originally made by Julián García Candau in his El País Semanal article, op. cit., and then at greater length and with greater conviction in his book, op. cit., pp. 54-55, and in interview with the author, op. cit.. García Candau's allegations have been supported practically unequivocally in interview by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and by the late Catalan sports writer Alex J. Botines. On the other hand, however, this allegation has been refuted by Luis Molowny, Manuel Velázquez, José María Lorente, Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo", and Enrique Gil de la Vega "Gilera", the veteran sports correspondents of ABC.

64. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta who lost a good part of his characteristic affability and serenity upon being asked this particular question.

65. This view, a kind of middle position between García Candau and his Real Madrid connected detractors, has been expressed to the author by Miguel Vidal, Juan José Castillo, Joan Josep Artells, the author of Barça, Barça, Barça, op. cit. / Antonio Hernández, the veteran editor of Sport.

The potential of Real to serve as a far more effective ambassador than any other Spanish club was demonstrated long before its spectacular domination of the world football. It was Real that led the way in persuading the leading Western European club to visit diplomatically-isolated Spain in the 1940s to play exhibition matches. When the club began to venture abroad in the early 1950s, the praise from the Franco regime for their behaviour was soon resounding, a prelude of things to come.

In July 1952, Real spectacularly won the prestigious Pequeña Copa del Mundo in Bogotá, Colombia. A glowing report of the club's visit from the Spanish ambassador in Bogotá led to a letter to Real from Castiella's predecessor as Foreign Minister, Alberto Martín Artajo. This letter was proudly reproduced in the next issue of the Boletín del Real Madrid CF:

"The behaviour of the components of the Real Madrid party, from the first director to the last player, has been irreproachable in every aspect, and the impression that they have left behind, thanks to their impeccable correctness, sporting gentlemanliness and patriotism, has been practically perfect."⁶⁶

It was not only the club's exemplary overseas behaviour, however, that, in the early 1950s, was setting the scene for its future ambassadorial work on behalf of the Franco regime. Real's magnificent new Estadio Bernabeu, then the biggest in Europe, was impressing many of the few foreign visitors who passed through Madrid in that period, and was actually placed on the list of recommended attractions compiled

66. Quoted in the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 28, September 1952.

by the Ministry of Information and Tourism.⁶⁷ It is safe to assume that the majority of the small group of tourists who visited Franco's capital expected to encounter massive poverty and repression, and were therefore probably pleasantly surprised to be shown around such an impressive construction. Very few foreign heads of state came to Madrid in the 1950s, but those that did were all encouraged to visit the stadium, for example King Hussein I of Jordan in June 1955 and the Brazilian President Doctor Kubitschek seven months later.⁶⁸

The Franco regime's gratitude towards Real Madrid for ambassadorial services rendered was clearly demonstrated for the first time in June 1955, when the club won the Latin Cup, the forerunner of the European Cup in Paris. For this exploit, every player was awarded the Falangist Medalla de la Orden Imperial del Yugo y de las Flechas, even though none of the FC Barcelona or Athletic de Bilbao players who had previously won the same trophy had been granted this decoration by the regime.

The diplomatic potential of Real was completely realized in the late 1950s, with victory in the first five editions of the European Cup. It was not just the fact of the five consecutive triumphs which made Real a legendary club throughout the world, but also the style. It was a style built firmly on flamboyant and attractive attacking play, led

67. For further details of the use of the Estadio Bernabeu as a tourist attraction by the Ministry of Information and Tourism, see the Libro del Oro del Real Madrid, Madrid, op. cit., p. 337.

68. For details of the visits of Hussein and Kubitschek, see the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 60, July 1955, and No. 67, February 1956 respectively.

by the remarkable Argentine Alfredo Di Stéfano.

This spectacular style of play contributed enormously to the ambassadorial significance of Real for the Franco regime. Another considerable contribution was made by the perfectly diplomatic behavior of the players and directors, always immaculately dressed and saying the correct things for the foreign press. As pointed out by the former Real star Manuel Velázquez:

"We were instructed by the club to dress smartly and behave ourselves at all times, but especially for trips abroad. Saporta even gave us instructions about what we should say to the foreign journalists, platitudes such as: "the hospitality that we have received in your country has been unforgettable, and we hope to be able to match this hospitality when it is your turn to visit our beautiful city."⁶⁹

The correctness was the result of the discipline instilled at the club by President Bernabeu, and of the diplomatic awareness of Vice-President Saporta. It was the latter who arranged, with the encouragement of Foreign Minister Castiella,⁷⁰ clever public relations exercises that possibly contributed towards an improvement in the general overseas image of Francoist Spain. In August 1958, for example, during a Real tour of South America, Saporta handed over a cheque for one thousand United States dollars to the Argentine President Arturo Frondizi for the

69. Author's interview with Manuel Velázquez.

70. In his interview with the author, Raimundo Saporta admitted that these public relations exercises were of his own invention. He then suggested to them to Castiella in their regular meetings, who normally reacted to them with enthusiasm. Saporta unequivocally pointed out, nonetheless, that these exercises had no political motive:

"The objective of these gestures was to improve the international image of our club, and afterwards to improve that of Spain in general. As I've said before, Real Madrid would have behaved the same way whatever kind of government had been in power at that time."

assistance of recent flood victims.⁷¹ In December 1961, the Real players were photographed smilingly distributing Spanish oranges at a Manchester children's hospital before playing a friendly match with Manchester United. In addition to these specific examples, the Real team also pleased football supporters and politicians all around the world by running out before exhibition matches carrying both the Spanish flag and that of the country of the host club. Indeed, as admitted by Saporta,⁷² Real would have carried out the same exercise before European Cup matches, if the UEFA regulations had not prohibited this.

It has been widely recognized, both inside and outside Spain, that the Real Madrid club contributed immensely towards improving the general international image of Francoist Spain.⁷³ As stated at the beginning of this chapter, nonetheless, it is relatively simple to allege that an excellent sportsman or team has acted as an effective ambassador and this improved the overseas image of his or their country. It is far more difficult to prove that this individual or team has actually helped to improve diplomatic relations with another country. For example, the Finnish long-distance runner Lassi Virren and the Roumanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci have undoubtedly served as effective ambassadors for their respective countries, but to suggest that they have been influential in a concrete diplomatic sense would be to make a grossly

71. For further details of the meeting between Saporta and Frondizi, see Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 98, September 1958, Marca, 10 August 1958.

72. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta.

73. This view has been supported by all of the officials, writers and journalists, and in all of the publications, mentioned in this chapter. Nobody, of whatever political persuasion, has attempted to contest this view.

exaggerated claim. It would be just as exaggerated and unsubstantial to claim that Real Madrid has played a decisive role in the establishment or strengthening of diplomatic links between Spain and some other country. In the light of the limited evidence available, the most that can be said is that Castiella clearly attempted to use the club for specific diplomatic purposes, but with only partial success.

The most blatant example of Real Madrid being used for specific diplomatic purposes occurred in May 1961, only nine months before Castiella made his first attempt at entry into the European Economic Community. As admitted by Saporta,⁷⁴ Castiella requested the club to play a friendly match in Strasbourg, and afterwards pay a seemingly impromptu visit to the headquarters of the Council of Europe. Saporta presented the Council with an expensive silver salver, and then made a speech which could well have been written by Castiella himself or one of his assistants. The general character of this speech is best summed up by the following extract:

"It is an honour to have been called to play (sic) in the "European Capital", because this demonstrates that even this Council, where Spain is not at the moment represented, consider us as Europeans."⁷⁵

This visit by Real Madrid to Strasbourg, however, did not yield the fruit hoped for by the Foreign Minister, because everyone of his subsequent approaches to the community was turned down, due to the anti-

74. Author's interview with Raimundo Saporta, in which he admitted that the Strasbourg visit was the idea of Castiella, but denied that his speech was written by the Foreign Minister or any of his assistants. Despite being requested to make the journey by Castiella, Saporta still denied that Real Madrid was willingly being politically manipulated by the Franco regime.

75. Quoted in Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 133, June 1961, and in Marca, 17 May 1961.

democratic nature of the Franco regime. It is even possible that Saporta's speech of May 1961 was counter-productive, having been recognized by members of the Council as a blatant, possibly even cynical stunt by Castiella.⁷⁶

A slightly less blatant example of the Castiella attempt to use Real for specific diplomatic objectives can be found in the form of the club's visit to New York in July 1959. During that summer, President Eisenhower of the United States was planning his mammoth world tour of November and December of that year. Both Castiella and Franco himself were desperately keen for "Ike" to stop off in Madrid for a few hours, which would, they hoped, confirm to the watching world a degree of United States approval of the Franco regime.⁷⁷ It appears to be more than a mere coincidence that the by then world-famous Real Madrid football team made their one and only journey to the United States that particular summer, especially when it is taken into account that there was no remotely decent team for Real to play against, because professional football did not reach the United States until the early 1970s. Furthermore, the suspicion that the visit has a specific diplomatic objective is strengthened by the fact that the Real party was met at Kennedy Airport, New York, by the Spanish Ambassador José María

76. This possibility was suggested to the author by Julián García Candau, and Keir Radnedge.

77. The importance that Franco and his Foreign Minister gave to Eisenhower passing through Madrid for a few hours is clearly demonstrated in the following three studies: Francisco Franco Salgado-Araujo, *op. cit.*, p. 273; Fernando María Castiella, Política exterior de España (1898-1960) Madrid, 1960, p. 28; Ricardo de la Cierva, Historia del franquismo. Aislamiento, transformación, agonía, Barcelona, 1978, p. 184.

de Areilza and the also visiting Minister of Commerce Alberto Ullastres, and photographed extensively with them throughout their visit.⁷⁸ The Real team played three exhibition matches on this American tour, in New York, Philadelphia and Washington DC, on each occasion running out on to the field with both the Spanish and United States flags, and then achieving convincing victories against their amateur opponents with some spectacular, attractive football. Three members of Eisenhower's cabinet were present at Real's final match in Washington DC, and afterwards paid fulsome tribute to the exciting display offered by the likes of Di Stéfano, Puskas, Santamaría and Gento.⁷⁹ Unlike the Strasbourg visit, this American tour must be considered a success for Castiella, because Eisenhower, whether influenced by the tour of Real Madrid or not, did in fact decide to spend a few hours in Madrid.

Furthermore, it has been alleged that Castiella requested Saporta to arrange Real tours of the Middle East, because good relations with the Arab states was one of the central features of Francoist foreign policy.⁸⁰ Castiella attempted to cultivate close links with the nascent United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria, and thus it could be argued that the visits of Real Madrid to play friendly matches against the Zamalek club of Cairo had a specific diplomatic purpose.⁸¹ Relations between Spain and the United Arab Republic were possibly

78. For further details of Real Madrid's American tour, see Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No.109, August 1959, or Marca, 24-30 July 1959.

79. See the publication mentioned in the previous footnote.

80. This allegation has been made in the book of Julián García Candau, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

81. This is the argument of Julián García Candau, expressed to the author in interview.

strengthened by the famous Real team, as usual, the first Spanish sporting team to visit the country, running out on to the pitch, in March 1961 and then again nine months later, carrying the flag of the new republic, to the delight of the 90,000 crowd. In the summer of 1964, Real visited Morocco and Algeria, and, the same as with their earlier tours of the United States and Egypt, there were more diplomatic advantages for the Franco regime than good professional teams for Di Stefano and his celebrated colleagues to play against.⁸² On this summer tour of 1964, Bernabeu and Saporta between them gave out a record eight of the club's famous golden lapel badges in three weeks, to various royals and politicians.⁸³

The suspicion that Castiella was using Real for specific diplomatic purposes is further fuelled by the large number of awards that he bestowed upon the personalities of the club, awards that were completely separate from those handed out by the Movimiento or the DND. The highest awards that the Foreign Minister had to give out was the Gran Cruz de Caballero de la Orden de Isabel la Católica, and this he bestowed upon Di Stéfano in a specific homage to the club with Franco present, at the dictator's El Pardo residence in December 1960, and then upon Saporta with similar pomp and ceremony only five months later.

It undoubtedly gave Castiella enormous satisfaction to see how

82. Professional football did not arrive in North Africa until the mid-1970s. The four opponents of Real Madrid on their 1964 tour were all amateur teams, and consequently real scored a total of 26 goals, and conceded just one.

83. Revealed by the Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 172, September 1964.

popular Real Madrid was with football fans across the world, and also to see foreign governments bestowing their own award upon the club.

President Bernabeu was actually awarded the highly prestigious Légion d'Honneur by the French government in June 1959 and this was confirmed upon him, in a ceremony in Paris attended by the Spanish Ambassador by Maurice Herzog, the French Minister for Youth and Sports and famous former mountaineer.

The extent of the international esteem for Real Madrid was illustrated in Rome in April 1965, when Saporta, to the delight of Castiella,⁸⁴ was elected to the executive committee of the International Council of Physical Education, an agency of UNESCO. In addition, Saporta was also chosen to be the President of that Council's "Commission for Sporting Legislation", on which he had already served for four years.

The ageing Castiella was replaced as Foreign Secretary in October 1969 by Gregorio López Bravo, another Real member and keen supporter. It was logically expected, therefore, that the club would continue to be used for the attempted attainment of specific diplomatic objectives. The instructions to Saporta, however, surprisingly stopped, and did not recommence until López Bravo had been annoyed by a Real Madrid basketball trip to Tel Aviv in November 1972. Because of the lack of advice from the Foreign Minister, Saporta arranged this visit to Israel without realizing that Real would upset López Bravo's Arab friends, and

84. Raimundo Saporta, interviewed by the author, admitted that Castiella had been very pleased to learn about the events in Rome.

this was exactly what happened when General Mosche Dayan was awarded the coveted Real lapel badge. In order to mitigate the negative diplomatic effects of this visit to Tel Aviv, the young Foreign Minister requested Saporta to organize a basketball trip to Libya, in which Colonel Gadaafi, the Arab leader most irritated by the Dayan decoration, would also be awarded the lapel badge a journey that was dutifully undertaken in June 1973.⁸⁵

In March 1973, López Bravo requested Saporta that Real perform yet another specific diplomatic service to the Franco regime. The gradual initiation of relations with the Eastern Bloc countries had been one of the central priorities of López Bravo, beginning with his surprise visit to Moscow in December 1969, when he had been Foreign Minister for only two months. He astutely realized that, although full diplomatic relations with the Soviets and their satellites were impossible whilst Franco remained in power, highly beneficial commercial relations could nonetheless be established.⁸⁶ Therefore, López Bravo requested the club on the occasion of their visit to Odessa to play Dynamo Kiev in the quarter finals of the European Cup, to create as pleasant an impression as possible on their first journey to the Soviet Union. This they duly did, being even more complimentary about the host country than

85. Raimundo Saporta admitted that the visit to Tripoli and the awarded to Gadaafi were suggested by López Bravo. For further details of Real's journey to Libya, see: Boletín del Real Madrid CF, No. 279, August 1973; Marca, 19-27 July, 1964; the El País Semanal article of Julián García Candau, op.cit., and his book, op.cit., p. 54.

86. Lopez Bravo demonstrated the priority that he gave to the improvement of commercial relations with the Eastern Bloc in the prologue that he wrote for the Spanish edition of Samuel Pizar, Transacciones entre el Este y el Oeste, Barcelona, 1972.

usual when questioned by Soviet journalists. In addition, President Bernabeu suppressed his latent anti-Communism sufficiently to bestow the club lapel badge upon the Ukranian Minister for Sport and Culture, and in the match that followed the Real Madrid team diplomatically wore an all-red uniform.

This visit to Odessa constitutes the last clear example of Real Madrid being used in an attempt by the Franco regime to attain specific diplomatic objectives. It is appropriate at this stage to arrive at a conclusion about the diplomatic importance of football in Francoist Spain. As in other chapters of this study, it must be pointed out that a general lack of explicit documentary evidence, especially with regard to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs,⁸⁷ partly impedes the forming of such a conclusion. Given the limited documentation available, it must be confirmed that both the Spanish national football team and Real Madrid helped to improve the international image of Francoist Spain to an unquantifiable extent, and that the latter club consciously allowed itself to be used by the Foreign Ministry in the attempted attainment of specific diplomatic objectives, possibly with partial success for Franco's regime.

87. As disclosed to the author by several high officials of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, all of them connected the present ruling Spanish Socialist Workers Party, where there is absolutely no material in the archives of the Ministry that concerns the Franco regime's manipulation of football for ambassadorial and diplomatic purposes.

CHAPTER EIGHT: FOOTBALL AND REGIONALISM

There can be little doubt that the relationship between football and regionalism in Francoist Spain constitutes one of the most important of the seven aspects of the political manipulation of Spanish football. The reason for this chapter on the regionalist aspect appearing at the end of this thesis is that this is the only aspect of politicization that worked against the Franco regime. All of the other six aspects already discussed in this thesis served the interests of the regime to some extent or other.

The importance of this regionalist aspect is clearly demonstrated by the relatively large amount of published work on the subject, in comparison to the scarcity of material discussing the other six aspects of politicization. The majority of these publications about the connection between between football and regionalism have specifically concentrated on the social and political significance of FC Barcelona. Two books have been written on this theme, Barça, Barça, Barça, by Joan Josep Artells,¹ and Barça: cara i creu by Jaume S. Sabartés,² along with a whole host of newspaper and magazine articles and book chapters. The

1. Joan Josep Artells, op. cit.
2. Jaume S. Sabartés, op. cit.

political significance of the two leading Basque clubs, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián, has received far less treatment, partly because of the absence amongst their supporters of a peña gauche divine of intellectuals similar to the one at Barça that was so eager to write about their club.

This imbalance in the treatment of the question of the question of football and regionalism obvious offers the impression that FC Barcelona was the club with the biggest anti-Francoist reputation. This impression, however, is somewhat deceptive. The evidence available suggests that Athletic de Bilbao and, to a lesser extent, Real Sociedad, carried out as many significant political gestures against the Franco regime as did the Catalan club, and in this way managed to reflect the general Basque opposition to the centralist dictatorship as effectively as Barça reflected Catalan opposition. Moreover, it could be argued that the Basque players were far more politically conscious and did far more to demonstrate their opposition to the Franco regime than did their counterparts at FC Barcelona, only a minority of whom were actually Catalans.³

There is no doubt that the opposition of the Basque clubs was very different in style and objectives from that of FC Barcelona. It has

3. The number of native Catalan players in the FC Barcelona first-team squad gradually declined during the Franco years. As revealed by an investigation of the archives of the club, carried out by the author during April and May 1986, there were 14 players born in Catalonia in the Barça squad for season 1939/1940, 15 for season 1949/1950, due to the increase of the squad from 18 to 22 players, 12 in season 1959/1960, and just seven in season 1960/1970.

been alleged on several occasions that this difference was partly a reflection of the difference between the two regions' style of political opposition to the Franco regime.⁴

The objective of this chapter is first to explain why football came to be an important catalyst for Basque and Catalan opposition to the Franco regime, and then to illustrate in detail how this occurred.

It is not difficult to understand why the game became a vehicle for popular opposition. Because of the Basque and Catalan support for the Republic in the Civil War, Franco systematically attempted to destroy, or at least render innocuous, every institution that offered the slightest hint of regionalism or separatism. The Basque and Catalan languages were outlawed in public and in official institutions, often brutally, while thousands of books written in the two tongues, many of them ancient and priceless, were systematically burnt ^{in 1938 and 1939}. The leaders and the great majority of militant regionalists had either died in the conflict, been forced into exile, imprisoned or executed by the victorious Nationalists. The militants that managed to survive the war and the subsequent purge mostly attempted to return into society unnoticed in order to support themselves and their families, avoiding any form of political activity.

Immediately after his victory in the Civil War, Franco made it unequivocally clear that his State was going to be completely unitarian

4. This is the view of Juan Pablo Fusi, and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, expressed to the author.

and centralist. Speaking in conquered Barcelona in 1939, he declared that:

"Spain is being reorganized within a broad totalitarian concept... The character of each region will be respected, but without prejudice to national unity, which we desire to be complete, with a single language, Castilian, and a single personality, the Spanish one."⁵

It is possible to speak of a "postwar vendetta" against both the Basques and Catalans, their culture and their language.⁶ The post-Civil War repression by the victorious Nationalists in the Basque Country and Catalonia was different from that in the rest of Spain, because of being directed not exclusively against the rojos, the imprecise expression used by the victors to describe the Left and the working class in general, but rather against practically all sectors of Basque and Catalan society, which had to pay for their collective offence against the Nationalist concept of "national unity".

The repression in the Basque Country and Catalonia, or, more accurately, the repression of these two defeated regions, was often brutal, with the armed police frequently behaving like an army of occupation. Because of their powerful industrial capacity and agricultural wealth however, the Basque country and Catalonia did not, in general, suffer hunger and misery quite to the same extent as the other Spanish regions in the 1940s and 1950s, which was a small consolation for the repression imposed by the centralist Madrid regime.

5. Quoted in Palabras del Caudillo, Barcelona, 1939, p. 226.

6. This was the phrase used by Norman L. Jones in his article "The Catalan Question Since the Civil War", included in the collection Spain In Crisis, op. cit.

Because of this relative prosperity, more than a million hungry labourers flooded into the two regions from, principally but not exclusively, Andalucía, Extremadura and Murcia. They found themselves in regions with plenty of employment opportunities and economic ambition, but politically and culturally repressed and frustrated. In the 1960s and 1970s, Basque and Catalan nationalist opposition movements, of a cultural and intellectual, as well as political, nature, evolved clandestinely in Francoist Spain, largely independent of the oppositional efforts of the exiled Basque and Catalan political forces.

Considering all of the above, it is hardly surprising that sport should have served as a catalyst or vehicle for Basque and Catalan opposition to the Franco regime. Extremely few other modes of expression remained open to these people whose language, literature, flags, songs, dances and even ^{traditional costumes} were systematically repressed.

Football was undoubtedly the most important sporting catalyst for regionalist opposition in Francoist Spain, but by no means the only one. Basketball also served as such a catalyst, mainly because the major basketball teams were merely one of the many sporting sections of the giant football clubs. Therefore, the politically-motivated antagonism between the Basque and Catalan football clubs and Real Madrid, largely regarded, in these two regions as the official club of the Franco regime,⁷ carried over into basketball. The basketball sections of

7. This view of Real Madrid during the Franco years has been expressed by practically every Barça supporter, ex-official and ex-player interviewed by the author, and in print by for example: Manuel Vázquez Montalbán in Política y deporte, op. cit.; Alex J. Botines, op. cit.; Julián García Candau, op. cit.

Athletic de Bilbao and FC Barcelona played the role of catalyst for regionalist anti-Francoist sentiment, and their home matches became regular gatherings of Basque or Catalan sentiment, where the regional language would be spoken without fear of arrest, where forbidden songs would be sung, and where, from the late 1960s onwards, the outlawed regional flags would be waved with relative impunity. It is true that, the same as occurred at football matches in Bilbao and Barcelona, there were several arrests by the Policía Armada over the years at basketball matches for flag-flying offences.⁸ Generally, however, the sports centre, like the football stadium, was a tolerated centre of regionalist expression.

On the occasion of the visits of the Real Madrid basketball team to these two repressed regions, Basque and Catalan contempt for the centralist regime found a largely tolerated outlet. The hostile reception for Real in the two regions was more ferocious and dramatic at basketball than at football matches, because of the compact nature of a basketball arena. Missiles were regularly thrown at the Real players, fighting between the two teams frequently broke out, and there was even a violent pitch invasion at FC Barcelona in October 1974, which the basketball federation, presided over by the Real Madrid Vice-President Raimundo Saporta, punished with a three-month closure of the Barça arena.⁹ The Real Madrid basketball supporters retaliated in kind when

8. As revealed by an examination of the archives of FC Barcelona, there was one arrest made in February 1967, at the basketball match against Real Madrid, for the flying of the senyera, and two in May 1972 during the game with Caja Madrid.

9. For further details, see El Mundo Deportivo, 17-27 October 1974.

the Basque or Catalan clubs visited the capital city. In December 1974, for example, Real fans stoned the FC Barcelona basketball team coach as a revenge strike for the pitch invasion two months earlier, thus necessitating the postponement of the match.¹⁰ This incident caused Leon Thompson, one of Barça's American imports, to declare:

"The local derby matches back home in New York used to get pretty tense. But that's as nothing compared with these Barcelona-Madrid clashes. If things continue like this, there could well be deaths one day, who knows?"¹¹

Athletic de Bilbao and FC Barcelona, however, were not the only basketball teams to serve as vehicles for repressed regionalist sentiment in Francoist Spain. Mention should also be made, in a Basque context, of the clubs Elorriaga Bidasoa, where a pitch invasion during a Real Madrid visit occurred in March 1975,¹² and the hugely popular Sestao. It can be argued that the Joventut club of Barcelona and Sant Andreu of Barcelona have played the role as catalysts for Catalan sentiment, in the same way but to a lesser extent than Barça. Indeed, the first pitch invasion in Spanish basketball history occurred at Sant Andreu in November 1968, during an explosive match with Real Madrid.¹³

The politically-charged struggle for Spanish sporting supremacy between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona continued in volleyball and handball, both amateur sports. As was the case with both football and basketball, volleyball and handball matches between the two giant clubs

10. For further details, see As, 2-3 December 1974.

11. Quoted in Dicen, 3 December 1974.

12. See, for example, As, 9 December 1975.

13. For further details, see El Mundo Deportivo, 16 November 1968.

were followed by invasions of angry Barça supporters.¹⁴

There were also other sports, particular to the Basques and Catalans, which served as vehicles for regional sentiment. In the Basque country, the sports of pelota and rowing, both of which were energetically promoted by Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián, fulfilled this function.¹⁵ In a Catalan context, mention should be made of roller-skate hockey and rugby.¹⁶ All four of these sports accentuated Basque and Catalan cultural distinctiveness, and provided regular opportunities for speaking in the regional languages. These sports, however, were practically unique to the two regions, and therefore there were no potentially explosive clashes with Real Madrid teams in which the Basques and Catalans could vent their anger and frustration about centralism, volleyball and handball.

The context for this chapter should be established not only by isolating the other sports which served as catalysts for Basque and

14. See, for example, El Mundo Deportivo, 7 October 1972.

15. These two sports were almost exclusively practised in the Basque Country. Players from the two major Basque clubs always constituted a majority in the Spanish national pelota team, while the rowers from these two clubs on two occasions, in 1972 and 1976, constituted a majority in the Spanish Olympic rowing team.

16. Roller-skate hockey had only been played in Catalonia, Portugal and in the parts of South America where there was a sizeable Catalan immigrant community. The Spanish national team, frequently "world" champions, has been composed almost exclusively of Catalans, with Barça players usually in the majority. Rugby, however, has not been confined to Catalonia, having spread across the whole of Spain. Its popularity in Catalonia, though, far exceeds that in any other region. The Spanish team has traditionally been practically all-Catalan. The team for the friendly match against Argentina in Barcelona in October 1973, for example, was composed entirely of Catalans, while the team for the match with West Germany in Madrid the following April included only one non-Catalan.

Catalan sentiment in opposition to the Franco regime, but also by discussing the role of football as a vehicle for regionalist opposition to centralist dictatorship in other parts of the world. Because of being by far the most popular spectator sport, football has frequently served as a vehicle for the sentiment and pride of a particular region, and this is especially the case when that region is being repressed by centralism. Political parties, flags and languages are immediately suppressed, and implicit forms of expression which are roughly tolerated by the centralist regime become of immense importance to the repressed region. Football is not, of course, the only example of these tolerated implicit forms of rational expression. Art, music, literature, theatre and other sports can also serve as catalyst for regionalist sentiment and opposition.

In the specific context of international football, several clubs outside Spain have clearly acted as vehicles of opposition for repressed regions. In the Soviet Union, for example, the Dynamo Tbilisi club has traditionally served as a catalyst for repressed Georgian nationalism, with the supporters speaking the Georgian language rather than Russian, and with the club usually staging pre-match Georgian dancing exhibitions. The home matches of Dynamo Tbilisi against the powerful Moscow teams have become just a highly-charged and potentially violent as Barça or Athletic de Bilbao versus Real Madrid during the Franco years.¹⁷

17. See, for example, World Soccer, November 1979 and May 1981.

In very much the same way as Dynamo Tbilisi in Georgia, the Ararat Yereven club has served as a vehicle of expression and protest for the repressed Armenian. Over the years, there have been many violent incidents during the visits of the Moscow teams.¹⁸ Furthermore, several Yereven players have refused to appear in the Soviet national team in protest against continued repression,¹⁹ a tactic that was adopted, as shall shortly be seen in detail, by the celebrated Athletic de Bilbao goalkeeper José Angel Iríbar.

A brief mention should also be made of Dynamo Zagreb representing the repressed region of Croatia in Yugoslavia,²⁰ and of Slovan Bratislava fulfilling the same role in Czechoslovakia for the disaffected Moravians.²¹ The struggles of all of these regionalist clubs against those of the capital city have always been tense and frequently violent, while their participation in the European competitions has given these repressed regions an opportunity to internationally project themselves.

It is now necessary to offer a detailed illustration of the

18. In July 1969, the stadium of Ararat Yereven was closed for three months following a violent pitch invasion in a match with Dynamo Moscow. Games against Torpedo Moscow in Yereven were twice suspended, in April 1976 and September 1978, because of missile-throwing at the visiting players. In April 1983, the team coach of Dynamo Moscow was stoned while leaving the vicinity of the Yereven stadium, which provoked a further two month closure, and the threat of enforced relegation if further violent incidents occurred. For further details of Ararat Yereven, see World Soccer, August 1969, and May 1984.

19. See World Soccer, May 1984.

20. For further details, see World Soccer, October 1981.

21. See, for further details, World Soccer, March 1968, October 1973 and June 1975.

relationship between football and regionalism in Francoist Spain, beginning with the Basque clubs because of their numerical superiority. It could be argued that the Osasuna club of Pamplona should be included in this study of the political significance of Basque football. As shall be seen in the Epilogue to this thesis, Osasuna undoubtedly played a significant role in the transition from dictatorship to democracy, by adopting an all-Basque player policy and clearly siding with the Basque nationalist movement rather than with the devotees of a non-Basque Navarre. During the Franco period, however, the opposite was very much the case. Osasuna was a club led by Francoists, who immediately changed the club's traditional all-Basque player policy,²² and well supported by staff and students of the famous Rightist Opus Dei university in Pamplona.²³ In addition, Osasuna was a club of secondary sporting importance during the Franco years, playing in the first division for only four seasons.

As seen in the Introduction to this thesis, both Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad clearly came out in favour of a degree of Basque autonomy before the outbreak of the Civil War. In April 1937, the players of the two clubs, many of whom had previously served in the

22. As revealed by an examination of the archives of El Mundo Deportivo, the all-Basque player policy of Osasuna, adopted in 1921, was abandoned by the completely new board of directors headed by the appointee of General Moscardo, the army Colonel Juan Antonio Solana in March 1939. Thenceforth, the Osasuna team was composed by a combination of local Navarrans and players from other Spanish regions, with very few Basque from the provinces of Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya and Alava.

23. It is estimated by Juan José Castillo, the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo, that approximately a quarter of the Osasuna supporters during the Franco years were either staff or students of the Opus Dei university.

Basque militias defending their homeland, came together to form the backbone of the El Euzkadi team which toured Europe and Mexico and refused to return to Francoist Spain.

Given the clear political identity of the Athletic de Bilbao club, it is not surprising that it was viewed with suspicion by the Nationalist conquerers under General Fidel Dávila in June 1937. In addition to the support for Basque autonomy and the El Euzkadi team, two of the clubs' directors, Aitor Azcargorta and Patxi Gorrotxategi, had died in the conflict, and many members had either similarly perished, were in Francoist prisons, or were continuing the struggle against the Nationalist forces in another part of Spain.²⁴

The club was only saved from post-war extinction by a public call from the Civil Governor of Vizcaya province for prospective new directors to gather at an extraordinary meeting in August 1937.²⁵ As seen in Chapter Three of the thesis, it has been alleged that the major motive of the new Francoist authorities in helping to save Athletic and other clearly pro-Republican football clubs, for example FC Barcelona and Valencia, from disappearance was to ensure that the game could serve as a kind of political soporific or "social drug", and so mitigate part of the austerity and repression of the post-Civil War years. Whatever the motives of the Civil Governor of Vizcaya, there were enough Athletic supporters amongst the Basque bourgeoisie who had supported Franco to

24. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of Athletic de Bilbao.

25. This call was published in all of the Bilbao newspapers of 11 August 1937.

form a new board of directors and put the club back in business.²⁶ The new directors were mostly local businessmen, bankers, shipbuilders and export agents, who had largely maintained a low profile during the Civil War. There were also two Basque Falangists, Antonio Echevarría and Juan Carlos Crespo,²⁷ on the reconstituted Athletic board of 1937.

In this way, the political character of Athletic de Bilbao was completely transformed in the space of three months. The objectives of the new directors, led by the banker Luis Casajuana, were to build a new young team, while ensuring that the club "would never again identify itself with the anti-patriotic forces that criminally seek to destroy national unity".²⁸

An example of the obedience of the new Athletic board to the Francoist authorities can be found with regard to the enforced change of club name. In January 1941, the local Jefatura Provincial de Propaganda, ordered the club to change its title to the Castilianized Atlético. Casajuana and his directors meekly assented to the change. According to the official club history Historia del Athletic Club, it was undoubtedly a change for the worse:

"Effectively, 1 February 1941 is a sad date for the great Athletic pride and sensitivity with regard to the club name, invariably maintained since foundation".²⁹

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26. According to the archives of Athletic de Bilbao, 23 persons presented themselves at this meeting, only one of whom, Alfredo Bengoechea, had previously served as an Athletic director, during the years 1929-1934.
27. Revealed by the Athletic de Bilbao archives.
28. According to the archives of Athletic de Bilbao, these were the words of President Casajuana at the first regular meeting of the newly-constituted board, in September 1937.
29. Historia del Athletic Club, Bilbao, 1974, p. 86.

Although Real Sociedad de San Sebastián obviously did not have to change its name, a complete change in the nature of the club leadership was necessary because the majority of the pre-Civil War directors had been pro-Republican. For example, one Real director, Andoni Nuñez, had died fighting against the Francoist conquest of Guipúzcoa province, whilst two colleagues, Juan Antonio Betelu and Miguel Onaindía, preferred to cross the French border and enter into exile rather than remain in Francoist Spain.³⁰ Like its Bilbao rival, the club needed a new board of local pro-Franco businessman, led by the industrialist authorities.

The two major Basque clubs had serious problems in forming decent teams in the immediate post-Civil War years. Some Basque players had died in the conflict, José Duñabeita of Real Sociedad for example, whilst all but two of the famous El Euzkadi team remained in Mexico. The two clubs were forced completely to rebuild with young players who had survived the Civil War, and who saw in football an opportunity to escape the hunger and misery from which the great majority were suffering. These new young teams developed in an atmosphere of militant Falangism and systematic repression in the Basque Country.

Athletic de Bilbao managed to rebuild far more effectively than Real Sociedad, and dramatically carried off the newly-named Copa del Generalísimo on three successive occasions, from 1943 to 1945. Given the political climate of the early 1940s, it is not surprising that these Athletic triumphs were subjected to the application of Falangist-inspired mystification. This mystification was largely encouraged by

30. Information revealed by the archives of Real Sociedad de Sebastián.

the declarations to the Press of Eduardo Lastagaray, a prominent local Falangist who had replaced Antonio Echevarría on the Athletic board in October 1942.³¹ The young and physically powerful Bilbao team was acclaimed by the sporting Press to be the embodiment of the furia española,³² a concept which, as illustrated in Chapter Two, had acquired an obvious political significance. The spectacular Athletic forward-line was given the good military title of the "five artillerymen",³³ whilst the tall and courageous centre-forward Telmo Zarra was held up by the media as a shining example of the "virile, impetuous and furious" new generation that was about to lead Spain into a new and glorious imperial age.³⁴

The dramatic triumphs of the 1943-1945 period served to revitalize the old network of Athletic de Bilbao supporters' clubs across the whole

31. In Marca, 29 May 1943, for example Lastagaray was quoted as saying, immediately after Athletic's 1-0 victory over Real Madrid in the cup final, held in Madrid, that:

"Today's victory demonstrates the limitless potential of our magnificent young team. We are the authentic furia española, a team of courageous, powerful, committed, virile young players, a shining example of the young generation that will lead our new, reborn Spain to glory."

After watching Athletic defeat Español in their own Sarriá stadium on 12th November 1944, Lastagaray was moved to declare to El Mundo Deportivo:

"Once again, we have demonstrated our virility, discipline and courage. Ours are the kind of young men that Spain will need in the battles that surely lie ahead if we are to fulfill our historic destiny."

32. For further details, see, for example: Marca, 29-31 May 1943, 19 March 1944, 5 June 1944, 1-6 June 1945; El Mundo Deportivo, 5 June 1944, 12 November 1944, 4 June 1945; ABC, 4 June 1945; Arriba, 2-6 June 1945.

33. This title was first bestowed upon the Athletic forwards by Marca, 30 January 1944, and subsequently adopted by the Spanish sporting media as a whole.

34. The most complete examples of the politically significant mystification of Telmo Zarra can be found in an extensive profile of the player in Marca, 7-12 December 1944, and in Arriba, 3-6 June 1945.

of Spain, and even to inspire the formation of new ones. In 1936, there were 196 such supporters clubs outside the Basque Country, a figure that fell to 78 by 1941, because of the turmoil of the Civil War and the subsequent repression and hunger. By 1947, however, there was a record number of 243 local clubs in existence, and this figure would steadily increase throughout the Franco years, arriving at a peak of 293 in 1968.³⁵ In the Introduction to this thesis, it was noted that the motive for the proliferation of these Athletic supporters' clubs has allegedly been partly political, with workers in all Spanish regions regarding the Bilbao club as a potent anti-Francoist system.

Real Sociedad had only a fraction of the number of supporters' clubs outside the Basque Country of Athletic de Bilbao, but was nonetheless also largely regarded in the 1940s and 1950s as a club with an implicit anti-Francoist character. They aroused the suspicion of the Francoist sporting authorities in June 1946, when they engaged as coach Benito Díaz, a former footballer who had served the Republic during the Civil War as the Sub-Director of the Federation of Orange Exporters, and had then fled to France.³⁶ Similar suspicions were aroused in May 1949, when the San Sebastián club replaced Díaz with Salvador Artigas, who had been a Republican fighter pilot in the conflict.³⁷

Artigas proved to be a useful coach for Real Sociedad, despite the political suspicions surrounding him, but he came nowhere near to

35. Information revealed by an examination of the Athletic de Bilbao archives.

36. For further details about the suspicions surrounding Benito Díaz' past, see Francisco Cerecedo, *op. cit.* p.

37. [See Cerecedo] *ibid.* p

emulating the achievements of neighbours Athletic de Bilbao. Athletic reached their peak of popularity and success in the Francoist period during the years 1955-1958, when they won the cup three times and the league championship once.

In June 1958, an argument with political undertones broke out when the Bilbao team were due to play against Real Madrid in the cup final. Because of the centralist nature of the Franco regime, as seen in the Introduction to this thesis, the DND had issued a ruling in March 1941 that the final of every national sporting competition should take place in Madrid.³⁸ Football cup finals before the Civil War had been staged in various Spanish cities, according to the geographical position of the two finalists. During the Franco years, however these finals were all played in the capital city, and from 1948 onwards in the Estadio Bernabeu of Real Madrid.

The Bilbao Press began a campaign against the 1958 final being held in the Bernabeu, thus giving Real a crucial home advantage, and included pleas from the Athletic players for a neutral venue, preferably Zaragoza or Valladolid.³⁹ The Athletic board, still largely composed of Francoist local businessmen, was reluctant to complain to the RFEF about the issue, but was ultimately forced to do so by the pressure from the

38. Revealed by an examination of the archives of the DND.

39. The first Bilbao newspapers to request that the final be played in a neutral venue was El Correo Español on May 22 1958, including pleas to the same effect from the Athletic players Angel Carmelo and Jose María Maguregui. In La Gaceta del Norte of the following day, there were similar pleas to play the final outside the capital, with quotations from the Athletic captain Piru Gainza, and the players Jesús Garay and José Arieta.

Press, players and supporters. The RFEF, demonstrating its lack of power during the Franco period, passed the Bilbao complaint up to the DND, which insisted upon the final being played in Madrid, but gave Athletic the choice of the Bernabeu or Atlético Madrid's Estadio Metropolitano.⁴⁰ The Bilbao Press urged Athletic to choose the Bernabeu, in order to make the injustice being visited upon the club appear quite clear.⁴¹ This was exactly what the Athletic board did, and then, in an unprecedented move to arrange cheap coaches and trains to allow a record 30,000 Basque supporters to make the trip to Madrid.⁴² There was a hostile atmosphere at the match, and several fights between rival supporters. On the field, a tough match including six bookings saw Athletic record an historic 2-0 victory against the European Champions Real.

It had been alleged on various occasions that this 1958 cup final dispute served to reawaken the dormant political conscience of the

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40. In the author's examination of the Athletic de Bilbao archives, a letter, dated 29 May 1958, from the President of the RFEF was uncovered. The letter acknowledged a correspondence of the previous week from Athletic complaining about the "neutral" venue. In the light of the intransigence of the DND, the RFEF regretted "having to inform your club of the necessity of staging the said final at either the Estadio Bernabeu or the Estadio Metropolitano, whichever of the two is more convenient to yourselves".
41. Both of the Bilbao newspaper La Gaceta del Norte and El Correo Español, upon hearing of the intransigence of the DND, confirmed in the letter discussed in the above footnote, suggested that Athletic should choose to play the final in the Estadio Bernabeu, in their editions of 1 June 1958.
42. According to the Athletic de Bilbao archives, the club arranged with the Spanish national railway company and two separate private coach companies a special low price of one hundred pesetas for the Athletic supporters to travel to the final in Madrid. An estimated 20,000 Basque followers made the journey to the capital by train, 6,000 by coach, and the remaining 4,000 by private means.

Athletic de Bilbao supporters, players and even directors.⁴³ It has also been claimed that the dispute caused the Basque people in general, not only football fans, to identify with Athletic in their struggle against the Francoist sporting authorities, and then Franco's team.⁴⁴ From 1958 onwards, there was a noticeably more hostile attitude to Real Madrid in their visits to Bilbao and San Sebastian, with frequent outbreaks of violence both on and off the field.⁴⁵

This new spirit of dissent and confrontation in Basque football culminated, during the period 1969-1975, in a joint campaign by the two major Basque clubs against the illegal entry into Spain of foreign players. As seen in Chapter Three of this thesis, because of the DND's unpopular and dictatorial prohibition of foreign footballers from 1962 to 1973, the majority of clubs signed on South Americans, mostly Paraguayans, who has false documents to support their claim for Spanish nationality on the basis of their parentage. The two Basque clubs, who

43. This allegation has been made to the author by, among other: Juan Crespo, veteran the football correspondent of La Gaceta del Norte; Julio Lamana, the veteran general secretary of Athletic; the former Athletic players and coaches Iñaki Sáez, José Angel Iríbar and Javier Clemente.

44. This was claimed to the author by all of the interviewees listed in the footnote above.

45. In February 1959, for example, the Real Madrid player Francisco Gento was felled by a missile, in a stormy match in Athletic's Estadio San Mamés which saw four bookings and two expulsions. In October 1964, the same fixture in Bilbao was suspended for twenty minutes because of a pitch invasion by Athletic supporters protesting about an allegedly offside Real goal. Exactly two years later, two players from each side were sent off in another tense Athletic-Real clash. In San Sebastián in March 1965. the Real Madrid team coach was attacked by angry Real Sociedad supporters, after a controversial 2-1 victory for the team from the Spanish capital. For further details of these incidents, see for example, Marca, El Correo Español and La Gaceta del Norte of 26 February 1959, 10 October 1964, 2 October 1966 and 19 March 1965.

had not used foreign players for fifty years, were obviously in favour of this DND import ban which did so much to help their chances of success. They were naturally angered when the number of these South Americans with dubious documents sharply increased in the period 1969-1971, and especially so when both the DND and the REF turned a blind eye to their complaints.⁴⁶

In October 1971, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad jointly took the unprecedented step of engaging a leading lawyer to pursue their case against the Francoist authorities, José María Gil Robles, the son of the famous monarchist politician of the same name. In order to prevent a huge scandal about its complicity in the issue, the DND decided to preempt Gil Robles's findings by lifting the ban on foreign players in June 1973.⁴⁷

This joint campaign of the Basque clubs earned them the hostility

46. The Presidents of Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad, José María Oraa and José Luis Orbegozo respectively, jointly wrote five letters to the RFEF about the scandal of the South American players, copies of which are kept in the archives of Athletic. These letters, dated 17 February 1969, 24 August 1969, 28 April 1970, 12 August 1971 and 10 October 1971, complain, in a gradually more indignant tone, about the RFEF's lack of action with regard to the falsely-documented South American players. The final letter informed the RFEF about the engagement of a leading lawyer to fight the case.

47. That trepidation about the investigations of Gil Robles was one of the motives of the DND in lifting the prohibition on foreign players is demonstrated by the actual wording of the announcement of the end of the eleven-year ban, published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No.359, July 1973:

"It has been decided, in the light of the wishes of the majority of clubs and certain problems created by a possible evasion of the rules of the old system, to permit two foreign footballers per professional club rom season 1973/1974 onwards, whatever their nationality or conditions."

of all of the clubs with illegal South American players, especially Real Madrid, whose visits to the Basque Country became even more tense affairs.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the campaign had served to unite the two Basque football clubs by revealing the incompetence and lack of respect for the Basques of the Francoist sporting authorities.⁴⁹

This campaign against the illegal entry of the South American players broadly coincided with the gradual resurgence of Basque nationalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The businessmen on the boards of Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad were slowly becoming more receptive to the ideology of the clandestine Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), which was in favour of a return to democracy and regional autonomy.⁵⁰ It has been estimated that about half of the supporters of

48. In November 1971, for example, the visit of Real Madrid to Athletic's Estadio San Mamés resulted in six players booked, one expelled, and 27 Basque supporters arrested for attempting to invade the field and attack the Real players. In the return match in the Estadio Bernabeu in March 1972, the Real fans retaliated by jeering the Athletic team as they took the field, and then showering them with missiles. In January 1973, as the investigations of Gil Robles began to uncover the illegality of the documents of many South American players, including those of Real Madrid's Paraguayan forward Rubén Fleitas, another fierce Athletic-Real battle in Bilbao saw four players booked, the Real defender Gregorio Benito laid out by a bottle, and another attempted pitch invasion. For further details of these incidents, see Marca, As and La Gaceta del Norte, of 1 December 1971, 7 March 1972 and 21 January 1973.

49. This is the opinion of Juan Crespo, Julio Lamana, Iñaki Sáez, José Angel Iríbar and Javier Clemente.

50. This was alleged to the author by Juan Crespo, Julio Lamana, and the former Real Sociedad President José Luis Orbegozo. This point is also evidenced by the large number of directors of the two major Basque clubs who became members of the PNV after its legalization in 1977: the then President of Athletic de Bilbao Jesús Duñabeita; the former Athletic President José Antonio Eguidazu; the Athletic directors Iñaki Aguirre and José María Gorritz; the former Real Sociedad President José Luis Orbegozo; the Real Sociedad director José López Iturbe.

these two clubs were broadly in agreement with the objectives and methods of the PNV, while approximately a quarter of them supported the armed struggle of ETA against the Franco regime.⁵¹ It was this latter radical group of Basque supporters who dared to bring out the outlawed national flag, the ikurriña, on the Athletic terraces for the first time in January 1971, thus provoking a scuffle with the Policía Armada.⁵² Three months later, the pro-ETA minority of Real Sociedad supporters followed the Bilbao example. Furthermore, a group of young hooligans, the first of its kind in Spain, formed out of the most politically radical Athletic supporters in the years 1973-1975. This group, which adopted the name Frente-Norte, was responsible, in October 1974, for the throwing of missiles at the Real Madrid players, and for afterwards stoning the coaches of the travelling Real supporters, the first incidents in a catalogue of partly politically-motivated hooliganism which continues in the present day.

In the early 1970s, the stadia of Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad became centres of clandestine Basque political activity. This process began in December 1970, when leaflets in support of the accused at the infamous Burgos military show trials were distributed on the terraces.⁵³ From then onwards, the two stadia were primary targets for the propaganda of both the PNV and the more radical abertzale pro-ETA

51. These estimates were made to the author by Juan Crespo, Julio Lamana, José Angel Iríbar, Javier Clemente and José Luis Orbegozo.

52. This incident was neither reported or discussed in the Press, but was referred to in the archives of Athletic, as "an unfortunate happening regarding a group of supporters with a forbidden flag and members of the Policía Armada".

53. This was confirmed to the author by various veteran Athletic supporters, as well as by Julio Lamana and Juan Crespo.

groupings that would later come together to form the Herri Batasuna coalition.⁵⁴ The Policía Armada occasionally made arrests outside the stadia after discovering spectators trying to enter carrying such propaganda or the ikurriña flag.

It is perhaps not surprising, given the circumstances described above, that the Basque footballers began to develop a political consciousness. The first player to do so was the Athletic de Bilbao goalkeeper José Angel Iríbar, an immensely popular figure across the whole of Spain because of both his magnificent performance for the national team and his devout Catholicism. Like so many Basques, Iríbar was deeply affected by the Burgos military trials, which, as he himself explains, were the catalyst for his own political development:

"The Burgos trials caused me to think politically, in a profound way, for probably the first time in my life. It seems that these trials effected a change in many other Basques as well, in colleagues in the team. Before, I had been too wrapped up in football to give much thought to politics. It had obviously seemed wrong to me since childhood that we could not speak our mother tongue in the street or learn it in the schools. But until the Burgos business I did not give it much attention. The events of December 1970 really shook me up, because the military prosecutors were trying to have the Basques hung with only the flimsiest of evidence, without giving them a fair trial. I really believe that the trials were counter-productive for the Franco regime, because they demonstrated to the Basques the real nature of Francoist justice, and also gave a glimpse into the ideology of ETA. It was then that I really began to think about the repression of Euzkadi, and it occurred to me that perhaps one day I could use my fame and popularity to make a significant political gesture."⁵⁵

Five years passed until Iríbar's "significant political gesture"

54. This was confirmed to the author by the same sources as in the above footnote.

55. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

occurred. In that time, the number of political leaflets and ikurriñas on the Basque football terraces increased,⁵⁶ the joint campaign of the Basque clubs against the illegal South American players gained strength, the clashes with Real Madrid became more ferocious,⁵⁷ and the Basque language came increasingly into use at the two clubs.⁵⁸

Iríbar's gesture occurred in September 1975, and turned out to be the most politically significant gesture made against the Franco regime through football. On the 27th of that month, the ageing dictator, who had only two months left to live, ignored the pleas for clemency from the Pope and the European Community, and insisted upon the execution of three FRAP and two ETA members convicted of terrorism by a military tribunal, because of confessions allegedly made under torture. Like the great majority of Basques, Iríbar was enraged by the executions,⁵⁹ and decided to demonstrate his contempt for the Franco regime. He explained to his Athletic team-mates that he was going to wear a black armband for the following match, away to Granada, and persuaded them to do the same. Iríbar afterwards claimed to the suspicious Press that the armbands had served to commemorate the anniversary of the death of the obscure ex-Athletic player and director Luis Albert, but nonetheless the real motive was generally realized, even though it could obviously not be expressed

56. This was confirmed by the same sources as in footnotes 55 and 56.

57. As already seen in footnote 49 of this chapter, the joint campaign of Athletic and Real Sociedad contributed towards the DND lifting the prohibition on the important of foreign players in June 1973.

58. As revealed by the archives of the two major Basque clubs, Real Sociedad adopted a policy of making all official club announcements in both Basque and Castilian from August 1972 onwards, and Athletic de Bilbao decided to follow suit exactly a year later.

59. Author's interview with José Iríbar.

in print.⁶⁰

Before carrying out the gesture, Iríbar had informed Athletic de Bilbao President José Antonio Eguidazu of his intentions, and the latter offered his tacit approval.⁶¹ He also attempted to persuade the Real Sociedad players to follow suit, but without success⁶². Iríbar was successful, however, in persuading Aitor Aguirre, the Basque centre-forward of Racing de Santander, and his politically conscious team-mate Sergio, a PSOE supporter from Valencia, to join in the armband gesture for their team's home match with Elche. Three members of the Francoist political police, the Brigada Socio-Político, actually entered the Racing dressing-room at half-time and obliged the two politically-conscious players to remove the armbands. Four days later, Aguirre and Sergio were fined the considerable sum of a hundred thousand pesetas each, equivalent to almost two months' wages, by the Civil Governor of Santander for "provoking a possible breach of the peace".⁶³

Iríbar summed up the impact of the gesture in the following way:

"The gesture was really successful, even more than I had hoped for, despite the Real Sociedad disappointment. The public clearly

60. This was alleged to the author by Julio Lamana, Juan Crespo, Iñaki Sáez, by the Marca journalists José María Lorente and Rodolfo "Belarmo" and by Juan José Castillo, the veteran editor of El Mundo Deportivo.

61. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

62. Ibid.

63. Although the news of the fining of Aguirre and Sergio was not published in the local, national or specialist sporting Press, it was revealed by Sergio to Don Balón No. 7, 18 November 1975. In this interview, Sergio ironically added that "the armbands were not worn out of friendship".

realized the true motive for the armbands, and this hopefully caused them, both Basque and Spaniard, to think deeply about the repression of Euzkadi."⁶⁴

As will be fully illustrated in the Epilogue to this thesis, this black armband gesture was the prelude to the adoption of a clear political position by the two major Basque football clubs, players and supporters during the years of transition from dictatorship to democracy. It would be a position similar to the one adopted by Basque football in the years preceding the Civil War, unequivocally in favour of nation-wide democracy, Basque autonomy, and the promotion of the Basque language. In this way, the political significance of Basque football completed a full circle, leaving behind almost forty years of largely pro-Francoist leadership and politically passive players and supporters.

A few words about the lesser Catalan football clubs are appropriate at this point, before the political significance of FC Barcelona is discussed in detail. The first other Catalan club to be mentioned should be Español de Barcelona. As illustrated in the Introduction to this thesis, the Español-FC Barcelona rivalry was, and indeed continues to be, a local version of the Real Madrid-Barça rivalry, with a similar political significance. During the Franco period, FC Barcelona was the club of the vast majority of Catalonia's six million inhabitants,

64. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

including the provinces of Gerona, Lérida and Tarragona⁶⁵ and also including the majority of the immigrants to the region from other parts of Spain.⁶⁶ Español, in contrast, had a very small following, mostly composed of non-Catalan State officials posted in Barcelona temporarily, professionals and skilled workers from other regions, policemen and military personnel.⁶⁷ Broadly speaking, the Barça supporters were mostly anti-Francoist, and in favour of a return to nation-wide

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65. That FC Barcelona was, and indeed continues to be, the effective national team of Catalonia is evidenced by the number of Barça supporters club and members in the provinces of Gerona, Lérida and Tarragona, in comparison with the same numbers for the local clubs. As revealed by an investigation of the archives of El Mundo Deportivo: carried out by the author in September and October 1984, in the summer of 1970 there were 73 local FC Barcelona supporters clubs in Gerona province, while there were only 46 for the local second division club, Girona Futbol Club. Furthermore, there were approximately 4,000 FC Barcelona members in this province, almost as many as Girona's total membership of 5,788. In the province Lérida, there were 57 Barça supporters clubs and approximately 3,500 members of the premier Catalan club, compared with the 4,334 members and 39 supporters clubs of the local Unió Esportiva Lleida. In 1970, there were 76 Barça clubs and an estimated 4,000 members in Tarragona province, whilst the Gimnastic de Tarragona club could only boast 27 local clubs and 3,293 members.
66. The archives of FC Barcelona included lists of the club members for every year, although not their place of birth. Although it is an imprecise method of evaluation, it can be estimated by means of these lists, that approximately 40% of the surnames were either completely or half non-Catalan, meaning that the member was either an immigrant from another region or the offspring of a marriage between an immigrant and a local Catalan. Juan José Castillo estimates that approximately half of the 40% were immigrants to Catalonia during the Franco period.
67. The same as at FC Barcelona, the archives of the Español club, include lists of the club members for every year. The significant feature of these lists, during the Franco period as well as during the pre-Civil War years and the transition from dictatorship to democracy, is the almost complete absence of Catalan surnames. Only approximately 5% of the members have had two Catalan surnames, and between 15% and 20% one Catalan surname and the other from another Spanish region. The names of the other 75% or 80% of Español members are wholly non-Catalan.

democracy and regional autonomy,⁶⁸ while the Español followers were, in their majority, pro-Francoist, in favour of a centralist, unitarian State, and opposed to all hints of Catalan separatism or even regionalism.⁶⁹ The FC Barcelona devotees regarded the Español club as a kind of "spectre of centralism in their own house",⁷⁰ whilst the Español supporters largely looked upon Barça as a club with a suspect political character, whose supporters dared to converse in an outlawed language.⁷¹

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68. In this case, rather than presenting an extensive and exhaustive list of publications and interviewees who have made this generally-held allegation, along with the evidence to support this allegation, it seem appropriate to point out that this allegation has never been challenged, neither by supporters of the Catalan club nor its opponents, and that detailed evidence in support of it will be presented in the course of this chapter.
69. This allegation has been made in the following publications; Cerecedo op. cit.; Artells, op. cit., pp. 24-26; Sabartés, op. cit., pp. 13, 29, 34, 122; Manuel Vázquez Montalán, "Barça, Barça, Barça" in Triunfo, 26 October 1969; Julián García Candau, op. cit. The current President of Español, Antonio Baró, however, claimed that although their club had a different conception of Catalonia to that of FC Barcelona and their supporters, this did not mean to say that Español was completely in opposition to Catalan autonomy. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that, from the early 1970's onwards, there have been frequent burnings of the senyera Catalan national flag in the Español stadium. Furthermore, the Real Madrid team has always enjoyed a far more friendly reception there than FC Barcelona.
70. This phrase is taken from the article "Barça, Barça, Barça" by Alfredo Relano and Emilio Pérez de Rosas, El País Semanal, 12 October 1982. This allegation has been either made or supported in practically all the articles and all of the interviews listed in the above footnote.
71. Again, this claim has either been made or supported in the articles and interviews listed in Footnote 72. In addition, the Español President from 1963 until 1969, Antonio Vilá-Reyes, the chairman of the fraudulent MATESA textile company who ended up in Madrid's Carabanchel Prison, was quoted thus in El Mundo Deportivo, 7 April 1968:
- "It does not seem at all right to me that the supporters of a certain football club should be effectively permitted to wave a flag that is formally forbidden and speak a language that is not Castilian, the national language of Spain. In my opinion, the game should not be politicized in this way"

It is no exaggeration to say that Español was the club of the Civil War victors, and FC Barcelona the club of the losers. The huge superiority of support in Catalonia for Barça has ensured that they have always had a far more talented team from their local rivals. Español, however, have traditionally considered the two local derby matches to be their most important games of the season, with the result that FC Barcelons has frequently been humbled by their modest neighbours. The vast majority of Español supporters have preferred to see Real Madrid rather than Barça as Spanish league champions, and their victories in the local derby matches often converted this wish into reality.⁷²

The 1940s were the glory years of Español. The directors, players and supporters, many of whom had fought for the Nationalists in the Civil War,⁷³ had the pleasure of winning the Copa del Generalísimo in 1940, and battling their way through to the finals of 1941 and 1947. Furthermore, they had the perverse pleasure of seeing FC Barcelona struggling to survive.

In later years, there would be no more triumphs for Español to celebrate. There would be, however, frequent defeats of Barça to maintain enthusiasm at the club, in addition to the occasional transfer humiliation of their powerful neighbours, such as occurred with the

72. During the Franco years, Español made a significant contribution to Real Madrid winning the league championship by defeating their local Catalan rivals in April 1958, March, 1962, April 1968, February 1969, and April 1975.

73. As revealed by an investigation of the archives of the club, op. cit., two Español players, José Luis Pérez and Antonio Martín, were wounded in the Civil War, fighting in the Nationalist army.

controversial signing of the phenomenal former FC Barcelona player and coach Ladislav Kubala in June 1963. The dispute over the signing of Kubala caused even more animosity between the two Catalan clubs than the transfer of the famous goalkeeper Ricardo Zamora had done in 1928.⁷⁴ In June 1969, Barça obtained partial revenge for the alleged "stealing" of Kubala, by controversially signing Español's Spanish international forward Marcial Pina, thus further embittering relations between the two clubs.⁷⁵

The other Catalan clubs that need to be mentioned at this stage are Sant Andreu of Barcelona, despite the fact that they have never played in the Spanish first division, and Sabadell. Both clubs have played a minor role as catalysts for repressed Catalan nationalism and opposition to the Franco regime. Their stadia, like those of Athletic de Bilbao, Real Sociedad and FC Barcelona, became tolerated centres for the speaking of the local language and, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the scene of the distribution of illegal political pamphlets and the flying of the outlawed senyera Catalan national flag.⁷⁶

74. For further details of the Kubala signing controversy, see El Mundo Deportivo, 24 June - 4 July 1963.

75. See El Mundo Deportivo, 15-28 June 1969 for details of the Marcial transfer.

76. This has been alleged to the author by several Sabadell and Sant Andreu supporters, in addition to: Juan José Castillo, Joan Josep Artells; Antonio Hernández, the veteran editor of Sport; Jordi Golobart, the current President of the Sant Andreu club, a position he had occupied since 1975.

In January 1941, Sant Andreu was ordered by the Jefatura Provincial de Propaganda, to "castilianize" Their club title to San Andrés.⁷⁷

In addition, they were the only club to be requested by the DND to change their colours, because their traditional red and yellow stripes, a perfect copy of the senyera, the Catalan national flag, were considered to have "a possible separatist significance".⁷⁸ The club was "advised" to change to an all-white uniform, the same as Real Madrid's and duly did so.

The Sabadell club possessed a special importance in assimilating immigrant workers from the Southern Spanish regions into the mainstream of Catalan society.⁷⁹ Approximately half of the Sabadell supporters during the Franco period were immigrants, many of whom were helped in picking up the local language by the native Catalan fans. There was practically no division or direction at the club, between the two groups partly helped by the fact the Sabadell team has always been a homogeneous combination of local Catalan players and signings from other Spanish regions. From August 1972 onwards, all club announcements were made in both Catalan and Castilian, and throughout the early 1970s there

77. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of El Mundo Deportivo.

78. According to the archives of El Mundo Deportivo, the Sant Andreu club received a letter from the Catalan regional football federation, in August 1939, passing on the request from the DND for the offending strip to be changed, "because it is feared the highest sporting authorities of the land that your team uniform could have a possible separatist significance." Sant Andreu immediately obeyed the request, which was never made public, before the start of the 1939/1940 season.

79. This subject is fully discussed in the book La historia del Centre d'Esports Sabadell, Barcelona, 1984, and in El Mundo Deportivo, 5 February 1974 and 7 August 1977.

were almost as many senyeras waving on the Sabadell terraces as at FC Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium, with the immigrants apparently just as ready to wave the flag of opposition and autonomy as the natives.⁸⁰

It is now appropriate to offer a detailed illustration of the political significance of FC Barcelona during the Franco years. As seen in the Introduction to this thesis, the Catalan club had clearly come out in favour of the Republic during the Civil War. Just as with Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad, many Barça directors and supporters died fighting the Nationalists. The club President Josep Sunyol, for example, lost his life on the Jarama front in March 1937, and the director Albert Reventós in the defence of Catalonia against the advances of the army of General Juan Yagüe, in November 1938. It is estimated that approximately 9,500 of the 16,000 club members that FC Barcelona had upon the outbreak of the Civil War either died in the conflict, were "purged" afterwards by the National conquerers, were imprisoned, or left for exile, mostly crossing the French border on foot.⁸¹ Furthermore, only four of the Barça team that left for Mexico in April 1937 could bear to return to a Catalonia under military occupation.⁸²

80. For further details, see, for example, El Mundo Deportivo, 7 August 1977.

81. This is the estimate of Juan Castillo, Joan Josep Artells, Nicolau Casaus and Agustí Montal.

82. The four Barça players who returned from Mexico with club secretary Rosend Calvet in June 1938 were Josep Raich, Josep Escolá, Antoni Pedrol and Domingo Balmanya. As will presently be seen, they would be punished by the DND for having taken part in this politically significant venture.

In spite of all these problems, FC Barcelona managed to survive. As in the case of Athletic de Bilbao, the new Francoist authorities were presented with the choice of their allowing the club to die by natural causes because of its lack of active directors, members and players, or of stepping in to save it from extinction. Given the clear political significance of FC Barcelona, the new rulers of Catalonia were extremely tempted to permit the club simply to disappear.⁸³ This would have meant depriving the inhabitants of Barcelona of one of their major sources of entertainment and, as seen in Chapter Three of this thesis, the Franco regime allegedly wanted football to serve as a "social drug" or political soporific that would help in mitigating the poverty and misery of the post-Civil War years that obviously lay ahead. Partly with these arguments in mind, the new authorities decided to assist in the preservation of the club, contenting themselves with attempting completely to transform its political character. A public call from the Civil Governor of Barcelona led to the formation of a new board of directors in May 1939.⁸⁴ This board, to be headed by the Francoist textile manufacturer Joan Soler, was largely composed of right-wing

83. It was alleged in Sabartes, op. cit., p. 17 that the following leading Francoist personalities in Catalonia in 1939 were prepared to see FC Barcelona cease to exist: the Fascist poet Ernesto Giménez Caballero, installed in Barcelona an enthusiastic supporter of the Español club; Luis Galinsonga, the editor of the leading Barcelona newspaper La Vanguardia Española, a close personal friend of Franco and another Español supporter; Juan Fontana Tarrats, the head of the Falange in Tarragona province; José Díaz de Gomara, the apostolic administrator of Barcelona; Enrique Genaro de la Riva, a volunteer officer in the Nationalist army during the Civil War, appointed President of Español by General Moscardó in April 1939. There is no documentary evidence, however, that any of these personalities attempted to dissuade the Civil Governor from launching his campaign, in May 1939, to save the club from extinction.

84. This call was published in El Mundo Deportivo, on 6 May 1939.

Catalan businessmen who had previously been mildly in favour of a degree of regional autonomy, and had therefore supported the initiative of Francesc Cambó and, afterwards, Lluís Companys. The revolutionary events in Barcelona at the beginning of the Civil War, however, especially the enforced collectivization of their businesses by the powerful Catalan anarcho-syndicalist movement, had largely horrified these future Barça director, who generally considered the Nationalist conquest of Catalonia to be a lesser evil.⁸⁵ The newly-composed Barça board included the two obligatory Falangists Antonio Vallés and Agapit Vallmitjana, and the army colonel Manuel Bravo Moreno, who had fought under the command of General Juan Yagüe in the Nationalist invasion of the city. FC Barcelona was back in business, but with a completely different political character from the one that it had possessed in 1936.

The formation of this new right-wing board, however, was certainly not the end of Barça's problems. In June 1939, the new DND, under the command of the Civil War hero General José Moscardó, suspended the club secretary Rosend Calvet from holding sporting office for 20 years for having organized the tour of Mexico, and suspended the four players who

85. This is the view of Agustí Montal, who recounted to the author that his father, himself President of Barça from 1946 to 1953, was a supporter of Cambó's Lliga and then of the Republic upon the outbreak of the Civil War, but changed his political perspective when his textile business was collectivized. When the Nationalist troops of General Yagüe entered Barcelona in January 1939, Montal recalled, his father was sad that the experiment in Catalan autonomy had obviously come to an end, but pleased about the prospect of his business being returned to him.

returned for two years each.⁸⁶ Therefore, Barça had a very difficult task in fielding a decent team for the 1939/1940 league championship.

The poor performances of the young FC Barcelona team caused a club crisis in March 1940, which was promptly resolved by Moscardó using his full dictatorial powers to appoint as President his good friend and ex-Civil War colleague Enrique Piñeiro, the Marqués de la Mesa de Asta. As pointed out in his inaugural speech, Piñeiro considered that he had a mission to convert the Catalan club into:

"...Henceforth a rosette in the crown of triumphs of Spanish sport, and its colours will contribute to demonstrate up to what point the glorious deeds of our invincible Caudillo Franco have rejuvenated the heart of Spain, the heart of thousands and thousands of good Spaniards born in Catalonia, who only feel love and admiration for the immortal destinies of our beloved homeland."⁸⁷

Pineiro behaved in the FC Barcelona presidency exactly as the above speech indicated that he would. He accepted without a murmur of protest the order, in January 1941, to change the club name to Club de Fútbol de Barcelona from the Jefatura Provincial de Propaganda.⁸⁸ Exactly two years later, Piñeiro began to promote special radio broadcasts of football commentaries for the Blue Division of Falangists fighting alongside the Nazis on the Russian front.

86. In the archives of FC Barcelona, the author uncovered the letter, signed by Moscardó and dated 6 June 1939, suspending Calvet and the four players, "for having been a part of a tour that offered to the outside world a negative view of Spanish sport".

87. Quoted in El Mundo Deportivo, 27 March 1940 and in Sabartés, op. cit., p. 14.

88. Information revealed by the archives of FC Barcelona.

The great majority of Barça supporters detested Piñeiro and all that he represented.⁸⁹ Such supporters, however, were primarily concerned, in the difficult early 1940s, with supporting themselves and their families, holding down a job and steering clear of any political suspicion. In as far as their thoughts centred on football, they wished for little more than a winning Barça team that would distract them away from the daily grind. The transformation in political character of the FC Barcelona leadership was regarded by most Catalan supporters as regrettable, but largely only to be expected given the post-Civil War political climate.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, there was a small minority of radical Catalanist Barça fans who had survived the Civil War and the subsequent purges, who, in May 1943, upset all of Piñeiro's plans to change permanently the character of the club. As seen on various occasions previously in the course of this thesis, the opposition of FC Barcelona to the Franco regime was largely reflected through its stormy relationship with Real Madrid, the club regarded by the majority of Catalans as "another arm of the repression".⁹¹ Piñeiro hoped that the radical section of Barça

89. This has been alleged in print by Sabartés, op. cit., pp. 14-15, and in interviews with the following; Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus, and Juan José Castillo. This allegation is also partly borne out by the events of May 1943, to be discussed presently.

90. This has been the view of the majority of veteran FC Barcelona supporters interviewed by the author, and of the four interviewees mentioned in the above footnote.

91. This phrase is taken from the article "Barça, Barça, Barça", written by Alfredo Relano and Emilio Pérez de Rosas, op. cit. That the majority of Barça supporters looked upon Real Madrid in this way was alleged to the author in many interviews with old FC Barcelona followers, and with the four interviewees listed in Footnote 93.

supporters had been so reduced by the Civil War and its aftermath so as to permit relatively peaceful relations with the Madrid club.⁹² During the cup semi final between the two giant clubs in May 1943, however, the hopes of Piñero were dramatically dashed. A minority of the Catalan crowd at the Les Corts stadium pelted the Real Madrid players and the allegedly biased referee with all manner of missiles. When the referee temporarily suspended the match, the anger and frustration was directed towards the presidential box, with insults and threats being directed not only towards the Real Madrid directors, but also towards Piñero himself.⁹³

The DND was just as horrified as Piñero by this unexpected reappearance of the spectre of a politicized FC Barcelona. The punishment decreed by General Moscardó was not surprisingly very severe:

"To impose upon the Club de Fútbol Barcelona a fine of two thousand five hundred pesetas for the behaviour of the crowd, which comported itself with intense threats and hostility against the visiting team and the referee, and also for the disrespectful and inconvenient way in which a notable section of its supporters directed themselves repeatedly towards the presidential box, occupied by the highest sporting authorities."⁹⁴

92. Before the match with Real Madrid, Piñero was asked by El Mundo Deportivo if he feared crowd trouble. The reply of the Barça President was unequivocal:

"Those unfortunate days of hostility towards the team of the capital city have long gone, let there be no doubt about that. The FC Barcelona supporters, or so called supporters, who used to cause these problems before the "War of Liberation" seem to stay away from our stadium now and thankfully so."

For further details, see El Mundo Deportivo, 13 May 1943.

93. For further details of the incidents, see El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, of 15 May 1943. These newspaper accounts, however, do not reveal the full scale of the trouble, especially with regard to the insults directed at Piñero and the Real directors. For a more accurate report, see Sabartés, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

94. Quoted in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No.4 June 1943.

The return match in Madrid took place in an even more hostile atmosphere, which contributed to Barça being trounced by the amazing scoreline of 11-1.⁹⁵ The magnitude of Real Madrid's victory has caused several allegations of political interference in the result, none of which have been supported by any tangible evidence.⁹⁶ There were more violent acts from the Madrid crowd than had occurred in Barcelona, and for this reason Piñeiro expected that Real would be punished as least as severely by the DND as had been the Catalan club before.⁹⁷ He was indignant, therefore, when the DND ruled that Real would be fined only half the amount of Barça.⁹⁸ This indignation combined with the effect of the insults received in Les Corts and the humiliation of the 11-1

95. For further details of the incidents in the return match, see Sabartés. op. cit., pp. 16-17, El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, of 22 May 1943.

96. Although none of these allegations have been put into print, even since 1975, this claim of political interference to assure the passage of Real Madrid into the final has been made to the author by the following: Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Alex J. Botines, Joan Josep Artells, and several old Barça supporters. Neither Agustí Montal nor Nicolau Casaus, however, effectively the official voice of FC Barcelona past and present, have alleged political interference in the result or partisan refereeing: As pointed out by Montal:

"What this club complained to the RFEF about at the time, is that the hostility and violence of the crowd contributed towards the heavy defeat suffered. Indeed, one of the many missiles thrown laid out our player Josep Escolá, with the score at 3-0. Whilst Escolá was off the pitch being treated for about fifteen minutes, reducing Barça to ten men, Real Madrid scored more goals. These are the kind of events that make players nervous and force them into mistakes."

97. Revealed by an interview in El Mundo Deportivo, 23 May, 1943.

98. When the news of the fine on Real Madrid imposed by the DND was made public, Piñeiro declared to El Mundo Deportivo, 3 June 1943 that:

"This news does not please me. Although I obviously respect the DND and its reasons for only fining Real Madrid half of the amount that it fined us, I believe that their punishment should possibly have been more severe because of the unprecedented events in Madrid of ten days ago."

defeat to provoke his impetuous resignation.⁹⁹ General Moscardó was so annoyed by this show of petulance from his formerly obedient colleague-in-arms that he decided to replace him with an even more dutiful and reliable man, a President who could finally and permanently bring FC Barcelona under centralist control. His choice for this difficult task was the army colonel José Vendrell, who had previously served the new regime as the delegate for Public Order in La Coruña province.

Vendrell knew that his mission would be difficult, because the incidents of May 1943 and reawakened all of the bitterness of the Barça-Real Madrid rivalry, with its obvious political significance.¹⁰⁰ Partly because of these incidents, the presidency of Real Madrid was assumed by Santiago Bernabeu in September 1943. His ascendancy to power almost immediately worsened relations between the two giant clubs because, as seen in detail in the Introduction to this thesis, his personality was abrasive and intolerant, and moreover, he has taken part in the Nationalist invasion of Catalonia as a volunteer lieutenant in the army of General Agustín Muñoz Grandes. It was expected that his first visit

99. As revealed by the archives of both FC Barcelona and El Mundo Deportivo, Piñeiro offered his resignation to Moscardó on 5 June 1943. El Mundo Deportivo of 16 June announced curtly that:

"From the beginning of next week onwards, the President of Club de Futbol Barcelona will be the honourable Colonel José Vendrell Costa."

100. This is confirmed by Vendrell's declaration to El Mundo Deportivo 22 June 1943, upon assuming control at the Catalan club:

"I know that the task assigned to me will not be easy. The unfortunate incidents of last month have made relations between this club and Real Madrid and the sporting authorities of the nation difficult."

to the Les Corts stadium would provoke further incidents among the Catalan supporters.¹⁰¹ This was exactly what happened in April 1944, when abuse was directed towards Bernabeu and missiles were thrown at the Real players. Barça were fined five thousand pesetas by the DND, double the amount of the previous fine, and were threatened with having to play their home matches against Real on neutral ground.¹⁰²

Acting on the instructions of an enraged Moscardó.¹⁰³ Vendrell organized a series of friendly matches between the two rival clubs in the summer and autumn of 1944. In this way, relations between Real and Barça temporarily improved, but the pattern of politically significant problems had already established itself in Francoist Spain, and would reappear on many occasions in the following thirty years.

In September 1946, Vendrell died and was replaced by Moscardó with the former Vice-President Agustí Montal, a wealthy Francoist textile

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101. In the archives of FC Barcelona, examined by the author, op. cit., there is a letter from the President of the RFEF, Javier Barroso Sánchez-Guerra to Vendrell, dated 7 April 1944, requesting the Barça President to assure that there would be no more incidents in the forthcoming match in Les Corts.
102. For further incidents, see El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, of 22 April 1944, or Sabartés, op. cit., pp. 17-18. For details of the fine and the threat, see the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No. 15, May 1944.
103. The author uncovered in the archives of the DND, a letter from Moscardó to Vendrell, dated 2 May 1944, in which the Delegado Nacional expressed his "profound sadness and indignation at the incidents that occurred in the Las Cortes stadium of your club last month". Moscardó went on to suggest that Vendrell "organize several exhibition matches with the Real Madrid club, in order for relations between the two most important sporting clubs in Spain to lift themselves out of the abyss in which they now find themselves".

manufacturer who had effectively hid himself during the Civil War.¹⁰⁴ His seven years as Barça President were characterized by spectacular success on the field, due to a remarkable all-Catalan team, and by the celebration of the club's fiftieth anniversary in 1949.

The man charged with the arrangement of these celebrations was Nicolau Casaus, the former Catalanist Esguerra Republicana militant who, as seen in Chapter Four, had escaped from a death sentence in 1939, and had since been forbidden by the DND from holding any sporting office. In normal circumstances, Casaus would have been an FC Barcelona director and probably also a presidential candidate, because he was very intelligent, hardworking and popular within the club.¹⁰⁵ During the Franco period, however, he had to content himself with various unofficial posts and temporary responsibilities that the sympathetic Presidents offered him over the years. Not surprisingly, his responsibility for the anniversary festivities caused political problems for the club. The Civil Governor of Barcelona intervened upon hearing that Casaus's speech inaugurating the celebrations had referred to Barça traditionally serving as a symbol of opposition to centralist Madrid dictatorship, without actually mentioning the Franco regime. Furthermore, Casaus had

104. Author's interview with his son, Agustí Montal, op. cit.

105. The popularity of Casaus at the club, and his possible assent to the presidency in normal circumstances was affirmed to the author by the following interviewees: Agustí Montal, the former Barça players Carles Rexach and Joaquim Rifé, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Juan José Castillo, and by many old FC Barcelona supporters.

allegedly smashed up a photograph of the Caudillo himself. According to Casaus:

"The incidents of 1949 have to be seen in the context of FC Barcelona being a very successful club despite the undoubted partiality of the RFEF and the other Francoist authorities, while by 1949 their beloved Real Madrid had not managed to win a single league title since the Civil War. I think that they were anxious to stop the success of Barça, and saw my appointment as head of the 1949 celebrations as the perfect opportunity. The Civil Governor summoned me, and even threatened me with exile on two charges. Firstly, he claimed that my inaugural speech had given a separatist, anti-centralist message, and then accused me of having smashed up a picture of Franco that used to be in the boardroom, when in reality I had simply taken it down and put it in a less prominent position because it used to fall down every time that the door was closed. It would really have given me a lot of pleasure to have done the things that he accused me of, but I had to act responsibly in the name of FC Barcelona. In the end, lack of evidence forced him to let me off with a warning. The anniversary celebrations went ahead exactly as planned, culminating in the dancing, on the Les Corts pitch in front of a capacity 40,000 crowd, of the biggest sardana organized since the Civil War."¹⁰⁶

Four years later, FC Barcelona was at the centre of another political storm. Both Barça and Real Madrid were eager to sign the world-famous Argentine forward Alfredo Di Stéfano. The problems partly arose because the phenomenal Argentine was playing in the "private" Colombian league that had been outlawed by the world football governing body FIFA. Martí Carreto, the Catalan textile manufacturer, followed the correct procedure and approached the River Plate club of Buenos Aires, recognized by FIFA as Di Stéfano's proper club.¹⁰⁷ Santiago Bernabeu of Real Madrid, however, was not so respectful of the FIFA rules, and made direct contact with the Millionarios club of Bogota,

106. Author's interview with Nicolau Casaus.

107. For further details of the Barça approaches to River Plate, see El Mundo Deportivo, throughout the whole of June and July 1953.

thus hoping to steal a march on Martí Carreto.¹⁰⁸ This was exactly what Bernabeu had done nine years earlier, in May 1944, when he had sent an aeroplane to the Canary Islands to sign up the remarkable Luis Molowny, before the boat sent by Barça arrived.¹⁰⁹

Di Stéfano arrived in Spain in August 1953, unsure about which of the two giant clubs he had actually signed for. Because of this, confusion, the RFEF and ultimately the DND were obliged to intervene.¹¹⁰ In the opinion of practically all of the neutral observers, the case of FC Barcelona was far stronger, because of their having exactly followed FIFA procedure.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the DND after having received a full report from the RFEF,¹¹² arrived at the unexpected and bizarre decision

108. For further details about the efforts of Bernabeu, see either Marca, throughout June and July 1953, or Boletín del Real Madrid CF, Nos. 25 and 26 July and August 1953.

109. The battle for the signature of Molowny marked the beginning of the dramatic transfer war between the two giant clubs, a war that reached its most bitter moment with the Di Stéfano affair and still continues in the present day. For further details of the Molowny transfer, see Marca, and El Mundo Deportivo, 19-27 May 1944.

110. In the archives of the RFEF, were uncovered letters to the RFEF from Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, dated 20 and 22 August respectively, asking for that organization to intervene in the affair whilst stating their own case. As was usual in these cases of arbitration between clubs, the RFEF passed the problem up to the DND.

111. This opinion has been expressed, not surprisingly, to the author by all of the interviewees connected with FC Barcelona mentioned already in the footnotes to this chapter. In addition, the following neutral observers have alleged that the case of Barça was far stronger than the Real: Pablo Porta, the former President of the RFEF, the former Delegado Nacional de Deportes Benito Castejón; Julián García Candau; Miguel Vidal.

112. According to the archives of the RFEF, this report about the Di Stéfano affair was sent to the DND on 29 August 1953.

that Di Stéfano should be shared, season by season, by the two rival clubs.¹¹³

That Martí Carreto should have accepted this unprecedented ruling in a docile manner should come as no surprise in the light of his passive role in an incident in Caracas in June of that same year. The episode was, for obvious reasons, not recounted in the Press of the time. As recalled by Nicolau Casaus,¹¹⁴ the Barça team was in Venezuela playing in the famous Mundialito tournament, with an exiled Catalan on the terraces enthusiastically waving a senyera national flag. This type of manifestation of defiant nationalism was frequent at FC Barcelona matches in South America and France during the Franco years, and clearly demonstrates the political significance of the club for Catalan Civil War exiles and emigrants. On this occasion, the Spanish ambassador in Venezuela and former Falangist President of the RFEF Manuel Valdés Larrañaga was present, and angrily demanded to Martí Carreto that the offending flag be removed before the match could begin. The Falangist ambassador had no right to make such a demand, because the senyera was obviously not illegal outside Spain; nonetheless, the obedient Martí Carreto despatched his assistant Joan Prado to restrain the flag waver, thus causing the indignant exiled Catalans to direct accusations of treachery and collaboration with the Franco regime at the Barça President.

113. The decision of the DND, was published in the Boletín Oficial de la DND, No.1, 26 October 1953 and in Marca, and El Mundo Deportivo, of 12 September 1953.

114. Author's interview with Nicolau Casaus.

The reaction to the servility of Martí Carreto in Caracas, however, was as nothing in comparison to the reaction in Barcelona in September, 1953, when he returned from Madrid with the news of the agreement about sharing Di Stefano. The angry reaction of the Barça directors forced him to resign the presidency, the majority of them largely sharing the view of most Barça fans that Di Stéfano had been "stolen" by Real Madrid in a campaign, encouraged by the Francoist sporting authorities, to apply a brake to the successes of the Catalan club for political reasons.¹¹⁵ The interim committee of ex-Barça Presidents that took over the running of the club was so indignant about the ruling of the DND that it took the symbolic decision angrily to sell to Real Madrid complete rights over the contract of Di Stéfano.¹¹⁶ The supposed injustice committed against FC Barcelona by the DND assumed gigantic proportions over the following years, largely because the Argentinian immediately transformed Real into an unstoppable team, inspiring a total of eight league championships, a record five European Cups and the World Club Cup in the period 1954-1964.

115. That the majority of FC Barcelona supporters and directors held this opinion of the Di Stéfano affair has been alleged in print by Sarbartes, op. cit., pp. 59, 64, by Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., and by Cerecdo, op. cit.. Furthermore, this has been alleged to the author in interviews with the following: Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Juan José Castillo, Alex J. Botines, and Joan Josep Artells.

116. The press reports of the Barça decision, in El Mundo Deportivo, 17 September 1953, for example, do not convey the ambience in which the decision was taken, because of the fear of breaking the rules of the DND's Comisión de Prensa y Propaganda about reporting the decisions of the Francoist sporting authorities. A fuller account of the episode can be found in Sabartés, op. cit., p. 60. Agustí Montal, interviewed op. cit., recalled to the author that his father, the chairman of the Barça committee of ex-Presidents, was extremely angry about the DND's ruling.

Of even greater significance to the aggrieved Barça fans, however, was the fact that Di Stéfano's arrival at Real was undoubtedly the turning point in the sporting struggle between the two giant clubs of Spain. Up until 1953, FC Barcelona had completely dominated Spanish football, but afterwards, throughout the Franco period, they were always in the shadow of Real Madrid.

The Di Stéfano affair caused the political consciousness of the direction and especially the supporters of FC Barcelona to be raised. The Francoist sporting authorities were regarded as being afraid that Barça, strengthened by the acquisition of the Argentine forward, would continue to dominate, and so committed an injustice in order to weaken the Catalan club.¹¹⁷

From September 1953 onwards, there was a noticeable increase in the hostility of the Barça crowd towards both Real Madrid and the visiting leaders of the RFEF and the DND. It has been alleged on many occasions that the various Presidents of the RFEF, beginning with Sancho Dávila Fernández in December 1953, and the Delegados Nacionales de Deportes, beginning with Moscardó in March 1955, were granted a hostile reception upon visiting the Les Corts and later Camp Nou stadia, without any mention of this hostility, for obvious reasons, being made in the Press.¹¹⁸ It has even been alleged that Moscardó was so infuriated by

117. The evidence to support this allegation is exactly the same as for Footnote 120.

118. This allegation has been made to the author by the following interviewees: Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Joan Josep Artells, Nicolau Casaus, and Alex J. Botines.

the abuse directed towards him that he had to be restrained from reacting violently by the Barça President Francesc Miró Sans.¹¹⁹

The controversial decision taken by the interim committee of ex-FC Barcelona Presidents, in October 1953, to hold popular presidential elections with all of the club's 19,000 adults members being allowed to vote, is generally considered to be a consequence of the Di Stéfano affair. From that date onwards, the Barça directors were markedly less respectful and more critical towards the sporting authorities.¹²⁰ The first manifestation of this change of attitude was the decision about the presidential elections, taken in spite of the knowledge that such elections would infuriate Moscardó and other Francoist authorities.¹²¹

Miró Sans, the winner of the 1953 elections and another prosperous Catalan textile manufacturer, was essentially a cautious Barça President who was careful to make flattering tributes towards Franco and his ministers when necessary. In March 1955, for example, he did his best

119. This has been alleged by the four interviewees listed at the beginning of the above footnote, of whom, however, only Casaus, was present at that particular match. Not surprisingly, the incident was not mentioned in Press reports of the match.

120. This allegation has been made in print by Sabartés, op. cit., p. 31, and by Vázquez Montalbán, op. cit., and to the author by the following interviewees: Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Juan José Castillo, Alex J. Botines, Joan Josep Artells, Julián García Candau, and, most significantly due to their close connection with the Barça board of directors, Agustí Montal, and Nicolau Casaus.

121. Agustí Montal, recalled that his father acknowledged to him at the time that the decision would probably annoy Moscardó, but was indifferent about the wishes of the Delgado Nacional because of the unfavourable outcome of the Di Stéfano affair. That the committee of ex-Barça Presidents knew that their election arrangements would not please Moscardó has also been alleged by Sabartés, op. cit., p. 31.

to ingratiate himself with the visiting Moscardó, and the same occurred during the visits of Interior Minister General Camilo Alonso Vega and Foreign Minister Fernando María Castiella, in April 1957 and November 1958 respectively. Furthermore, Miró Sans, in August 1957, offered the Caudillo himself the honorary presidency of the Inauguration Committee of the Camp Nou stadium which the club had been forced to construct because of the massive increase in membership numbers in the 1950s.¹²²

It has been argued, however, that Miró Sans had no option but to ingratiate himself with the highest levels of the Franco regime, and that any other approach would have caused problems for the Catalan club.¹²³ Moreover, Miró Sans almost exactly reflected the spirit of defiance of the sporting authorities that was provoked at the club by the Di Stéfano affair. To begin with, he was in complete agreement with the decision to hold popular presidential elections.¹²⁴ One of the bases of his election campaign was the condemnation of Martí Carreto's docility in the Di Stéfano affair, and the affirmation of the need to insist upon fair treatment from the referees. During his eight years as Barça President, Miró Sans frequently complained to the RFEF about allegedly partisan referees¹²⁵ and even arrived at the extreme, in

122. For further details of the nomination of Franco, see Barça, No. 88, 22 August 1957, and El Mundo Deportivo, 20 August 1957. Due mainly to the spectacular triumphs of the team led by the Hungarian exile Ladislav Kubala, the members of FC Barcelona had increased from 26,459 in January 1950 to 38,966 in January 1957.

123. This is the view of Augustí Montal and Juan José Castillo.

124. Miró Sans expressed his approval of the holding of popular presidential elections in El Mundo Deportivo, 27 October 1957.

125. As revealed by the examination of the archives of FC Barcelona, Miró Sans sent letters complaining about specific referees to the RFEF in March 1955, September 1955, May 1956, February 1959 and February 1960.

November 1957, of suggesting that the RFEF import referees from abroad.¹²⁶ Furthermore, he frequently referred to the Di Stéfano affair in a bitter tone, without these comments being reproduced by the Press.¹²⁷

Miró Sans was a politically significant Barça President in two other main ways. Firstly, he encouraged several Catalan cultural and folkloric activities that were frowned upon by the Francoist authorities. During the ceremony of inauguration of the Camp Nou stadium, for example, in September 1957, gigantic sardanas were danced by folklore groups, while traditional Catalan songs were sung by the famous L'Orfeo Graçenc. The winning of every league and cup trophy from 1957 onwards was celebrated in this way. The second way in which Miró Sans proved to be a politically significant President concerns his gradual promotion of the Catalan language. This promotion also began during the celebrations of the inauguration of the new stadium, with singing of songs in Catalan. In the October 1957 issue of the official club magazine Barça, which was under the direct editorial control of the club President, there was reproduced a fanciful "Hymn of the Stadium" written in both Catalan and Castilian, as well as the poem Blau i Grana in only a Catalan version, attributed to the celebrated Josep Maria de Segarra, a name

126. Miró Sans issued a note to the Press, which was published by Barça, No. 99, 7 November 1957, and by El Mundo Deportivo, 6 November 1957, in which he denounced the "habitually incompetent and, on occasions, clearly partial refereeing which is systematically prejudicing the whole Spanish professional football, and of which our club has frequently been the victim".

127. This has been alleged in print by Sabartés, op. cit., p. 42, and to the author by Augustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus and Juan José Castillo.

that was almost always Castilianized to "José" during the Franco period.¹²⁸ Thenceforth, Catalan appeared in the magazine Barça with ever-increasing frequency.¹²⁹

During the presidency of Miró Sans, the struggle on the field between Barça and Real Madrid became even more impassioned and potentially violent,¹³⁰ partly because of the added incentive from 1955 onwards, of the domestic champion entering the European Cup. Real Madrid spectacularly won the first five editions of the new trophy, until being controversially eliminated from the competition in November 1960 by their Catalan rivals, who had qualified due to having won the Spanish league championship in season 1959/1960.¹³¹

Despite this highly-acclaimed victory over Real, Miró Sans' popularity evaporated in March 1961. The construction of the new stadium caused a massive club debt, which in turn led to the sale of

128. See Barça, No. 94, 5 October 1957.

129. The front cover of Barça, No. 118, 21 March 1958, for example, consisted of a photograph of the club's new Hungarian player Zoltan Czibor holding up a French phrase book clearly entitled Apprenez Le Catalan Avec Moi, demonstrating both Miró Sans's policy of promoting Catalan through Barça and the Francoist prohibition on such tuition books being published in Spain. The front cover of Barça, No. 211, 31 December 1957, showed the children of the players holding up a banner which read Bon Any 1960. Visca el Barça! Furthermore, from February 1960 onwards, Barça contained a regular column with the Catalan title of Cau d'Orella.

130. In February 1956, for example, two players from each team were sent off in a stormy Barça-Real clash at the Les Corts stadium. In November 1957, the first game between the two giant clubs in the Nou Camp stadium ended with two Barça players being expelled, and the Real team and the allegedly partisan referee being pelted with a hail of missiles.

131. For further details of this famous Catalan victory, see El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, 7-24 November 1960.

star midfielder Luis Suárez, the hero of the defeat of Real, to Internazionale of Milan, and the subsequent deterioration of the team. In the elections which followed Miró Sans enforced resignation, another wealthy textile manufacturer, Enric Llaudet, defeated the shipping agent Jaume Fuset, with only 270 fortunate members drawn out of a hat entitled to vote.

In his six years as FC Barcelona President, Llaudet intensified Miró Sans' policies of defiance towards the Francoist sporting authorities and the promotion of the Catalan language and folklore, and, furthermore, launched a powerful campaign against the lack of democracy in football. According to Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, a young, highly-politicized Barça supporter during this period, Llaudet exactly reflected the growing defiance of the Catalan middle classes in the 1960s, who constituted the greatest majority of club members, in the same way as Miró Sans, Martí Carreto and Agustí Montal had earlier reflected, to a varying extent, the docility and ineffectiveness of these middle classes vis-a-vis the Francoist authorities.¹³²

In September 1961, Llaudet began his long-standing dispute with Spanish national television (RTVE). In spite of his protests, RTVE insisted on entering the Camp Nou to broadcast the Barça-Real Madrid clash, thus reducing an expected capacity crowd 120,000 to just 38,000. Llaudet campaigned for a complete change in the system of compensating clubs for televising matches, and this he managed to achieve by controversially forbidding the entry of the cameras before the games

132. Author's interview with Manuel Vázquez Montalbán.

against Valencia in April 1962 and Zaragoza in October 1962, and then by threatening similar prohibition of the transmission of the home match with Real Madrid in January 1963.¹³³

Another of Llaudet's campaigns against the practices of the Francoist sporting authorities concerned the unpopular DND ban on the entry of further foreign players, adopted after the failure of the Spanish national team in the 1962 World Cup in Chile. Llaudet challenged this prohibition in 1963 by signing the Uruguayan Luis Cubilla and the Brazilian Joao Silveira, and demanding the right to play them in the national league. After a fierce debate at the 1963 RFEF assembly however, Llaudet was forced to back down on this issue because of lack of support from the other clubs.¹³⁴

Llaudet continued with Miró San's policy of strongly protesting about allegedly partisan referees, especially in March 1964 and November 1966 when crucial defeats by Real Madrid were attributed to partial arbitration.¹³⁵ At the 1964 and 1966 RFEF assemblies, Llaudet proposed a motion in favour of the importation of English referees for the most important matches, the original idea of Miró Sans, but was again isolated by the lack of support from the other club Presidents.

133. For further details of these prohibitions and these threats, see El Mundo Deportivo, 26-28 April 1962, 7-8 October 1962, 20-23 January 1963.

134. For further details of this debate, see El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, 13 July 1963.

135. On each occasion, Llaudet complained by issuing a note to the Press, published in El Mundo Deportivo, 4 March 1964 and 10 November 1966, and writing a letter to the RFEF. In the course of these notes and letters, he recommenced the campaign for the importation of foreign referees.

In Chapter Four, it was seen in detail how Llaudet launched several attacks in the club magazine Barça against the dictatorial style of the DND and the RFEF. In addition, he proposed motions at the RFEF assemblies of 1963, 1965 and 1966 in favour of a return to the old system of the clubs voting for the RFEF President and directors, and all adult club members voting for their own Presidents.¹³⁶ These progressive initiatives came to nothing because, once again, the bulk of the other clubs declined to support the Barça proposal. In this case, the other club Presidents were mostly in favour of continuing with the "organic democracy" system that permitted them to continue in power without being especially popular.

Annoyed by this lack of backing from the other clubs, Llaudet decided, in August 1965, to make a politically significant gesture against the lack of democracy in the game. He organized a referendum to decide the name of the club's eight-year old stadium, and 46,000 out of 48,000 FC Barcelona members demonstrated their support for football club democracy by voting.¹³⁷ At any other club, such a straightforward decision would simply have been taken by the directors. Those of Barça, however, had a point to prove.

With regard to the language question, the magazine Barça continued

136. For further details of these motions of Llaudet, see El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, 14 July 1963, 10 July 1965, and 15 July 1966.
137. For further details, see El Mundo Deportivo, 8-9 and 29-31 August 1965, and Barça, Nos. 508-511, 12 August - 2 September 1965.

to play an extremely positive role during the Llaudet presidency.¹³⁸ In very much the same way, Llaudet continued with Miró Sans' policy of promoting Catalan culture and folklore. There were displays of traditional singing and dancing to celebrate the winning of every trophy, while an extensive folkloric festival was organized to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Camp Nou stadium, in September 1967.

It has been alleged that the challenge presented by Llaudet to the the Francoist sporting authorities encouraged the underground opposition to the Franco regime to use the club's stadium as a means of expression and diffusion of their messages.¹³⁹ During the 1960s, the walls of the Camp Nou began to be covered with political graffiti, particularly by militants of the Catalan Communist Party (PSUC) and the anarcho-syndicalist movement CNT-FAI. These graffiti reached their peak during the trial and execution of the Communist agent Julián Grimau in April 1963, and during the regime's campaign for a "yes" vote in the referendum of December 1966.¹⁴⁰

138. From March 1965 onwards, the Cau d'Orella column was written in Catalan, whilst, beginning in November 1965, all of the declarations and speeches by Llaudet himself were reproduced in regional language.

139. This allegation, never made in print, was made to the author by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Joan Josep Artells, as well as by several radical, highly-politicized Barça supporters.

140. Because of the censorship of the Press, no written evidence can be offered as proof. This was alleged to the author by the interviewees mentioned in the above footnote, and confirmed by Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus and Juan José Castillo.

Llaudet succeeded in earning for FC Barcelona the image of a club in opposition to the Francoist sporting system, and in favour of a democratization of the game and a promotion of Catalan language and culture. He failed, however, to build a team to challenge the supremacy of Real Madrid, despite having spent heavily on leading non-Catalan players.¹⁴¹ Because of this failure on the field, he resigned in September 1967, and was succeeded by Narcís de Carreras, the result of an agreement between the various factions at the club without elections being necessary.

In his short period of power, Carreras, a lawyer who broke the tradition of textile manufacturer Presidents, proved to be the most politically conscious and controversial Barça leader since the Civil War fighter Josep Sunyol.

From 1921 to 1926, Carreras had served as private secretary to Francesc Cambó, the founder and leader of the centre-right Catalanist party the Lliga. Carreras had supported the Republic during the Civil War, but was not purged after the conflict because he had not occupied any public or political post. He was not included on the DND's list of persons prevented from holding any sporting office due to their political past, unlike his close friend Nicolau Casaus. Nevertheless,

141. Llaudet broke the Spanish domestic transfer fee record on three occasions, by bringing to the Catalan club Jesús Pereda in June 1961, Lucien Muller in July 1965 and José Mendonça in July 1967.

upon assuming office he quickly became an object of suspicion, as he recounted himself:

"I accepted the presidency, even though they tried to torpedo it from Madrid. The President of the (Football) Federation (José Luis Costa) rang to ask me if I was a Falangist, and I answered that I wasn't, that I was of the Lliga."¹⁴²

As can be expected from his defiant response to Costa's questioning, Carreras was not a man to ingratiate himself with the Francoist sporting authorities. He accelerated the speed of all of the campaigns of Llaudet mentioned above, especially the promotion of Catalan in the magazine Barça.¹⁴³ Furthermore, he launched his own vociferous protest campaign against having to play the 1968 cup final against Real Madrid in that club's Estadio Bernabeu, and, in addition, on a Wednesday evening, meaning that fewer Catalan supporters could make the trip than would have been able to had the final been played on a Saturday, as usual.¹⁴⁴ In spite of the venue and the hostility of the crowd, Barça surprisingly won 1-0, which caused an angry and unprecedented hail of missiles. The disappointment on the faces of Franco himself and his ministers, as they presented the Barça players with the trophy and their medals, shows up quite clearly in all of the photographs.¹⁴⁵

142. Quoted in El País Semanal, 12 October 1982.

143. From 1968 onwards, approximately a quarter of Barça magazine appeared in Catalan.

144. The 1968 final of the Copa del Generalísimo was the first ever not to be played on a Saturday.

145. An example of such a photograph can be found accompanying the article "The Politics of Fútbol", written by the author of this thesis, which appeared in History Today (London) August 1985.

Quite understandably, Carreras called for the RFEF to punish Real Madrid severely for the violent behaviour of their supporters at the final.¹⁴⁶ The RFEF, however, took no action whatsoever against Real, on the dubious grounds that the final was played at a supposedly neutral venue rather than as a Real home match, with the conclusion that the blame for the anti-Barça hooliganism lay with themselves, the RFEF, rather than with Real.¹⁴⁷ At the annual RFEF assembly in July 1968, Carreras denounced this lack of punishment as "ridiculous", and proposed a motion that the final never again be held in the Bernabeu when Real Madrid was a finalist.¹⁴⁸ Unlike the motions presented to the assembly by Llaudet, this one proved to be popular with the other clubs, but even when passed overwhelmingly could still not be incorporated into the RFEF statutes because of the DND ruling of March 1941 that the final of all national sports competition should always be held in Madrid.¹⁴⁹

The Real Madrid President Santiago Bernabeu was indignant about the Catalan victory in the stadium bearing his name, and about Carreras motion at the assembly. While on holiday in Santa Pola the following week, he gave vent to all of his latent anti-Catalan sentiments:

"I admire Vilá Reyes (the President of the Español club, and shortly to be embroiled in the MATESA scandal) simply because of the fact that he presides over a club in Catalonia which carries

146. Carreras made this call in El Mundo Deportivo, 12 July 1968, and in Barça, No. 660.

147. This decision was justified by the RFEF President José Luis Costa in Marca, 19 July 1968.

148. For further details, see Marca, or El Mundo Deportivo, 23 July 1968.

149. Information revealed by an examination of the archives of the RFEF. For details of the reaction in Catalonia to the obstruction of Carreras' motion, see either Barça, No. 662, 26 July 1968, or El Mundo Deportivo, 24-27 July 1968.

the name Español which is worthy of admiration. And those that say that I don't like Catalonia are not correct. I like her and admire her, in spite of the Catalans."¹⁵⁰

This outburst was very popular with the great majority of Real supporters.¹⁵¹ The FC Barcelona followers and most Catalans, however, were infuriated and looked to Carreras to launch a counter-attack. In September 1968, Carreras replied to Bernabeu by coining his own belligerent catchphrase:

"We must struggle against everybody and against everything, because we are the best, and we represent what we represent."¹⁵²

It was the almost perfect response to the attack of Bernabeu, because it made a clear reference to the political significance of Barça, but was nonetheless sufficiently ambiguous to avoid any possible punishment from the Madrid authorities. The phrase opened a new phase in the recognition of the political significance of the club, which had never been publically alluded to before by any director or even journalist. Henceforth, this significance became one of the leading subjects of debate and discussion in Catalonia, partly due to the challenging articles of Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Alex J. Botines.¹⁵³ Furthermore, Carreras's catchphrase also referred quite clearly to the alleged partiality of the Francoist sporting authorities.

150. Quoted in Murcia Deportiva, No. 416, 27 July 1968.

151. This has been alleged in print by Sabartés, op. cit., p. 92, and to the author not only by well-known Barça figures such as Nicolau Casaus, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Joan Josep Artells, but also by Madrid-based journalists José María Lorente, Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo" and Miguel Vidal.

152. Quoted in Sabartés, op. cit., p. 95.

153. See the article by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán in Triunfo, 25 October 1969, and by Alex J. Botines in Dicen, 11 January 1970, 9 March 1970 and 6 October 1970, for example.

The first major contribution to the debate provoked by Carreras's recognition of the political significance of FC Barcelona was made by Vázquez Montalbán in the October 1969 edition of Triunfo.¹⁵⁴ His article offered a vivid illustration of the hostility with which Real Madrid was welcomed to the Camp Nou since Bernabeu's outburst of the previous summer:

"In general, this a tolerant crowd which does not vent its anger on the visiting team. Except for one exception: Real Madrid. The reception which was dispensed to Real Madrid in the second half of the last league was memorable. A reception which not even Miguel Orts himself (a pro-Real, Francoist Catalan radio football commentator, and columnist in ABC, Madrid) would have been able to ignore. A constant shouting, butane gas sirens, whistles, pipes. The tarring and feathering of the madrileños? No way. It is something deeper, which is not restricted to present concrete politics, but which rather goes back to a historic consciousness of the evils of centralism."¹⁵⁵

Vázquez Montalbán also referred to the general use of the Catalan language at the Camp Nou, and of the increasing appearance of formally outlawed senyera flags, being provocatively displayed by the most politically conscious group Barça supporters:

"This crowd would be unusual at any other ground in Spain, As would also be unusual those cars which shove to pass through the impenetratable mass of human bodies and which, in the back window,

154. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, "Barça, Barça, Barça!", Triunfo, 25 October 1969.

155. Vázquez Montalbán, *ibid.*

carry the message: "Speak in Catalan". In many of these cars there slowly flutters the flag of Barça and that of Catalonia."¹⁵⁶

Carreras, just as both Llaudet and Miró Sans before him, was forced to resign in October 1969 because of further frustrations on the field. In the elections that followed, the democracia orgánica system insisted upon by the DND permitted only 283 Barça members to vote. The winner was Agustí Montal, the 32 year-old son of the 1964-1953 President of the same name, a name which was the decisive factor in the 1969 elections because of its association with former success and glory.

This result meant that the presidency of FC Barcelona returned to the hands of wealthy textile manufactures. Montal, however, proved to be similar to Carreras in a political sense, being a democratic Catalan bourgeois, a group that was becoming increasingly defiant towards the Francoist authorities in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Montal demonstrated his solidarity with the political objectives and methods of this group by personally supporting the December 1970 protest lock-in of leading Catalan personalities at the mountain-top monastery of Montserrat.¹⁵⁷

After only six months as Barça President, Montal found himself embroiled in a controversy of extensive political significance, in the

156. Vázquez Montalbán, *ibid.*

157. Although, for obvious reasons, Montal's support for the lock-in did not appear in print, it was alleged to the author by the former FC Barcelona President that the majority of the club's supporters were aware of his position. This has also been alleged to the author by Nicolau Casaus, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Alex J. Botines and Joan Josep Artells.

shape of the most bitter argument involving his club and Madrid since the Di Stéfano affair of 1953. In June 1970, the Basque referee Emilio Guruceta was in charge of a tense cup quarter-final between the two giant Spanish clubs in the Camp Nou. With half an hour remaining, Guruceta awarded a penalty to Real which, in the opinion of every neutral observer,¹⁵⁸ was clearly fictitious. This dubious decision provoked a violent pitch invasion by the furious Catalan supporters, reacting angrily against what they regarded as the latest in a long series of injustices visited upon their club by the Francoist sporting authorities.¹⁵⁹

The RFEF was compelled to accept that Guruceta had made a bad decision, and accordingly suspended him for six months, "for provoking a problem of public order by his deficient action".¹⁶⁰ This suspension, however, did extremely little to satisfy the demands of Montal for the resignation of the allegedly pro-Real Madrid Chairman of the RFEF

158. The neutral observers who have made this claim to the author are the following: Juan José Castillo, Miguel Vidal, Antonio Baró, Pablo Porta, José Angel Iríbar.

159. The anger of the FC Barcelona supporters was best reflected by the magazine Barga, which, in its issue No. 760, 9 June 1970, indignantly stated that:

"Guruceta is mainly responsible for what happened in the stadium... Because the performance of Guruceta, let us say it one more time, exhausted the patience of the supporters who are understandably fed up of so much injustice that it is suffering from, week after week, season after season."

160. This decision was published in El Mundo Deportivo, and Marca, among other newspapers, on 12 June 1970.

referee's committee José Plaza, and also for the complete democratization of the RFEF.¹⁶¹

Catalan indignation only began to subside in September 1970, when Juan Gich, the FC Barcelona secretary, was surprisingly named Delegado Nacional de Deportes in succession to Juan Antonio Samaranch. As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, the dismissal of the latter had nothing to do with the Guruceta affair. Nonetheless, the Barça supporters expected that the appointment of Gich would terminate the alleged campaign against their club.

The section of FC Barcelona followers most affected by the Guruceta affair was the so-called gauche divine group of intellectual supporters that had formed in the late 1960s, informally led by Vázquez Montalbán and Josep Termes, both lecturers at Barcelona's Universitat Autònoma. Many of these intellectuals witnessed for the first time an example of the injustice that the majority of supporters had been denouncing for years. Furthermore, the reaction of the Camp Nou crowd in the face of this alleged injustice demonstrated to them that the club could serve as a popular pole of resistance, occasionally violent, to the Franco regime.¹⁶²

161. These demands of Montal, and his disappointment at the limited nature of the RFEF's decision, were expressed through interviews in Barça, Nos. 760, 761 and 762, 9, 16 and 23 June 1970, as well as in El Mundo Deportivo, 8 and 19 June, and Dicen, 10, 16, 19 and 22 June 1970.

162. Tele-Exprès, (Barcelona) published a special feature on this so-called gauche divine group in its edition of 23 October 1970, in which Francesc de Carreras, the law lecturer son of the former Barça President, commented in the following way on the Guruceta affair:

"On the day of the Real Madrid game, the crowd jumped onto the field for an extra-footballistic reason, the famous penalty."

The political consciousness of the Barça supporters increased in proportion to the increase in strength of the myth about the campaign from Madrid to prevent the Catalan club from regaining the league championship that it last won in 1960. By around 1972, the majority of these supporters had arrived at the conclusion that very little had changed in the sporting corridors of power.¹⁶³

As pointed out in the Introduction to this thesis, no evidence has been uncovered to support this theory about the alleged campaign,¹⁶⁴ and it is quite probable that this theory partly evolved in order to explain and excuse the frequent failures of the costly Barça team on the field. With respect to this thesis, however, the important point is that this theory or myth existed, and made a massive contribution to the politicization of everybody connected to FC Barcelona. Lluís Pujol, one of the few native Catalan players at the club, illustrated the political awareness of the player when, in December 1972, he was asked about the alleged anti-Barça campaign:

"It is very clear that in certain circles the fact that FC Barcelona is, week after week, the leader of this present league

163. This opinion was expressed in Sabartés, op. cit., pp. 137-138, and by many ordinary Barça supporters in special reports published in Dicen, 17-20 April 1972, and 9 October 1972. In addition, this view was expressed to the author by several veteran FC Barcelona supporters, and by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Nicolau Casaus, Agustí Montal and Alex J. Botines.

164. The author expected that such evidence was contained in the archives of FC Barcelona, having been told that this was the case by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Alex J. Botines and Joan Josep Artells. The widely-held view that Barça had evidence about the alleged campaign waged by the Francoist sporting authorities against the club, however, proved to be a myth. Upon examining the archives of the club, in April and May 1986, the author uncovered no such evidence, and, furthermore, was then informed by both Nicolau Casaus and Agustí Montal that this kind of proof simply does not exist.

championship is disturbing, and every kind of hindrance and obstacle is being invented in order to put a brake on the forward march of our club."¹⁶⁵

The 1973/1974 season was of crucial importance for FC Barcelona. The DND finally lifted its ban on foreign players, and Barça immediately bought the Dutchman Johann Cruyff, then undoubtedly the world's leading player. Inspired by Cruyff, the Catalan club won its first league championship for fourteen years, spectacularly defeating Real Madrid by a historic 5-0 score-line in their own Estadio Bernabeu on the way.

It was also in this season that the politically significant phrase about FC Barcelona being "more than a football club" made its appearance. The creator of the phrase was the publicist Xavier Coma, who was commissioned in November 1973, to devise a slogan for Agustí Montal's presidential election campaign against Lluís Casacuberta. It has frequently been alleged that this phrase contributed just as much to Montal's re-election as did the goals of Johann Cruyff.¹⁶⁶

165. Quoted in Barça, No. 890, 5 December 1972.

166. This has been alleged by Coma himself in El País Semanal, 12 October 1982, by Sabartés, op. cit., p. 139, and by Alex J. Botines in Dicen, 28 November and 2 December 1974.

In April 1974, amidst all of the league title celebrations, Montal persuaded the DND to permit the club to revert to its original title of Fútbol Club Barcelona.¹⁶⁷ These celebrations constituted the culmination of Barça's long-standing policy of promoting repressed Catalan folklore and popular culture. There was dancing from the Escola de Dansa Popular, songs from L'Orfeo Gracienc, and moving performances from the immensely popular Nova Cançó artistes Joan Manuel Serrat, Raimon and Guillermina Motta, all of whom were keen Barça supporters and had confessed to the Press their support for the club's political significance.¹⁶⁸ These celebrations culminated in the visit to Montserrat that was discussed in the Introduction to this thesis.

The complaints about the alleged campaign against FC Barcelona temporarily abated. In February 1975, however, Johann Cruyff was sent off in dubious circumstances in a game at Málaga. All of the indignation and bitterness that exploded during the Guruceta affair came to

167. In the archives of FC Barcelona, examined by the author, there is the copy of a letter, dated 20 April 1974, from Montal to the RFEF President José Luis Pérez Payá, informing the latter of "the unanimous desire of this club to revert to our original title of Fútbol Club Barcelona". Montal went on to request that Pérez Payá "kindly arrange with the necessary authorities, especially the Delegación Nacional de Deportes and the Jefatura Provincial de Propaganda, that this club be known by its original title from the commencement of season 1974/75 onwards." Pérez Payá granted this request, and persuaded the two institutions mentioned above to accept the name change. Following the example of Barça, both Athletic de Bilbao and Sporting de Gijón reverted to their original, foreign-influenced names in the summer of 1974.

168. See, for example, the interview with Motta in Barça, No. 830, 12 October 1971, the interview with Serrat in Dicen, 30 April 1974, and with Raimon, 3 May 1974.

the surface again.¹⁶⁹ Montal responded with a typically aggressive note which condemned "the vast campaign unleashed against the Fútbol Club Barcelona and everything that it represents".¹⁷⁰

While the whole of Spain, during the long illness of Franco in the autumn of 1975, was contemplating a future without the dictator, there was absolutely no doubt about the political position of FC Barcelona, because Montal expressed himself with his usual clarity:

"If you ask me if I like it that FC Barcelona is considered a democratic club, I will tell you yes. FC Barcelona is a reflection of the currents of the town and of the country (Catalonia), which are democratic and liberal."¹⁷¹

The great majority of Barça supporters, the same as the great majority of Catalans, were waiting for the death of the dictator with optimism, anxious to commence down the road that would lead to a return to democracy and regional autonomy. When this death finally occurred, there was little sadness at the Catalan club, but rather hope for the future.¹⁷² As on many previous occasions, Montal almost perfectly reflected the sentiments of the supporters in the unequivocal telegram

169. For details of the reaction to the Málaga affair, see Dicen, El Mundo Deportivo and Barça, from 16-26 February 1975.

170. This note was published in Dicen and El Mundo Deportivo on 16 February 1975, and in Barça, No. 1005, 18 February 1975.

171. Quoted in Barça, No. 1039, 14 October 1975.

172. This has been alleged to the author by many veteran FC Barcelona supporters, Agustí Montal and Nicolau Casaus, as well as by the former Barça players Carles Rexach and Joaquim Rifé. That there was little sadness at the Catalan club upon the death of Franco is also demonstrated by the fact that the magazine Barça was practically the only Spanish publication of that week which did not carry a reverential photograph of the dictator on its front cover, choosing instead one of the new Head of State, King Juan Carlos.

that he sent to King Juan Carlos, the man who would hopefully preside over the reintroduction of democracy:

"Excmo. Sr. Marqués de Mondéjar, Civil House of His Royal Highness the Prince of Spain, Palacio de la Zarzuela, Madrid. In these transcendental historic moments, I beg you to pass on to his Royal Highness the testimony of personal adhesion of our club, casting votes for a future of pacific and democratic coexistence which your Royal Highness represents. Agustín Montal, President, Fútbol Club Barcelona."¹⁷³

The history of the political significance of FC Barcelona during the Franco years arrived at its conclusion with this telegram. More space in this thesis has been dedicated to the Catalan club than to the two major Basque clubs, because Barça was at the centre of many more politically significant controversies and gestures against the Francoist sporting authorities, despite the truth being, as pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, that Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián reflected the general Basque opposition to the Franco regime just as effectively as FC Barcelona reflected Catalan opposition.

The regionalist significance of Spanish football obviously did not completely terminate in November 1975. On the contrary, as shall be fully illustrated in the Epilogue to this thesis which now follows, both FC Barcelona and the Basque clubs, as well as clubs such as Valencia and Celta de Vigo which had possessed no meaningful political significance during the Franco period, had an important role to play in the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

173. Reproduced in Barça, Barcelona, No. 1045, 25 November 1975, and in El Mundo Deportivo and Dicen, on 21 November 1975.

CHAPTER NINE: EPILOGUE: FOOTBALL DURING
THE TRANSITION FROM DICTATORSHIP TO DEMOCRACY

This study has attempted to illustrate the many ways in which football reflected Spanish life in general during the Franco period. The game continued to be a reflection of the country during the transition from dictatorship to democracy, changing more in the four years from 1976 to 1980 than it had done in the previous forty years.

The most important personalities in the political transformation of Spain were King Juan Carlos and Adolfo Suárez, the President of the Government from 1976 to 1981, both of whom were determined to translate the desire of the majority of Spaniards for a pluralist democracy, with a limited degree of regional autonomy, into reality.

Speaking metaphorically, in the transformation of Spanish football the king, or overlord, was Benito Castejón, whilst it could be said that the role of Suárez was played by Pablo Porta. Castejón was the man who presided over the transition from dictatorship to democracy in Spanish sport in general. As seen in the Introduction to this thesis, he was, along with his good friend Juan Antonio Samaranch, a rare example of a competent and respected sports administrator in Francoist Spain. He was appointed to be the last Delegado Nacional de Deportes in September

1976, with the task of dissolving the Falangist DND, and thereafter remained at the helm of Spanish sport because of being regarded by the government of Suárez as the ideal man to implement democracy.¹ Castejón supervised the transformation of the DND into, firstly, in March 1977, the Dirección General de Deportes, and secondly, five months later, the permanent Consejo Superior de Deportes. The latter institution still remains as the supreme organ of Spanish sport, a testimony to the organizational long-sightedness of Castejón, who himself retired from public life in June 1981.

In a similar way to Castejón, Porta was the last and, in the opinion of the majority of sports journalists, officials and footballers,² the most efficient of the many short-lived and obedient RFEF Presidents during the Franco years. Despite vociferous criticism from Madrid,³ partly because of his being Catalan, Porta was sufficiently popular to remain as President for a record nine years. He was twice re-elected unopposed, in 1977 and 1981, and was only compelled to retire from the presidency in November 1984 because of a decree from the socialist government preventing the Presidents of various sports federations from remaining in power for more than two four-year terms of office. It befell to Porta to apply the democratic principles of

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1. For further details, see the special feature on Castejón in As, 7-11 November 1979.
 2. This view of Porta has been expressed in García Candau, op. cit., pp. 82-84. in practically all of the Press, both sporting and general, when the government decree curtailing his term of office was published in March 1984.
 3. This criticism mostly came from Marca, and, to a far lesser extent, As, for concrete examples, see Marca, 30 October 1977. 28 June 1978, 2 October, 1981, 17 February 1983, 10 April, 1983.

Castejón to football, and this task he carried out with enthusiasm, despite, as seen in the Introduction, his Falangist past. Porta also attempted to reduce the significance of the various politicizing aspects that had existed in Spanish football during the Franco years. As shall be seen in the course of this Epilogue, circumstances largely combined to assist Porta in his mission of de-politicizing the game, with the important exception of the regionalist aspect.

The method of this Epilogue will be to illustrate the fate during the transition from dictatorship to democracy of each of the seven aspects of the politicization of football in the Franco period isolated in this thesis. Before this systematic approach is adopted, a brief discussion about Spain's staging of the 1982 World Cup finals tournament is necessary.

The World Cup finals tournament undoubtedly served as a catalyst or motor of change, mainly because, in order to stage it, the RFEF was forced to change many of its former incompetent ways.⁴ It was frequently suggested, both before and after the tournament, that the

4. One example of the RFEF having to change its former ways for the World Cup finals was the appointment, in February 1980, of a public relations officer, for the first time in the history of the organization.

World Cup would have been staged with fewer organizational problems if Spain had still been a dictatorship.⁵ Despite these problems for the approximately one million foreign footballers, journalists and supporters who visited Spain for the finals, and despite the embarrassing failure on the fields of the Spanish national team, the overall impression given by the Spanish hosts to the watching world was not unfavourable.⁶

It is now necessary to examine the fate of Spanish football's seven aspects of politicization since 1976. With regard to the first aspect, the Fascist influence that existed in the game during the Franco period, it must be stated that this influence quickly disappeared from football in very much the same way as it largely disappeared from Spanish politics and society. As illustrated in Chapter Two of this thesis, Fascist influence over sport in general and football in particular was institutionalized in the Franco period through the Falangist DND, a mere department of the Movimiento. From 1976 onwards, therefore, football could only be completely de-

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5. This allegation was made in practically every Spanish publication both during the immediately after the tournament, when the organizational defects, for example the inadequacy of the public transport system to cope with the one million visiting supporters and journalists and the lack of competent translators available, were manifest. See, for example, As, 13 July and 4 August 1982, or El Mundo Deportivo, 15 July 1982. This allegation has also been made to the author by the majority of his interviewees, especially by overseas sports journalists such as Brian Glanville of the Sunday Times, David Lacey of The Guardian, Keir Radnedge of World Soccer, and Jaques Ferran of L'Equipe the near-perfect organization of the tournament in the Argentina of General Videla four years earlier.
 6. This was the opinion of the four visiting journalists mentioned above, who pointed out that Spanish hospitality partly mitigated the organizational shortcomings.

fascistified with the abolition of the DND, a move which was campaigned for by the majority of the country's extensive sporting Press.⁷ The immediate object of the contempt of the Press, eager to assert a freedom of expression completely denied to it during the Franco years, was the allegedly incompetent Delgado Nacional de Deportes Tomás Pelayo Ros.⁸

Partly because of this critical campaign, and partly because of the dismal Spanish performance at the Montreal Olympic Games, Pelayo Ros was dismissed in September 1976. His successor, Benito Castejón, immeasurably more respected by the sporting Press,⁹ was also more aperturista (reform-minded) with regard to the dissolution of the DND and the institutional future of Spanish sport.

By the beginning of 1977, it was quite clear that Spain was heading in the direction of pluralist democracy and the consequent dismantling of the pillars of Francoism, even if this was by no means a smooth process. In March 1977, both the Movimiento and the DND were dissolved by the Suarez government. A temporary solution to the problem of sports administration was to create the new Dirección General de

7. This campaign was headed by Don Balón and Sport, both published in Barcelona. For concrete examples, see Don Balón, No. 23, 7 March 1976, No. 27, 6 April 1976, No. 35, 1 June 1976, No. 38, 22 June 1976, No. 57, 3 November 1976, and Sport, 8 June 1976, 23 August 1976, 8 December 1976 and 27 January 1977.

8. The competence of Pelayo Ros was called into question in all of the articles in the above footnote dated before his dismissal in September 1976.

9. This respect was fully demonstrated when Castejón's appointment was announced. See, for example, As, 10 September 1976, and El Mundo Deportivo, Sport and Dicen, on 11 September 1976. The warmest welcome for Castejón was offered by Don Balón, No. 50, 16 September 1976.

Deportes, taking over the staff, the offices and the functions of the DND, and placing it under the control of the President's Office. In August 1977, after an extensive debate about the required administrative structure for Spanish sport in a democracy,¹⁰ the permanent Consejo Superior de Deportes was created, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. It was the task of Benito Castejón to establish a completely distinct attitude at the new institution from that which had existed at the DND, and this he achieved by either replacing the Falangist staff that he had inherited from Pelayo Ros, or by convincing them that Spanish sport needed a new kind of flexible, reform-minded and dynamic leadership.¹¹

The demise of the DND obviously dealt a powerful blow to what little Fascist influence remained in Spanish football. As seen in Chapter Two, by the early 1970s, apart from the institutional framework, this influence was limited to the national football team being used as a catalyst for virulent and aggressive nationalism. The rhetoric surrounding the national team became noticeably less potent after 1976, largely because of the failure of the team to impress at the 1980 European Championship tournament in Italy, and most disappointingly, as

10. This debate found echo in practically all Spanish publications of August 1977, not just in the specialist sporting Press. The debate was most fully treated in As, 17 August - 5 September 1977.

11. As revealed by author's interview with Castejón, he replaced 24 of the CSD's permanent staff of 93 during the period 1977-1979, "those who could not accept that the days of cracking the whip at the sports federations and the offending clubs were completely finished"

the host team at the 1982 World Cup finals.¹² Furthermore, the formerly potent and politically significant myth of the furia española suffered a steady decline from 1976 onwards.¹³

In addition, the number of Falangist footballers declined steeply. As seen in Chapter Three, there was always a sizeable minority of Falangist players during the Franco years. A May 1977 inquest by Don Balón into the political sympathies of the footballers revealed, however, that only one professional player, Antonio María Nozal of the Burgos club, was a supporter of the Fascist Fuerza Nueva party.¹⁴

Nevertheless, in one sense Fascist influence in Spanish football has actually increased during the transition from dictatorship to democracy. The same as in every other footballing country, football hooliganism has increased dramatically in Spain in the last ten years.¹⁵ Connections between this hooliganism and ultra-right-wing groupings have been widely accepted.¹⁶ The now defunct Fuerza Nueva and its successor

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12. Ultra-nationalistic phrases such as "we battled for victory like true Spaniards" or "the national team triumphed in the face of all adversity, as only Spaniards can", which had, as illustrated in Chapter Two of this thesis, been systematically employed by the sporting Press during the Franco years, gradually faded away in the early 1970s, and had completely disappeared by 1980.
 13. Since 1976, this phrase has very rarely been employed, in part due to the consistently disappointing performances of the national team.
 14. See Don Balón, No.86, 30 May 1977.
 15. Organized football hooliganism did not exist in Spain in 1977, but has since converted itself into, in the words of Jose Barrionuevo, the current Spanish Minister of the Interior, quoted in AS, 29 April 1987, "a very worrying problem of public order".
 16. These connections have been discussed to some extent or other in practically every contemporary Spanish publication, especially in the wake of the serious problems provoked by Real Madrid's Ultra Sur hooligans at the Estadio Bernabeu during the April 1987 European Cup semi final against Bayern Munich. For a detailed expose of these connections, see As, 27-1 May 1987, or World Soccer. April 1987.

the Frente Nacional, both led by the demagogic former Falangist Blas Piñar, appear to have followed the example of the British National Front in building up a significant influence within the many groups and sub-groups of the potentially violent young football supporters.

The two hooligan groupings with the biggest Fascist or neo-Fascist influence are the Ultra Sur of Real Madrid and the Frente Atlético of Atlético de Madrid, which specialized in attacking supporters of visiting foreign teams and of the unpopular Basque and Catalan clubs.¹⁷ Partly in response to these Madrid groups, there have emerged the Boixos Nois and the Herri Norte factions at FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao respectively.¹⁸ Both groups are heavily influenced by radical Catalan and Basque nationalism.¹⁹

Fascist or neo-Fascist influence in Spanish football, therefore,

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17. The most vicious hooligan attack in Spanish football history was perpetrated by the Ultra Sur against the visiting FC Barcelona supporters in September 1984, partly provoked by Barça winning the match 3-0. 16 Catalan supporters were admitted to hospital, half of whom were injured in the stoning of one of their coaches. The visit of the Athletic de Bilbao supporters for a cup match with Real Madrid in February 1985 produced numerous fights and the blocking of the famous thoroughfare the Paseo de la Castellana. The Ultra Sur and the Frente Atlético joined forces to combat supporters accompanying a visiting national team. In February 1987, these combined forces provoked countless brawls with followers of the England team, three of whom needed hospital treatment.
 18. The Boixos Nois group came into existence during the football season 1981/1982, and Herri Norte approximately a year later.
 19. As illustrated in detail in El Mundo Deportivo, 10 February 1986, the Boixos Nois regularly chant slogans in favour of the neo-terrorist, separatist faction Terra Lliure. The Herri Norte group at Bilbao can frequently be heard chanting in favour of ETA, for example during the match against Valladolid on 7 March, 1987, the first Athletic home game since the death in Algeria of the ETA leader Txomin Iturbe Domingo.

continues in the form of these politically significant hooligan groups, long after the institutional framework that imposed this influence during the Franco period, and the rhetoric and mystification which accompanied it, have disappeared.

It is a matter of some debate whether the second aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain, the game's manipulation by the regime as a political soporific, has completely disappeared. The blatant utilization of televised football matches during the May Day public holidays did not terminate immediately. Adolfo Suárez, the Minister-Secretary of the Movimiento in the short-lived government of Carlos Arias Navarro, insisted upon the Real Madrid-FC Barcelona match scheduled for 3 May 1976 being brought forward to Friday 1 May and transmitted by Spanish national television (RTVE).²⁰ In this way, the numbers of workers and students who took to the streets on the first May Day after the death of Franco were, to an incalculable extent, partially reduced. This proved to be the last such blatant example of using televised football as a political soporific, because, from 1977 onwards, RTVE was formally subjected to the same kind of liberal guidelines and democratic political control as existed in the other Western pluralist democracies.

Nevertheless, it has been alleged that the socialist government of Felipe González has possibly revived the tradition of RTVE transmitting

20. The fullest account of these events is offered in García Candau, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

football matches on politically significant dates.²¹ It is claimed, for example, that it was more than a mere coincidence that a friendly match between Spain and Austria was arranged for 20 November 1985 and broadcast by RTVE, thus contributing to distract attention away from the commemorations of the tenth anniversary of Franco's death.²² It is also claimed that González set the date for the fourth general elections as 22 June 1986, knowing that on the same day the Spanish national team would probably be playing in the World Cup quarter-finals in Mexico.²³

The suspicion that the government may have been manipulating RTVE's football coverage for political purposes was fuelled by an occurrence during the 1976 World Cup finals tournament in Mexico. With only three days remaining before the general elections, when an estimated 70% of Spaniards were excitedly watching their national team defeat highly-fancied Denmark in cavalier style, the PSOE's clenched fist and red rose symbol was "accidentally" flashed on to the television screens instead of the name of the scorer of the fifth Spanish goal, together with the government's election slogan of "To Continued Advancing Down The Right Road". The impressive performance of the national team in Mexico certainly did nothing to damage the credibility of this vote-catching slogan.

21. This allegation, which has never been put into print, was made to the author by the Marca journalists José María Lorente and Rodolfo Belarmino "Belarmo" interview.

22. It should be pointed out that there were precious few other dates when this match could have been played, because most of the other Wednesday nights, the traditional night for international matches in Europe, in the autumn of 1985 were occupied by games of the Spanish teams in the European club competitions.

23. This allegation was also made by the Marca pair, op. cit.

The third aspect of the politicization of football in the Franco period, the complete lack of authentic democracy throughout the game, is the aspect that has undergone the most profound changes since 1976. As seen in Chapter Four of this thesis, this lack of democracy was unpopular with the great majority of football supporters, and with approximately half of the club directors. It was widely expected that the re-establishment of democracy at national, regional and local level would be accompanied by its return to the world of football.²⁴

These expectations have, by now, been completely converted into reality. In 1988, the RFEF and various regional football federations are at least as democratic as their West European counterparts, and in many cases more so. Furthermore, democracy has been restored at the clubs, with the result that every adult member, male and female alike, has the right to vote at least every four years for the club President, a right which is denied to football supporters in practically every other country.

By 1976, the demand for the return of democracy to football was huge and vociferous.²⁵ It has been alleged that, because of the

24. This expectation was best expressed by Agustí Montal, interviewed by Don Balón, No.36, 8 June 1976:

"If the country is experiencing a democratization in various sectors, then it is logical that this should reach football."

25. This campaign was spearheaded by the Barcelona publications Don Balón, Sport, Dicen and the short-lived Barrabás. El Mundo Deportivo, and As, were luke-warm in their attitude towards the return of democracy to football, whilst in the few articles that Marca, dedicated to the subject, for example 15 September 1976, the would-be reformers were myopically accused of "attempting to raise the level of political content in Spanish sport to an intolerable height", a bizarre and ironic accusation given Marca's history, discussed in the Introduction of this thesis.

strength of this campaign in favour of reform, the arrival of "democracy without adjectives" to football was really inevitable.²⁶ Nevertheless, the situation did not begin to change until the well-received appointment of Benito Castejón as Delegado Nacional in September 1976, an appointment that, ironically, was made by the Movimiento in the anti-democratic style that had characterized the whole of the Franco period.

Castejón immediately declared that one of his priorities was the "gradual but complete democratization of Spanish sport".²⁷ The first step that he took down this road, just one month after taking office, was to decree that all of the Presidents of the various sports federations would have to face elections within six months, and thereafter at least every four years. These elections duly took place in the winter and spring of 1977, although in some cases it was alleged that the incumbent President managed to retain power by skilfully arranging the conditions of the election himself.²⁸

Pablo Porta was elected unopposed in December 1976. His victory was a demonstration both of the general esteem in which he was held, unlike the earlier RFEF Presidents, and of the general belief that he

26. This allegation was made to the author, with the use of hindsight, by the following interviewees: Julián García Candau, Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, and Pablo Porta.

27. Quoted in an interview with Don Balón, No. 50, 16 September 1976.

28. It was alleged, for example in Barrabás, No. 223, 6 January 1977, that Miguel García Redondo partially owed his victory in the recent presidential elections at the Spanish handball federation to his limiting the franchise to the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the various clubs, excluding from the election the players and referees.

was genuine about his campaign for democracy in football, Indeed, FC Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad, the three most democratic clubs, as illustrated in detail in Chapter Four, voted for Porta to continue in office.

During 1977, Porta lived up to the image of a convert to democracy. In March of that year, he personally drafted rules for the future election of the RFEF President and of all of the members of the executive committee, with a far more extensive franchise than had existed for the December 1976 elections.²⁹ In addition, he planned new democratic norms to be adopted by the regional federation. These reform proposals of Porta were almost unanimously accepted at the annual RFEF assembly in July 1977.³⁰

The response of Porta to the demand for the return of internal democracy at the football clubs was to establish, in January 1977, a special commission, under the chairmanship of RFEF and Real Madrid Vice-President Gregorio Paunero, to draft proposals for reform. Three months later, this commission recommended a system in which every adult club member of at least three years standing would vote, at least every four years, for the President, who would afterwards choose his own Vice-President and directors. This proposal was criticised by certain

29. According to the archives of the RFEF, Porta created a form of electoral college, in which 50% of the votes were allocated to the professional clubs, 30% to the local amateur clubs, organized into the regional federations, and 15% each to the players and the referees.

30. For details of this assembly, see any of the specialist sports newspapers, 14-16 July 1977.

sections of the sporting Press, who unfavourably compared the proposals with the democratic norms which existed at the football clubs before the Civil War.³¹ Despite these criticisms, the proposals were received very favourably by practically all of the clubs, and were overwhelmingly accepted at the July 1977 RFEF assembly. Thenceforth, democratic presidential elections recommenced at the clubs, and the "organic democracy" system of only approximately 200 members whose names had been drawn out of a hat being able to vote was consigned to history.

1977, therefore, was the important year for the re-establishment of democracy in Spanish football, in the same way as it was the significant year for the re-establishment of democracy at national level. The speed of this democratization of the game was partly the consequence of the fact that neither the leadership of the RFEF nor of the football clubs had much to lose by embracing the powerful campaign for reform. With regard to the fourth aspect of politicization, however, the poor, patronized treatment received by the players during the Franco years, the situation was completely different. Both the clubs and the RFEF obviously had much to lose from an improvement in the working conditions of the footballers. In consequence, they did practically everything in their power to maintain the unequal status quo that had existed for almost forty years.

The obvious way for the footballers of Spain to resolve their seven major grievances, discussed in detail in Chapter Five of this thesis,

31. For details of these criticisms, see Dicen, April 1977, Barrabás, No. 232, 11 April 1977 and Don Balón, No. 79, 11 April 1977.

was to form an independent trade union or association, as the professional players of most other countries had already done.³² The Spanish players had made several attempts toward this goal from 1968 onwards, but on every occasion had come up against the implacable opposition of the clubs and the Francoist sporting authorities. From 1976 onward, however, the desire of the footballers to unite became stronger, partly because of the exciting and challenging political climate. The first tentative step towards the formation of a trade union took place in Madrid in January 1976, when José Angel Iríbar, the organizer of the Athletic de Bilbao black armbands gesture discussed in Chapter Eight, arranged a meeting of the captains of the 54 professional teams.

Despite this promising start, the Association of Spanish Footballers (AFE) did not come into existence until December 1977. This two-year delay had two major causes. Firstly, the clubs and the RFEF put every possible obstacle in the path of the players.³³ Secondly, the players themselves were extremely passive due to having been "conditioned to be docile, unquestioning robots for so many years".³⁴

One of the objectives of the AFE was to demonstrate that

32. The French footballers were the first to form a united and lasting trade union. In 1968 the Dutch players followed suit in 1970, the West Germans in 1971, the British in 1975 and the Portuguese in 1976.

33. For example, many clubs prevented their players from attending, during the period 1976-1977, the meetings that eventually culminated in the formation of the AFE, claiming that they were needed for training even before completely insignificant friendly matches.

34. These are the words of Carles Rexach to the author.

footballers were intelligent professionals, deserving of respect for their opinions and demands. A sign of this new respect for the players achieved by the AFE was the high number of enquiries carried out by the Press into their political views.³⁵

The Spanish footballers quickly discovered, however, that it was far easier to gain respect than a material improvement in their working conditions. The three concrete objectives of the AFE were to obtain affiliation to the social security system, to have the clubs' right of retention when a player's contract had expired abolished, and to compel the clubs to keep ahead with their payments of wages and bonuses. Largely because of the intransigence of the clubs and the RFEF, little progress was made towards the settlement of these three problems in the negotiations of 1977 and 1978. In frustration, the AFE shocked the whole of Spain by resorting to strike action in January 1979.

The French footballers had unsuccessfully been on strike in 1969 and 1971, and there had been several brief players' strikes in South America, the biggest occurring in Argentina in 1971. Apart from these few examples, the action of the Spanish players was unprecedented, and demonstrated how desperate they had become. The sporting authorities, the football clubs and the Press, with several notable exceptions,³⁶

35. See, for example, Dicen, 8 October 1976 and 11 May 1977, or Don Balón, No. 30 27 April, 1976 and No. 86, 30 May 1977.

36. The exception to the rule of hostile reaction to the strike were Don Balón and the centre-left Madrid daily newspapers El País and Diario 16. For concrete examples, see any of these publications from 12 January to 7 February 1979.

reacted with hostility, an attitude which the players had expected.³⁷ They did not expect, however, that the majority of supporters would be just as hostile, and this largely explains why the footballers had to return to work after three weeks on strike with the mere undertaking that their grievances would be examined.³⁸

The intransigence of the clubs and the RFEF remained so rigid that further controversial strikes by the players in September 1981, April 1982 and September 1984 were necessary before any meaningful reforms were conceded to the AFE. From the autumn of 1984 onwards, the Spanish footballers were to enjoy the same rights as their colleagues throughout Western Europe: affiliation to the social security system: freedom of movement after the expiry of their contract; a proper labour contract which recognized them as professional workers, rather than as artists or showmen as during the Franco years.

The problem of the debting clubs, however, has still not been resolved, and consequently there are still several examples each season of unpaid players locking themselves in their dressing room or protesting in some other dramatic way.³⁹ Despite this remaining

37. That the players had expected such a reaction was alleged to the author by Carles Rexach, by the former Athletic de Bilbao players José Angel Iríbar and Javier Clemente, by Luis Aragonés, the former Atletico de Madrid player, and by the former Real Madrid player Manuel Velázquez.

38. Luis Aragonés and Manuel Velázquez recalled to the author their disappointment at the attitudes of the majority of supporters, and added that, had this attitude been favourable, then perhaps the footballers would have received a boost to their morale which would have helped them to prolong the strike.

39. See, for example, As, 8 October 1985, for details of the lock-in dressing-room protest of the disgruntled players of second division club Jerez.

problem, however, the footballers of Spain have managed considerably to improve their working conditions through ten years of hard struggle. A major consequence of these years of struggle is that the social and political consciousness of the players has been raised to an unprecedented level.⁴⁰

The fifth aspect of politicization during the Franco years, the presence in Spain of the East European players and coaches, completely lost any remaining significance during the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Several Yugoslavs entered Spanish football in the late 1970s, but they were certainly not converted into "anti-Communist symbols" like the Hungarians in the 1950s.

In a similar way, little can be said about the fate since 1976 of the sixth aspect of the politicization of football in Francoist Spain. The country is no longer diplomatically ostracized and isolated, but instead, on the contrary, a full member of both the European Economic Community and of the NATO military alliance. In consequence, the Spanish Foreign Ministry now has neither the necessity nor desire to attempt to extract any kind of advantage from the numerous international footballing successes of the Real Madrid club or of the national team.

The regionalist significance of Spanish football, the seventh and final aspect of politicization isolated in this thesis, has undoubtedly been the most important aspect during the transition from dictatorship

40. This allegation has been made in García Candau, *op. cit.* p. 87, and to the author by Carles Rexach, Luis Aragonés and Manuel Velázquez.

to democracy. To the surprise of many who thought that the passing away of Franco would reduce this regionalist tension,⁴¹ the rivalry between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid has assumed even fiercer political proportions than during the Franco years. Relations between the two giant clubs have never been worse than at present.⁴² In addition, further tension in football has been created by the players and supporters of the two major Basque clubs clearly demonstrating their support for the cause of Basque autonomy.

It is possible to claim that it was inevitable that Spanish football during the past eleven years should have served as an important arena for the expression of regionalist sentiment.⁴³ The principle argument to support this claim is that, as illustrated in Chapter Eight, there had been plenty of regionalist incidents and gestures in football even before the death of the dictator. As remarked at the conclusion of Chapter Eight, these incidents and gestures should be seen as a prelude to the events during the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

41. Carles Rexach, Agustí Montal and Nicolau Casaus and most people connected with FC Barcelona expected that this tension would decrease with the death of the dictator. Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Alex J. Botines, the late Dicen journalist, however, claimed that this was an unrealistic expectation, given the stormy history of pre-Civil War Barça-Real Madrid relations and the amount of regionalist antagonism that forty years of centralist dictatorship had stored up.

42. This state of affairs is demonstrated by the fact that, since 1981, the President and directors of both giant clubs have consistently snubbed their counterparts by refusing to attend the match in the opposing stadium, and by refusing to greet each other at the annual RFEF assemblies in July. Further evidence is the unprecedented "transfer war" declared by Barça on Real in February 1979, which still continues at the time of writing.

43. This claim has been made to the author by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Julián García Candau and Alex J. Botines, and in Vicente Marco, Historias del deporte, Madrid, 1981, pp. 203-205.

The second argument to support this claim concerns the veritable explosion of regionalist sentiment that occurred after 1975, principally in the Basque Country and Catalonia, and to a lesser extent in Galicia, Valencia, and Andalucía. This explosion affected all aspects of life in these regions, and it was impossible for football to remain apart from the process. After the long-awaited death of Franco, the regional clubs expected to be finally permitted to come out in the open with their support for the re-establishment of national democracy and regional autonomy. The directors and players of these clubs largely demonstrated their support for these two causes with their gestures and comments, whilst the supporters did so by means of formerly outlawed flags and songs.

It is safe to argue that the involvement in football of the regionalist political forces was just as inevitable as the clubs of the disaffected regions politicizing themselves. During the long years of exile or clandestine existence, the regionalist parties and politicians had gradually come to realize the social and political importance of the major football clubs of their regions. In a Catalan context, the two events that contributed most to these political activists recognizing the political significance of Barça were the June 1970 Guruceta scandal and the February 1975 controversial expulsion of Johann Cruyff.⁴⁴ With

44. This is evidenced by Josep Tarradellas, in a brief interview with El Mundo Deportivo, 9 February 1979, declaring that:

"I have always been a Barça supporter, even though I know next to nothing about football. I think that I have always, deep down, been aware of the social and political significance of Barça, of it being, as they say, more than just a club. But I remember being reminded of this significance when reading, in exile in Saint Martin le Beau, about the popular reaction to the Guruceta and Cruyff scandals."

regard to the Basque situation, the significant occurrence was the black armbands protest of September 1975.

With these recent events still fresh in their memory, it was only to be expected that one of the first publicized visits made by these politicians, upon returning from exile or emerging from clandestinity, would be to the football stadium. Both Josep Terradellas and Jordi Pujol were often to be found receiving a warm welcome at Barça's Camp Nou in the immediate post-Franco years, whilst Carlos Garaicoechea, Javier Arzallus and Inaki Esnaola have frequently enjoyed the ambience of either Athletic de Bilbao or Real Sociedad home match.⁴⁵

It should not be assumed from the above, however, that only these three clubs have served as a focus for Catalan or Basque sentiment. With reference to the Catalan situation, the home matches of both the Sabadell and Sant Andreu clubs continued to serve as collective expressions of regionalist sentiment, as they had begun to do in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁴⁶ In the Basque context, mention should

45. For a complete report on the presence of these political personalities at the football stadia of Spain, see Don Balón, No. 284, 4 March 1981. For specific details of Josep Tarradella's dramatic appearance at the Barça-Real Madrid game of January 1980, see El Mundo Deportivo and Dicen, 24 January 1980, and World Soccer, March 1980.

46. As testified to the author by Jordi Golobart, the President of the Sant Andreu club since 1975, the return to the previously forbidden senyera red and yellow team uniform in the summer of 1976 was extremely popular with the supporters. In the words of Golobart, "during the transition years, our home games were a festival of red and yellow stripes, both on the field and on the terraces". For the political significance of the post-Franco situation at the Sabadell club, see the book La historia del Centre d' Esports Sabadell, Barcelona, 1984 and El Mundo Deportivo, 7 August 1977, or Sport 29 February 1980.

again be made of the fact that Osasuna has, since 1975, played a significant role in the debate over whether the region of Navarre, of which Pamplona is the capital, should be part of the Basque autonomous region or not.⁴⁷ The club directors, for their part, have refused to return to the all-Basque player policy that Osasuna maintained before the Civil War, and the team has, in consequence, continued to be a mixture of local Navarrese players and imports from other Spanish regions, with practically no players from the other Basque provinces of Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya and Alava.⁴⁸ A large section of the Osasuna supporters, however, have demonstrated their political sympathies by waving the Basque flag that ikurriña, and, less unequivocally, by causing violent incidents during the visits of Real Madrid.⁴⁹ The smaller Basque clubs, Sestao and Alavés of Vitoria, for example, have also acted as arenas for the expression of Basque sentiment to a lesser extent in proportion to their reduced number of supporters.

In the same way as it should not be assumed that only FC Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad have served as a focus for Catalan

47. This was alleged in As, 26 April 1983 and in Don Balón, No. 431, 12 January 1984.

48. At the time of writing, for example, in season 1987/88, the Osasuna first team squad of 23 players, 15 were from Navarre province, five from Madrid, one from Cádiz, two from England, and none from the other Basque provinces.

49. During the visit of Real Madrid to Pamplona in October 1986, their team coach was stoned before the game, and later their Spanish international Ricardo Gallego was hospitalized by a missile from the crowd. When Real next visited, for a cup match in February 1987, the referee came close to abandoning the match because of the unprecedented number of missiles. For further details, see Marca and As, of 6 October 1986 and 26 February 1987.

and Basque nationalist sentiment, neither should it be supposed that the connection between football and regionalism since 1975 has been confined to these two regions.

During the transition from dictatorship to democracy, the Valencia club gradually moved towards adopting a regionalist image, after having been traditionally regarded as the non-valencianista club of the region, in contrast to local rivals Levante.⁵⁰ This change of posture was largely due to the ascendancy to club President, in October 1975, of Antoni Ramos Costa, successful businessman and supporter of the Partit Socialista de Valencia. Immediately upon assuming office, Ramos Costa carried out one of his election promises and ordered the monthly club magazine Mestalla to be written in both Castilian and the Valencian dialect of Catalan.⁵¹ In August 1977, he introduced a shirt that was an exact copy of the Valencia regional flag, red, and yellow stripes with a blue edge, for use in matches when the team had to change out of its traditional all-white stripe. This new shirt received a hostile reception because of its political significance when it was worn for the first time in a league match against Real Madrid in the Estadio Bernabeu.⁵²

Three other clubs had a regionalist significance during the transition from dictatorship to democracy, a significance that was

50. For further details, see a special report in Don Balón, No. 230 17 February 1980.

51. See Mestalla, from No. 164, December 1975 onwards.

52. For further details of this hostile reception, see Marca and As, 23 October 1977. The political significance of this reception was also discussed in García Candau, op. cit., pp. 25/26.

reflected, in the same way as that of the Valencia club, by the wearing of a team uniform of the same colours and design of the flag of that particular region: Celta de Vigo;⁵³ Real Betis of Seville;⁵⁴ Las Palmas.⁵⁵

It is appropriate at this stage, however, to examine in detail the political significance from 1975 onwards of FC Barcelona, the club with the sharpest regionalist projection during the Franco period. The death of the dictator provoked a veritable avalanche of articles by the club's gauche divine intellectual supporters about what the role of Barça should be in the transition from dictatorship to democracy that was expected to follow.⁵⁶

The Catalan club President Agustí Montal demonstrated, in the course of 1976 and 1977, that he largely accepted the role for the club desired by these intellectuals. He was eager to see FC Barcelona fully developed into, in his own words, "more than a club" by playing a positive and influential role in political events. Montal, himself a

53. For further details, see Don Balón, No. 232, 23 December 1979.

54. For details of the regionalist significance of Real Betis, see Don Balón, No. 230, 17 February 1980 and As, 10 November 1980.

55. See García Candau, op. cit., p. 26 for further details about the regionalist significance of the Las Palmas club.

56. Three of the most significant of these articles appeared in the Christmas special edition of Barça, No. 1049, 23 December 1975: "El Barça, bandera democrática de Catalunya" by Joan Antoni González Casanovas; "El Barça y el futuro democrático" by Josep Ramoneda; Armand Caraben's article in Catalan "Fútbol i política". The following week's edition of Barça, No. 1050, 30 December 1975, contained the article "Política y fútbol" by Manuel Vázquez Montalban, the undisputed leader of the gauche divine group, and three weeks later there commenced a three-part series of articles, beginning in Barça, No. 1053 20 January 1976, by Joan Josep Artells entitled "Fútbol Club Barcelona: Democracia y deporte".

founder member of Pujol's Convergència i Unió party, allowed newly-formed or reconstituted Catalan parties of all political tendencies to stage rallies in the club's immense Palau Blaugrana completely free of charge.⁵⁷ He also continued the policy of his predecessors in further increasing the use of the Catalan language in the club magazine Barça, and, in December 1976, installed a wholly Catalan electronic scoreboard. This scoreboard complemented the increasing number of senyeras, the Catalan national flag, which appeared in the Camp Nou.

In February 1977, a controversy occurred which raised the political consciousness of the Barça supporters to new heights. Dutch star Johann Cruyff was expelled for dubious reasons for a second time in a match against Málaga, on this occasion in the Camp Nou. The sending-off produced a pitch invasion similar to the one during the Guruceta affair of June 1970, in which Castilian referee Antonio Melero was violently attacked. Cruyff received a harsh three-match suspension from the RFEF, a verdict which provoked an outraged response from the whole Catalan media.⁵⁸ Montal launched a bitter attack on the "dictatorial

57. In June 1976, for example, the Palau Blaugrana was used for the inaugural assembly of the Partit Socialista de Catalunya, at which the Barça players Carles Rexach and Antoni Torres were present, and two months later by the broad-based L'Assemblea de Catalunya to launch its campaign Per L'Amnistia i la Libertat, a meeting which featured speeches from both the then Barça President Agustí Montal and the future Vice-President Nicolau Casaus. For further details of these events, see Don Balón, No. 39, June 1976, and No. 45, 10 August 1976.

58. For further details of the Cruyff expulsion and the reaction of the Catalan media, see El Mundo Deportivo and Sport, from 7 to 18 February 1977.

methods" of the RFEF, and called for the resignation of the RFEF President Pablo Porta.⁵⁹

It was cynically suggested at the time that the real objective of Montal's attack on the RFEF was to distract Catalan attention away from the failures of Barça on the field.⁶⁰ This allegation was made even more strongly when, in July 1977, Montal delighted the annual club assembly by demanding the restoration of Catalonia's Autonomy Statute and the subsequent re-establishment of the Generalitat, the traditional Catalan autonomous governing body.⁶¹

Because of this lack of success on the field, Montal declined to present himself for re-election in January 1978. There were two presidential candidates with a clear political significance: Nicolau Casaus, the former Catalanist Esquerra Republicana militant who, as seen in Chapters Three and Eight, was prevented from holding any sporting office during the Franco years: Antoni Ferrán Ariño, a member of the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya, whose candidature was supported

59. Agustí Montal was quoted in Don Balón, No. 72, 21 February 1977, as saying the following about the RFEF, in the light of the suspension of Cruyff:

"The principal persons responsible for what has happened, what is happening and what can happen are the leaders of the RFEF. The structure of Spanish football have to be radically changed and brought up to date with the growing democratization of the country."

60. This allegation was made by José María Lorente in Marca, 11 February 1977, and by his colleague Antonio Valencia in the same newspaper ten days later.

61. This allegation was affirmed in Marca 27 July 1977 by José María Lorente, who spoke of "an increasingly unpopular President who is resorting to political stunts in order to cover up for the lack of trophies for the past three years".

by the majority of the gauche divine intellectuals, and who proposed to adopt an all-Catalan player policy similar to that of the Basque clubs.⁶² Neither of these two, however, was elected. The winner was Josep Lluís Núñez, a self-made construction millionaire actually born in Vizcaya province, who aggressively promised to put Real Madrid in the shade both on the field and in the sporting corridors of power.⁶³ This result, and Núñez's subsequent re-election in December 1981 and May 1985, has caused many, including both Montal and Casaus, to claim that practical sporting factors outweigh political considerations with the FC Barcelona members.⁶⁴

In spite of his low political profile, however, Núñez proved to be a far more controversial Barça President than Montal. Núñez immediately began his reign by accusing Real Madrid of having been "Franco's team" and of having consistently benefited due to dominating the RFEF, although without offering any concrete evidence to support these allegations.⁶⁵ He then proceeded to declare, in February 1979: a "transfer war" on Real, which, from May 1980 onwards, reached the bizarre situation of Barça agreeing automatically to raise by 20%

62. For further details of this presidential election campaign and the proposals of each candidate, see either El Mundo Deportivo, Dicen or Sport from 16 December 1977 to 10 January 1978.

63. See interviews with Núñez in Dicen, 17 December 1977 and 4 January 1978, in El Mundo Deportivo, 23 December 1977, and 7 January 1978, and in Sport 2 January 1978.

64. This allegation has been made to the author by Agustí Montal, Nicolau Casaus, Carles Rexach and Juan José Castillo, and in the Barcelona sport newspapers after the presidential elections, i.e. 8-10 January 1977, 5-8 December 1981 and 27-30 May 1985.

65. See interview with Núñez in Dicen, 29 January 1978.

any offer made to any club about any player by Real.⁶⁶ Largely because of the aggressive and provocative Núñez, relations between the two giant clubs of Spain reached an unprecedented low in the early 1980s and since then have failed substantially to improve.

Throughout the Franco period, as seen in detail in Chapter Eight, there was a huge contrast between the style of FC Barcelona and that of the two major Basque clubs. This contrast remained just as clear during the transition from dictatorship to democracy. There continued to be very few native Catalans in the Barça team, and this meant that the players possibly did not share the political aspirations of the club's supporters. The Basque players, in contrast, were completely in touch with their supporters and the Basque community as a whole. Practically all of them learnt the difficult Basque language to one level or other, and they were all willing, as shall shortly be seen, to use their high profile and popularity to further the cause of Basque autonomy.

This willingness was clearly demonstrated in December 1976, when the Basque players made a political gesture that produced even more controversy than the black armbands gesture of September 1975. Before the local derby match in San Sebastián, transmitted to the whole of Spain by RTVE, the Real Sociedad and Athletic de Bilbao players ran out

66. This 20% extra promise by Núñez caused Barça to sign up many overpriced players who were not required in the first team by the coach, and so spent several seasons playing only a handful of competitive matches, the clearest examples being Jesús Landáburu, Marcos Alonso, Urbano Ortega and Raúl Amarilla.

together holding the still-outlawed ikurriña flag, to the delight of the capacity crowd. The armed police present actually attempted to impound the flag, in the same way as they were doing at exactly the same time on the stadium terraces, but officials of Real Sociedad physically prevented them from doing so. During the same match, the television microphones had to be turned down, in order to prevent the crowd's chants in favour of an amnesty for Basque political prisoners from being heard in homes and bars across Spain.⁶⁷

The ikurriña gesture, like the earlier armbands gesture, was the idea of the Athletic de Bilbao goalkeeper José Angel Iríbar.⁶⁸ The most significant and controversial gesture of Iríbar, however, was a completely personal one. By June 1975, Iríbar had played a record 49 international matches for the national team, but mysteriously never made his fiftieth appearance. It was alleged at the time either that Iríbar had been requested by the abertzale (radical Basque nationalist) party HASI, which later became the largest component in the Herri Batasuna coalition, of which he was a prominent member, to refuse to continue in the national team in order to draw maximum attention to the Bilbao goalkeeper's political views,⁶⁹ or that the RFEF had requested the national manager Ladislav Kubala to overlook Iríbar because of his political stance.⁷⁰ According to Iríbar, himself, neither of these

67. For a full account of the event, see García Candau, op. cit., pp. 30-32.

68. Information revealed during author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

69. This was alleged in As, 19 September 1976, and in Don Balón, No.54 13 October 1976.

70. This allegation was made in Dicen, 20 October 1976.

allegations is correct:

"I failed to play for the national for the fiftieth time in in the latter part of 1975 because I was injured. By 1976, it had occurred to me that it would be a highly effective gesture against the Spanish State to turn down all of Kubala's invitations to make a fiftieth and farewell appearance. I believe that the gesture was a success, because nationwide attention was drawn to the cause of Basque autonomy and an amnesty for political prisoners. But to suggest that this was requested of me by HASI is completely wrong, just as it is wrong to allege that the RFEF expelled me from the national team. It was completely my own decision, and one that I by no means regret".⁷¹

The impact of Iríbar's boycott was enormous. The applause and cheers that he used to receive throughout Spain gradually turned to jeers and, in Madrid and Seville, for example, abuse and even missile-throwing.⁷² A degree of hostility is still directed at Iríbar today, when he travels outside the Basque Country with the Athletic de Bilbao reserve team of which he is now coach.⁷³

It is not only Iríbar, however, who has received politically motivated abuse in the Spanish stadia during the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Chants of "Viva España!" and "Etarras!" (crudely connecting the Basque clubs with ETA terrorism) have frequently greeted the appearance of the Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad teams, accompanied by the waving of hundreds of Spanish flags and even,

71. Author's interview with José Angel Iríbar.

72. Iríbar recalled to the author that he has been struck by missiles thrown from the crowd on four occasions, in Madrid, Sevilla, Burgos and Santander.

73. Author's interview with Iríbar.

on occasions, the burning of the ikurriña.⁷⁴ Furthermore, as already stated in this Epilogue, there have also been violent attacks by groups of young hooligans, especially the Ultra Sur of Real Madrid, on travelling Basque supporters.

This politically significant tension surrounding the Basque clubs was fuelled by the controversial declarations of Javier Clemente, the highly successful Athletic de Bilbao coach from 1981 to 1986. Unlike Iríbar, Clemente is a supporter of the Basque Nationalist Party, but his political profile has nevertheless remained higher than that of the ex-national team goalkeeper. Clemente has boldly declared that "we Basques have not yet gained our freedom from the Spanish State", that "the mother of violence is injustice", and that "Navarre is an integral part of Euzkadi".⁷⁵ In addition, he has frequently used racial explanations to account for Athletic's hard-fought victories.⁷⁶

74. As revealed to the author by Javier Clemente, whilst he was the Athletic de Bilbao coach, he noticed, before an October 1982 game away to Racing de Santander, that an ikurriña was being symbolically burned on the terraces. He attempted to intervene, along with several of his players, but the national police refused to allow him to enter onto the terraces.

75. Those quotations are taken from an interview with Clemente in Cambio 16 No. 731, 2 December 1985.

76. After the decisive victory away to Valencia in April 1984, which meant that Athletic would retain their Spanish championship crown, Clemente was quoted as saying that:

"We won because we are Basques, a special people".

The following month, after Athletic had beaten FC Barcelona in a violent cup final, meaning that the Bilbao team had achieved the prestigious league and cup "double", he declared to the Press that:

"We Basques are a tough people. We know how to struggle against opponents with superior resources, and eventually triumph."

For details of Clemente's declarations, and the reaction to them, see As, 23 April and 5-6 May 1984.

The politically-motivated hostility towards the Basque teams, Iríbar and Clemente, was partly offset by a general respect for Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad's complete domination of the Spanish league championship in the early 1980s, despite a certain lack of appreciation of their defensive and occasionally over-physical tactics. The majority of this respect, however, was lost when the Basque dominated Spanish national team unexpectedly failed to make any impact as the host team at the 1982 World Cup finals tournament.

It is necessary at this stage to arrive at a conclusion about the politicization of Spanish football during the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

The radical changes that have transformed Spanish football since 1975 reflect the radical changes to the whole of Spanish society and the Spanish political system. Football is no longer systematically manipulated as a political soporific for the Spanish working classes, and Fascist influence in the game, except for the connection between hooliganism and ultra-Right groups, has disappeared. Spanish football has been completely democratized since the death of Franco, both at institutional and club level, whilst after eight years of struggle and four strikes, the players have gained the fundamental rights and respect previously denied to them. East Europe players and coaches in Spain are no longer converted into "anti-Communist symbols", and the international victories of the Spanish teams are not now used in an attempt to improve the poor overseas image and diplomatic position of the country. The regional aspect of the politicization was clearly the most important one during the transition, responsible for capturing the newspaper headlines

and contributing to keeping the stadia filled with impassioned spectators. Football continues to serve as an important arena for the expression of regionalist sentiment, and indeed the political significance of Spanish football appears likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future mainly with regard to this particular aspect of politicization.

APPENDIX OF AUTHOR'S INTERVIEWS: 1

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
Luis Aragonés	Madrid	22 November 1986
Joan Josep Artells	Barcelona	23 May 1986
Antonio Baró	Barcelona	10 May 1986
Rodolfo Belarmo	Madrid	3 May 1986
Alex J. Botines	Barcelona	10 October 1984
Paul Breitner	Paris	19 June 1984
Nicolau Casaus	Barcelona	21 May 1986
Javier Castedo	Madrid	21 November 1986
Benito Castejón	Madrid	7 January 1986
Juan José Castillo	Barcelona	3 September 1984
Javier Clemente	Bilbao	2 June 1986
Enrique Collar	Madrid	22 November 1986
Juan Crespo	Bilbao	30 June 1986
Ferdinand Daucik	Barcelona	14 April 1985
Julio De Miguel	Valencia	28 September 1985
Sheelagh Ellwood	Madrid	23 April 1985
Jacques Ferrán	Saint Etienne	8 June 1984
Juan Pablo Fusi	Madrid	22 October 1984
José María García	Madrid	9 February 1986
Julián García Candau	Madrid	22 July 1986
Enrique Gil de la Vega	Madrid	28 November 1985
Jordi Golobart	Barcelona	27 May 1987
Brian Glanville	London	12 August 1984
Antonio Hernáez	Barcelona	10 October 1984
José Angel Iríbar	Bilbao	1 July 1986
Sandor Kocsis	Barcelona	12 April 1985
Ladislao Kubala	Barcelona	14 April 1985
David Lacey	Paris	27 June 1984
Julio Lamana	Bilbao	1 July 1986
José María Lorente	Madrid	3 May 1986
José Luis Marín	Madrid	11 December 1986
David Miller	London	22 August 1984
Luis Molowny	Madrid	20 January 1986

APPENDIX OF AUTHOR'S INTERVIEWS: 2

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
Agustí Montal	Barcelona	30 April 1986
Robin Mortensen	Barcelona	24 May 1987
Manuel Orantes	Madrid	4 November 1986
José Luis Orbegozo	San Sebastián	28 June 1986
Jesús Pereda	Barcelona	26 May 1987
José Luis Pérez Payá	Madrid	17 February 1987
Pablo Porta	Barcelona	4 May 1986
Matías Prats	Madrid	10 November 1986
Keir Radnedge	London	26 January 1984
Carles Rexach	Barcelona	3 May 1986
Joaquín Rife	Barcelona	25 May 1987
Sir Stanley Rous	London	29 June 1985
Iñaki Sáez	Bilbao	29 June 1986
Raimundo Saporta	Madrid	23 October 1986
Juan José Totono	Madrid	13 December 1986
Manuel Vázquez Montalbán	Barcelona	21 May 1986
Manuel Velázquez	Madrid	17 February 1986
Miguel Vidal	Madrid	27 October 1984
Sir Kenneth Wolstenholme	London	11 August 1987

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For complete list of people interviewed, see Appendix.

2. Unpublished documents

2.1 Archives of the Delegación Nacional de Deportes (DND): mainly consisting of an uncatalogued collection of correspondences between the various Delegados Nacionales, and the Presidents of the Real Federación Española de Fútbol, of the Federaciones Regionales and of the football clubs.

2.2 Archives of the Comité Olímpico Español: uncatalogued documents concerning the preparations for and the results obtained by Spanish participation in the various Olympic Games tournaments.

2.3 Archives of the Real Federación Española de Fútbol (RFEF): in particular the uncatalogued collections of correspondence of the various RFEF Presidents with the DND, the Federaciones Regionales and the football clubs, in addition to the monthly Circulares issued by the RFEF.

2.4 Archives of the football clubs Real Madrid, Atlético de Madrid, FC Barcelona, Español de Barcelona, Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián: correspondence between the club Presidents and the DND and RFEF; detailed unpublished documents regarding club membership and financing.

2.5 Archives of the specialist sports newspapers As, Marca and El Mundo Deportivo: unpublished details about the poor public sporting infrastructure and the low levels of public participation in sports, especially in Castile and Catalonia.

3. Official publications

Boletín Oficial del Comité Olímpico Español, Madrid

Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Españolas, Madrid

Boletín Oficial de la Delegación Nacional de Deportes, Madrid

4. Sports publications

4.1 Daily sports newspapers:

As, Madrid
Dicen, Barcelona
L'Equipe, Paris
Marca, Madrid
El Mundo Deportivo, Barcelona
Sport, Barcelona

4.2 Weekly or monthly sports journals:

Barrabás, Barcelona
Deportes, Bilbao
Domingo Deportivo, Mexico City
Don Balón, Barcelona
France Football, Paris
Futbolín, Madrid
Goal, London
Jornada, Bilbao
Murcia Deportiva, Murcia
World Soccer, London

4.3 Weekly or monthly official club journals:

Aupa Atletico!, Madrid
Barça, Barcelona
Boletín del Real Madrid CF, Madrid
Los Leones, Bilbao
Mestalla, Valencia

5. General publications

5.1 Daily newspapers

ABC, Madrid
El Alcázar, Madrid
Arriba, Madrid
Diario 16, Madrid
El Diario de Barcelona, Barcelona
La Gaceta del Norte, Bilbao
The Guardian, London
El Heraldo de Aragón, Zaragoza
Informaciones, Madrid
El Mercurio, Santiago de Chile
La Nación, Buenos Aires
El País, Madrid
Pueblo, Madrid
Tele-Exprés, Barcelona
The Times, London
La Vanguardia Española, Barcelona

5.2 Weekly or monthly journals:

Cambio 16, Madrid
Cuadernos para el diálogo, Madrid
Hola!, Madrid
Interviú, Barcelona
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3. General studies of Francoist Spain

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known, had a far more Catalan image than its local rival. The gulf between the supporters of the two clubs was huge.⁶ The great majority of the Barça followers were Catalan speakers who favoured regional autonomy, whilst the Español supporters were mostly middle-class immigrants to Catalonia from other regions, professional men, state officials, and even a good number of policemen and military personnel.⁷ Practically none of the Español club members could speak Catalan, and it was widely thought that the very club name had been chosen as both a slight and a provocation to the native Catalans.⁸

In this way, the political context of the FC Barcelona-Español rivalry was important from the very beginning of the century, and considerably contributed towards the many violent local derby matches. In April 1912, a pitched battle between the players and supporters of the two rival clubs led to the local authorities suspending these derby matches for two years. Similarly violent clashes occurred in October 1921, March 1923, October 1927, May 1924 and March 1935.

The hostility of the Barça supporters, however, was directed with more ferocity towards actual manifestations of Castilian centralism than towards Español. In June 1925 during the centralist dictatorship of General Miguel Primo de Rivera, the military governor of Barcelona closed Barça's Les Corts stadium for six months because the crowd had

6. This gulf has been best illustrated by Artells, op. cit., p. 25-28.

7. See Artells, op. cit. p. 27.

8. This view has been expressed by Artells, op. cit., and in an interview with the author. This view has also been expressed to the author in many other interviews, for example with Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Alex J. Botines.