

MEMORANDUM

September 18, 1995

To: Jeremy Gunn

From: Joe Freeman

Subject: Spain

My search for relevant material at the Library of Congress was largely in vain, and I was reduced in the end to general readings on modern Spanish political history. While this may not be what you were looking for, this broad (of necessity) overview yielded some general potential sensibilities of which we should be cognizant. If you are generally familiar with post-1935 Spanish history, you may wish to skip the first section.

Franco's Legacy and the New Spain

Assisted by the fascist governments of Italy and Germany (especially the Luftwaffe), Generalissimo Francisco Franco came to power in April of 1939 after a three-year civil war marked by the winning side's indiscriminate terror against its own civilian population. Hundreds of thousands were killed, and the ravages of war were followed by a sequel of repression and hunger (as late as 1941 there were still 140,000 political prisoners being held in Franco's prisons). Franco's Civil Guard and Ministry of the Interior imposed a tight lid on Spanish politics and society for the next three-and-a-half decades. His staunchly anti-communist regime -- initially a pariah in post-war Europe -- adroitly manipulated Cold War fears in a successful campaign to worm its way back into the community of nations. The U.S. was a significant, if often quiet, ally in this effort. In the immediate post-war period (1945-52), the State Department and U.S. military establishment were advocates of closer relations with Spain, although President Truman's personal antipathy for the Franco regime slowed quick progress along these lines. But the advent of the Eisenhower administration facilitated the wrapping up of what became the Pact of Madrid (1953) -- an agreement between the U.S. and Spain permitting the U.S. to construct and use various military installations in Spain in return for U.S. economic and military aid (these base arrangements were subsequently renegotiated and extended in 1963, 1970, 1976 and 1983). In 1955, Spain was admitted to the U.N. as part of a deal cut between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. In 1959 Eisenhower visited Spain briefly in a gesture interpreted as a further imprimatur of the regime. The last decade of Franco's reign saw

Memo to Jeremy Gunn
September 18, 1995
Page 2

some liberalization in the domestic regime. His death in November of 1975 generated both hope for a post-Franco future and anxiety over whether Spain was ready to resist the centrifugal tendencies of a full-

fledged democracy. The successful transition to democracy was overseen by the steady hand of King Juan Carlos (designated by Franco as a constitutional successor/future head of state in 1969) and survived a military coup attempt in 1981. In 1977 Spain applied for membership in the EEC. In 1978 it approved a new constitution. In 1982 it joined NATO and power peaceably changed hands when the moderate Socialist Party (PSOE, under 40-year old Felipe Gonzalez) triumphed at the polls.

In 1986 Spanish voters ratified the country's NATO membership in a referendum, and on January 1, 1986, Spain was admitted to the EEC.

Spain is justly proud of its post-Franco development into a full-fledged democracy and partner in Europe. At the same time, there have been no easy answers to difficult problems like Basque separatism (and concomitant terrorism, like the 1973 assassination of President Luis Carrero Blanco) and an often-stagnant economy. Democracy, while a magnificent achievement, has been no panacea.

Potentially Sensitive Issues

Military bases - While Franco was anxious to enhance his regime's legitimacy by securing base agreements with the U.S., the bases have nonetheless been a sensitive issue over the years. Subsequent renewals of the 1953 Madrid Pact tended to: 1) extract more from the U.S. in terms of economic and military aid and, 2) increasingly assert ultimate Spanish sovereignty by placing more restrictions on the American military's flexibility in utilizing the bases. Despite these precautions, incidents took place: in 1966 an American jet based in Spain and carrying nuclear bombs crashed in the Mediterranean Sea just off the Spanish mainland. One bomb apparently ended up on land, while another one was subsequently fished out of the water. After 1979, the U.S. agreed to forgo having any nuclear weapons on Spanish territory. These kinds of issues have become less important since Spain joined NATO, in part because the U.S.-Spanish military relationship is no longer a strictly bilateral one. But any documents that reveal realities inconsistent with publicly-enunciated restrictions and policies -- now or in the past -- would be a potential embarrassment to both sides.

Basque terrorism - In very recent years, enhanced security cooperation between Spain and France, coupled with political concessions, has taken the political and military wind out of the sails of the ETA (Basque separatist terrorists). I found nothing relative to U.S. intelligence community cooperation with the Spanish government in the long-time battle against Basque separatism, but it

Memo to Jeremy Gunn
September 18, 1995
Page 3

goes without saying that any document referencing such cooperation could be potentially sensitive.

Gibraltar - At various points, the status of Gibraltar has been a hot button in Spanish-British relations. As an ally of both nations, the U.S. has tried to stay out of this dispute. Periodic flare-ups inevitably put us in a difficult position. Any documents that reference this issue and, more importantly, express a point of view on it, would be potentially sensitive.

U.S. - Spanish domestic security cooperation - Franco's regime was a repressive one, especially in its early years. Hopefully, we will not come across a document suggesting, say, that an American intelligence agency conducted training sessions in torture techniques for Franco's Civil Guard. If we did -- and I don't imagine we will -- it would obviously be a matter of great sensitivity.

In general, U.S.-Spanish relations don't seem to have been particularly problematic during the Kennedy administration (not that sensitive documents can't date from either before or after this period). The basic parameters of the bilateral relationship were worked out under Eisenhower, and the delicate issues surrounding how to deal with the regime in its last years -- and the post-Franco transition to democracy -- came later. As an example, the indexes in Sorenson's *Kennedy* and Schlesinger's *A Thousand Days* list one entry each under "Spain" (and neither reference is important).

This is in marked contrast to France or the United Kingdom, Harold MacMillan or Charles De Gaulle.

Freeman e:\wp-docs\091895
File 8.8 Foreign Liaisons