THE BASQUES (AND CATALANS)

by Dr. Kenneth Medhurst.

Introduction

In December 1970 the world's press briefly focussed its attention upon a military court room in the Spanish town of Burgos.[1] Sixteen Basque nationalists were being tried for a variety of offences, including an alleged assassination. Two of the accused were priests. Six of them were sentenced to death and their sentences were only commuted after the exertion of great international pressure upon Spain's government and following a heated political debate within the country itself.

The trial had been engineered by aggressively authoritarian elements within Franco's regime - particularly within the Spanish army. It was intended to deal a mortal blow to the militant Basque nationalist organisation E.T.A. (Freedom for the Basques) and to teach Basque nationalists of all types a salutory lesson.* In reality, however, the trial proved to be a serious embarrassment to Spain's government. The defendants, and their lawyers, exposed the essentially political nature of the proceedings and skilfully exploited an unprecedented opportunity for publicizing their cause. Likewise, the trial demonstrated to the world the way in which the Spanish government deals with its political opponents and highlighted some of the more unsavoury or arbitrary aspects of the Spanish State's behaviour.

The problem of ~~ethnic~~ national minorities within the Spanish State, which the Burgos trial illuminated, is not a new one. Since the end of the nineteenth century Catalan nationalism has been a major political force.[2] Later, partly following the Catalan example, a Basque nationalist movement gathered momentum.[3] The demands of those involved varied from greater administrative autonomy for their respective regions to complete separation from Spain. But all were at one in reacting against the highly centralized state structure that eighteenth and early nineteenth century Spanish rulers had created.

* E.T.A.'s full Basque title is 'Euzkadi ta Akatasuna'

[numbered bibliographical footnotes not yet included]

Catalans wished to re-assert the special identity of the region in which they lived instead of being administered through four centrally created provinces whose chief links were with Madrid rather than with each other.* Similarly, Basques articulated demands on behalf of the area populated predominantly by people of Basque stock and in which the ancient Basque language retained a foothold.** Catalan aspirations were largely satisfied in 1921 when the newly born Spanish Republic recognized the existence of a special autonomous region of Catalonia.[4] The recognition by Catalan nationalists that their fate was bound up with that of the Republic helps to explain why, in the Civil War of 1936-39, most Catalans rallied to the republican cause. Basque demands were not met until October 1936. The Spanish republican government then belatedly recognized an autonomous Basque Republic in return for local support for the former's military effort.[5]

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* These provinces are Barcelona, Gerona, Lerida and Tarragona. In each case the provincial capital bears the same name.

** The Spanish Provinces which nationalists regard as falling within "Euzkadi" - or the Basque 'national homeland' are Guipuzcoa (capital - San Sebastian). Vizcaya (capital Bilbao); Navarra (capital - Pamplona); and Alava (capital Vitoria). In practice the modern histories of Navarra and Alava have been very different from those of their neighbours. Alava, in particular, has a more ethnically mixed population containing many non Basques - the impact of Basque nationalism has therefore been limited in that area. Navarra (and to a lesser extent Alava) has been a stronghold of Carlism rather than Basque nationalism. Carlism was a nineteenth century arch-conservative dynastic movement which was regionally based but which became interested in the religious regeneration of Spain as a whole rather than in special regional demands. As will be seen there are also three French provinces, which are regarded as part of "Euzkadi". It should be made clear that Euzkadi has never, in fact, existed as a political entity.

Military victory for the insurgent forces of General Franco meant the destruction of special local political arrangements. The 'New Spain' was authoritarian and rigidly centralized in nature. Local nationalist parties, in common with all other opposition groups, were outlawed and the resulting political vacuum was filled by the one officially supported Falangist Party - or 'Movement' as it was later known. The Catalan and Basque regional governments were scrapped and their leaders executed , imprisoned or exiled. A Basque government continued to operate in exile but it became increasinly irrelevant to the internal Spanish political situation. In the case of those Basque Provinces (namely Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya) which had recognized the Basque Republic's authority there was even a loss of the small administrative privileges, the survival of which earlier Spanish governments had been prepared to allow.* On top of this there were determined efforts to stamp out the Catalan and Basque cultures and to eliminate those agencies which helped to give these regions their distinctive identities.

Present problems have to be seen against this background. The Civil War, and its aftermath, gave a new dimension to the distrust and bitterness which has characterized relations between Basques and Catalans, on the one hand, and Spanish

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* These surviving privileges were remnants of the local 'fueros' or special charters that had earlier been conceded by Spanish monarchs. The 'fueros' were withdrawn following local defeats in nineteenth century civil wars during which Basques had, to a large extent, been identified with the Carlist cause. The restoration of the 'fueros' was later one of the original and most potent motive forces behind Basque nationalism. It should be noted that Navarra and Alava, in return for supporting Franco's forces, have been allowed to retain some administrative privileges. They are minor in character but are without equal in Spain. Thus there is greater municipal autonomy in these provinces than elsewhere in the country and the two provincial councils have greater financial independence than their counterparts in the other forty eight provinces of metropolitan Spain.

governments based in Madrid, on the other.

The long standing feeling common amongst Catalans and Basques, that they constituted oppressed national minorities, received confirmation. Opposition to the re-created unitary state was driven underground but in some cases, at least, became all the more bitter for its failure to find adequate means of expression. In the rest of this discussion there will be a look at those factors which have fostered local nationalist movements and those factors which may explain the harsh responses that local nationalist demands have provoked within Spain. In particular there will be a discussion of the Basque problem and the form that it is currently taking. This is partly because of the interest aroused by the Burgos trial but also because of the peculiar intractability of the problem at this particular time.

The Root Causes of Local Nationalist Movements

Basque and Catalan nationalism must not be regarded as identical phenomena. These movements grew out of societies with different social structures and they took different forms. Whilst Catalan nationalism tended to be the forward looking nationalism of a modern minded community, Basque nationalism, at the outset, had a more romantic backward looking air about it. Moreover, the Catalan movement found expression through a variety of political parties, all tending to divide along class lines, but Basque nationalists, with few exceptions, supported the one Basque Nationalist Party (founded in 1894). The hard core of its mass support came from the region's socially conservative and intensely Catholic peasantry. Its leaders were drawn from the Basque lower middle and middle classes. Basque workers, by contrast, were principally organized under the umbrella of the Spanish

Socialist Party, which had little sympathy with regional movements. Similarly, 'upper class' Basque industrialists and financiers, with commercial interests all over Spain, had little to gain from the growth of a local nationalism.

Despite all this it is possible to make some generalizations about the genesis of the two movements. There are certain factors more or less common to both cases. The first of these is the relatively early growth of industry in the Catalan and Basque Provinces and the tendency, which still remains, for Spanish industry and industrial wealth to be concentrated in these areas. Thus in 1967 in Vizcaya (the Basque Province with the greatest concentration of industry) the income per capita was 65,000 Pesetas - a figure which was unsurpassed by any other Spanish province apart from Madrid.[6] Guipuzcoa and Barcelona came next on the list with 63,000 and 61,000 Pesetas respectively.*[7] Many other figures could be quoted which would confirm the same general picture of communities which, in economic terms, are relatively privileged and prosperous. On the surface this seems a curious basis for local nationalist movements nurtured on a strong sense of local grievance. Economic factors, however, have to be seen against the wider background of the political and psychological relationships between Basques, Catalans and the rest of Spain. In the first place resentment has been provoked by the feeling that the Spanish state, and more backward regions, are being subsidized at the expense of the Basque Country and Catalonia. Equally, there are feelings that links with Spain might act as a brake on the further economic growth of these areas. The central government and the spokesmen for other regions, on the other hand, naturally fear

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* Just to take one example, this is over double the size of the income per capita registered in the Province of Sevilla at the same time.

the consequences of loosing the benefits of association with Basques and Catalans and refuse to see why economic privileges (as they regard them) should also carry political privileges. Not least, at the present time, there is an unspoken fear of what would happen if other regions could no longer export their surpluses of under used or unemployed labour to more advanced northern areas.

These problems are compounded by friction and resentments of a perhaps less rational kind. The very prosperity of their regions has led some Basque's and Catalans to adopt a rather superior or patronising attitude towards the natives of other regions. Myths have grown up concerning the hard-working native of minority groups and rewards for hard work in the shape of a satisfactory socio-economic status. Such myths, in their turn. can give rise to self images to which people are expected to conform and which therefore take the form of self fulfilling prophecies. Conversely, those from more backward regions have tended to look with envy on their wealthier neighbours and have reacted against what they regard as their unfounded arrogance. Resentments of this type have been rationalized by accusing minorities of materialsim and of betraying Spain's traditional values. A situation has developed in other words, in which both sides tend to over-simplify complex problems and to think in terms of perhaps irrational but certainly influential stereotypes.[8]

Parallel problems arise out of relationships between local populations and the Spanish State. There seems to be, on the part of many Basques and Catalans, a sense of being alienated from offical institutions. This phenomena can be looked at under two headings. Firstly, there is a long standing and deeply rooted feeling that a highly centralized pattern of administration has been imposed on Catalonian and the Basque Country by politicians or officials who do not understand local problems and who neglect local insterests.[9] It is believed,

for example, that the present provincial divisions are instruments of a stifling central control rather than vehicles for the assertion of local demands. The fact that the provincial and municipal councils of the Basque and Catalan provinces generally provide more and better services than their counterparts in other regions serves merely to reinforce this sense of frustration. Secondly, there is the undoubted fact that the Basques and Catalans are under-represented in many of Spain's major public institutions. Before and even more, since the Civil War, disproportionately small numbers of Judges, civil servants, policemen and military personnel have been recruited from these groups. Between 1960 and 1964, for example, the Basque Provinces (including Navarra) supplied only 2.7 per cent of the students studying in Spain's army, air and naval academies, yet these same areas accounted for 6.2 per cent of the nation's total population.[10] Madrid, by contrast, accounted for 10 per cent of the nation's population yet it supplied 20.2 per cent of the studentsof the same academies.[11] Likewise, in 1967, only 4 per cent of the Directors General (divisional chiefs) within Spanish ministerial departments had originally come from Barcelona as against 21 per cent from Madrid.*[12]

This situation, originally at least, was not the product of a deliberately discriminatory policy on the part of the Spanish State. During the eighteenth century, for example, Basques played a particularly prominent part in the Spanish kingdom's central administration. Industrial development, however, provided the educated middle classes of Catalonia and the Basque Country with career opportunities in business and the professions. that were unavailable to comparable groups

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* It is only fair to comment here that a significant number of Basques can be found, at a high level, in certain branches of the civilian administration. But these people are either of Carlist background or come from the small social elite of the Basque Country which has traditionall maintained close links with Madrid.

in other parts of the country. The middle classes of Castille and Southern Spain frequently had to look to the bureaucracy for their material security but this became unnecessary for their Basque and Catalan counterparts. Thus new patterns of behaviour were created. Surveys suggest, for example, that career choices are made quite early and tend to be made in accordance with the expectations which are prevalent in a given locality.[12]

A 1963 survey of final year secondary school pupils indicated that 90 per cent of students in the Basque city of San Sebastian wished for a career in the private sector and nobody wanted to enter public service.[13] In Madrid the proportions were 68 and 31 per cent respectively.[14]

Such choices may not always be the result of deliberate discrimination but that has not necessarily meant an absence of friction. A predominance of Castillians (and other non Basques and Catalans) in ~~this~~ official posts has helped to feed on already strong sense of grievance. Local leaders, in business or the professions, have not only felt geographically remote from Spain's real centre of political power but they have also sensed difficulty in lobbying government departments on behalf of their interests. There is a belief, for example, that just after the Civil War a discriminat~~ing~~ory policy was pursued, for a time, against Catalan business.

Inevitably the nature of recruitment into the bureaucracy is sooner or later blamed for such decisions. This, in its turn, encourages local elite groups to redouble their commitment to business or other private activities and so the vicious circle is closed. Of equal importance is the friction that can be engendered on the spot between local populations and minor local functionaries of the central government. In a situation where the State (and not locally elected bodies) is responsible for administering most services of local

interest there are many opportunities for such friction. This, of course, is not a problem confined to the Catalan and Basque Provinces but there the large percentage of 'outsiders' in public service adds to the difficulties - not least in a dictatorship which offers ample opportunity for high-handed official behaviour. The fact that in these areas the bulk of civil servants, policement, judges and soldiers are from other regions means that there is little room for trust in relationships between the citizen and the state. At ~~least~~ last the local populations feel they are paying for the support of an army of parasitical bureaucrats. At worst, in times of crisis, a sense of being an occupied territory, is easily engendered.

Conflicts of the type mentioned above are further exacerbated by the relatively high levels of political awareness to be found in the Basque and Catalan regions. Not only are these the most economically developed parts of Spain but they are also the most politically sophisticated. There are deep rooted local traditions of popular involvement in civic affairs without parallel elsewhere in Spain. Such traditions are in marked contrast with those of large parts of Castille, for example, where public affairs have generally been the concern of very small local elites. One mark of this civic consciousness is the relatively high quality (which has already been noted) of the services supplied by Basque and Catalan local authorities. Many municipalities in Guipuzcoa, for example, have long had their own facilities for the case of the aged and the sick. Until quite recently the bulk of municipalities in other regions were not even supplying the most elementary local services.[15] Another measure of this phenomenon is the propensity of Basques and Catalans for ~~the~~ forming or joining special interest groups clubs and voluntary associations. Even Spain's official trade unions, which meet with particularly strong opposition in the Basque and Catalan regions, seem to work more effectively in these areas.[16]

The net effect of this situation is that local opposition to the state is not only likely to be particularly widespread in the Basque Country and Catalonia but is also likely to take fairly sophisticated forms. In 1951, for example, there was a boycott of public transport in Barcelona which eventually induced the government to remove a particularly unpopular Provincial Governor.[17] The population of the Basque Country has also shown considerable solidarity in the face of official pressures. One indicator which can be mentioned at this stage is the local absention rate in recent elections. In elections (held in September 1971) for the 1/6th of Cortes

members who are chosen by popular vote the officially recorded turnout on the Province of Vizcaya was 33 per cent. In the city of San Sebastian (in Guipuzcoa) the figure was only 26 per cent. This was in spite of all the blandishments of official propaganda and of a legal obligation to vote. In Guipuzcoa it was also in spite of a "sitting member" who had shown unusual independence of mind.[18] In view of all the other available evidence, such figures cannot signify apathy so much as a deliberate repudiation of existing political arrangements by a politically conscious and well organized populace.

Group solidarity is promoted above all, of course, by the existence of distinctive national identities and a sense of belonging to distinct national communities. Vital to the nurturing of such a national consciousness is the existence of distinctive local languages and cultures. Indeed, modern Catalan nationalism ~~from~~ first found expression through a literary revival. Catalan (partly because it is closer to Spanish and so easier to acquire) has been spoken by larger groups of people than has been the case with the Basque tongue. In both cases, however, the language has become a badge of nationhood and has been spoken by significant proportions of the local population. Precisely because of this Franco's regime, in the aftermath of the Civil War, did its best to eliminate the use of languages other than Spanish. Until the early 1950's, at least, there was a strict ban on the use of Basque and Catalan in public places or for educational purposes. Thus local languages could not be used for public meeting or in public worship. There was also a ban on street or shop signs written in non-Spanish tongues. Particularly in the Basque country there were even attempts to stamp out the casual use of the local language anywhere outside of the home. A Basque of school age during the 1940's (who is now a priest) recalls uttering

a few words of his language during a game of street football and, as a result, being promptly marched off to a local police station where, on the spot, he was ordered to pay a fine.[19] In the educational sphere controls were particularly strict. Basque school teachers, for example, were dismissed unless they could prove their 'political reliability'. The places of those dismissed were often filled by recruits from other regions who were indifferent or hostile to local traditions. Non-Basque priests, called in to staff the region's large number of private Catholic schools, were not least amongst those falling into this category.* The use of the vernacular by pupils therefore became liable to punishment. A command to 'Hablar Cristiano' -(i.e. to speak the language of Christians!) was frequently uttered.

By the 1950's it was apparent that these measures, might make the spread of local languages difficult, and certainly cause much irritation, but that they could not wipe out non Spanish tongues. Simultaneously, the Spanish State, feeling itself to be more secure, began to rely rather less on repression for ensuring its survival. Thus small concessions began to be made to local sentiment. Local festivals of the folkloric variety were again sometimes ~~in Basque (or Catalan)~~ permitted ~~reappeared~~. Likewise, the everyday use of the vernacular was again tolerated.**

On another level, the State instituted a chair of Catalan at Barcelona University (even if it did have difficulty in attracting candidates of the highest quality). In the Basque Country the Academy of the Basque Language was permitted to

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*. It has to be remembered that throughout Spain most secondary schools are Church controlled.

** In 1963 this writer heard Catalan being spoken in the headquarters of the Governor of the Province of Barcelona.

function - albeit as a wholly private body without state aid.

In nearly all these cases concessions were generally interpreted as little more than sops to local opinion. There are sound reasons for accepting this view. University chairs were of little interest to most Catalans and in the Basque Country there was not even this form of official support for the local language.

(no new para). A lot of the most ~~useful~~ use study of Basque was undertaken outside the Basque Country, at the Sorbonne, or by private individuals. The Academy of the Basque language was not only denied the funds needed for much of its work, but it was also prevented from working with Basques on the French side of the Pyrenees. Recently much has been done to standardize and update Basque but this work has not received offical encouragement.* Moreover, the vernacular is only exceptionally permitted as an instrumentof instruction. In the Basque Country an officially recognised school has recently been opened (in San Sebastian) where education is carried on in Basque. This is, however, an exception and the approximately 800 pupils it has already attracted suggests a large unsatisfied demand for this sort of facility. As it is children brought up exclusively in Basque are inevitably at a disadvantage in the educational system.

Though hard evidence is difficult to come by it does seem as if official policies have had some effect upon linguistic habits. Above all the need to learn Spanish in order to achieve educational success (and hence to obtain the best paid jobs) puts pressure upon the speakers of local languages. Surveys suggest that married couples (brought up before, during or just after the Civil War) who habitually communicate

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* The Basque language in fact embraces three distinct dialects. Prior to the Civil War, at least, it was also an archaic tongue and not always a useful means of communication in a modern industrial society. The archaic form of the language is still spoken but determined private efforts are being made not only to standardize its grammar but also to update its vocabulary.

with their children in Spanish or on a bilingual basis. Certainly, in the Basque Country, at least, there was, until about 1960, a decline in the numbers using the vernacular. Moreover, there are indications that discriminating educational policies can affect the degree of skill with which a language is used. A recent survey of housewives (published 1970) suggested that more people could understand the Catalan or Basque languages than could speak them. The numbers able to read or write these languages were still smaller. In the Basque Country, for example, there wer indications that something like 50 per cent of housewives understood Basque 46 per cent spoke it, 25 per cent read it and only 12 per cent wrote it.* In other words the absence of formal instruction in languages other than Spanish seriously reduces literacy rates and the numbers with access to local literatures. References to specific individuals graphically illustrate the same point. This writer knows of highly educated Basques (who prior to going to school knew no Spanish) who are more literate in Spanish, French or even English than they are in their own mother tongue. In so far as the utility or vitality of a language depends on the maintenance of lively literary traditions this is a potentially significant factor.

Such problems are compounded by the attitude of the mass media toward Basque and Catalan. After the Civil War publication in these languages was wholly illegal and there was certainly no question of broadcasting in them. Recently there has been some modification of official policy but no substantial change. Official spokesmen can now point to a number of periodicals, literary reviews and books published in local languages and can cite them as evidence of their good will.** But, in reality, these officially tolerated

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* The comparable figures for Catalonia were 90 per cent 77 per cent, 62 per cent and 38 per cent.

** Of course such publications are, in any case, subject to censorship.

publications are only likely to be of interest to small intellectual minorities. There is relatively little provision for mass audiences. Recently some daily newspapers in the Basque country have begun to publish some items in Basque but usually there is little more than one page on one day of the week. It could be argued that this fairly reflects the numbers able to take advantage of the service but this is certainly not true of broadcasting. Though something like 50 per cent of the population understands Basque the state controlled television monopoly provides no Basque language programmes. Radio offers some Basque programmes but these are infrequent and usually come from purely local stations. The State, when it comes to the potentially most influential of the mass media, largely ignores the interests of linguistic minorities.*

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* The gap is partly filled by an underground press but this necessarily has a limited impact. It is also worth noting the considerable and frequently clandestine traffic in gramaphone records of Basque and Catalan songs.

Despite such obstacles the Catalan language has, at the least, held its own in the past decade and there are indications that the Basque language has done more than this. In the latter case a considerable share of the credit must go to special part-time schools, known as 'Ekastolas'[21], which have recently proliferated in the Basque Country. From the late 1950's until the present these have grown fairly steadily in numbers. There are no reliable statistics on the subject but some observers maintain there could now be as many as 300 of them. Until very recently, at least, they were all purely private, self-supporting bodies working quite outside the ~~offered~~ official education system. They have been created, often as a result of grass roots initiatives, by groups anxious to preserve the local linguistic heritage. Their foundation has been encouraged by nationalist political organizations like E.T.A., but also by ostensibly non-political agencies - notably the local Roman Catholic Church. Particularly in rural areas the Church has played an especially significant part in promoting the 'Ekastolas' movement. It has made premises available, supplied teachers and sometimes extended its protection when 'Ekastolas' have come under police surveillance.

Surveillance of this sort indicates that though 'Ekastolas' are legally tolerated they often have to operate under difficult conditions. The effort to propagate the Basque language must, at present, be regarded as a potentially hostile political act. Moreover, 'Ekastolas' sometimes become centres of more overt forms of resistance. Thus those involved in the work of these bodies frequently come across obstacles put in their path by public officials. In common with other voluntary bodies in Spain their incorporation requires an official licence and the State often makes difficult the acquisition or renewal of the licence. There are reports of unaccountable bureaucratic delays and of arguments over building or health regulations with which organizations operating on very small budgets could never hope to comply. There are also reports of police demands for lists of all students, staff and financial backers. This

latter requirement can be especially daunting for the mere fact of appearing on such a list is sometimes to invite suspicion. The lists form part of the general stock of police information about potentially dissident elements.

Within the past 12 months the State has found a new and perhaps more subtle method for diminishing the potential political dangers of the 'Ikastolas' movement. This takes the form of supplying official financial backing to certain of these schools. On the face of it this seems to be a major concession to local opinion. In reality, however, it is more like a 'divide and rule' tactic. The schools singled out for assistance are generally those least in need of it. They are the schools, supported by wealthy elements in Basque society, where the more archaic forms of Basque are taught and in which the emphasis is on the purely literary rather than the political aspects of the Basque cause. This tactic seems to be meeting with some success. The State now appears to some as a champion of the Basque language and so sows some dissension amongst potential opponents. Some Churches sponsored 'Ikastolas', for example, seem willing to accept official aid and, one supposes, the supervision which presumably goes with it. Others are stubbornly resisting this tendency but are in danger of finding their influence diminished. Nevertheless, the 'Ikastolas' have made a significant contribution to the dissemination of the Basque language and most of them, albeit with very limited resources, will probably remain outside the official orbit.*

An interesting feature of the work of the 'Ikastolas' has been the small but not insignificant number of pupils who are immigrants, or the children of immigrants, attracted to the Basque Country from other parts of Spain. This inevitably raises the whole question of immigration into the Basque and Catalan regions. It is an

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* The fact that pupils can only attend in their spare time shows that those attending must be highly motivated.

important question for immigration on a large scale could obviously lead to the creation of less homogeneous local populations and so perhaps weaken local nationalist movements.

Immigration

As Spain's principal industrial regions the Basque Country and Catalonia have long been the scene of major population movements. Initially these took the form of movements from the local rural hinterlands into cities like Bilboa or Barcelona. Such localized population movements continue but they have long since been superseded in importance by migration flows from other parts of Spain. A large part of the pre-civil war working-class of Catalonia, for example, was drawn from the much more backward Andalusian area (in Southern Spain). The Basque region initially attracted most of its immigrants from more northerly and more developed areas but recently it too has drawn migrants from the South. The net result of these processes was demonstrated by a survey, done in 1966, which found that 38 per cent of a sample of heads of households, and their wives, dwelling in the Basque provinces, had been born elsewhere.[22] In Catalonia immigrants have come to constitute an even larger proportion of the local population. Apart from Madrid the Basque and Catalan Provinces have had the fastest growing population rates in Spain and in both cases immigration has played a major part.[23] In the Basque Provinces, at least, probably more than 50 per cent of the local working-classes are now non-Basque in origin.

Most of this immigration has to be seen against the background of Spain's recent rapid industrial growth and of the tendency for this growth to be concentrated in already industrialized regions. The unemployed or underemployed of backward areas have been attracted by the possibilities of work in more dynamic communities. Sometimes, however, the supply of immigrant labour has outstripped the demand. At one point in the early 1950's, for example, Bilboa businessmen pressed the local Governor to seek a halt to immigration

as immigrants were too numerous to employ or house.[24]

Local nationalists have sometimes seen non-economic forces at work. They suspect that immigration has deliberately been encouraged by the Spanish Government in order to destroy the homogeneity of the hostile local populations. There is little concrete evidence to support this view though it seems likely that the government appreciates the existence of this possibility and will not strive officiously to reverse the trend. It cannot be wholly without significance that, in the case of the Bilboa businessmen which has just been mentioned, the Governor allegedly replied that he would close the railway station to migrants when local businessmen acted to check the Basque nationalist cause.

In the long run demographic tendencies certainly do seem to be working against local nationalist movements. The possibility of local communities assimilating such large numbers of immigrants seems remote. Indeed, sections of the native born populations have sometimes perhaps done harm to their own cause. Particularly in the Basque Country there has sometimes been a tendency to shirk from social contact with newcomers and from making the effort needed to integrate them into the local community. In extreme cases Basques have manifested feelings of racial superiority to those from other regions. More often local nationalists have been openly resentful of people who, it has been feared, are contributing to the destruction of local traditions. Various factors have contributed to the friction and the feelings of mutual hostility engendered in these circumstances. The official policy of housing immigrants in their own largely segregated areas is a case in point. The tendency for immigrants and natives to lead distinct lives is inevitably reinforced. There is also a possibility of tension arising as a result of the relatively low socio-economic status of many immigrants. Whilst immigrants now constitute a large proportion of the local working-class they form a fairly small proportion of lower middle-class groups (such as clerical workers and shopkeepers) and a still smaller fraction of

middle-class professional people. Moreover, when it comes to the obtaining of houses and the provision of other services the native born tend to ahve contacts and a knowledge of local conditions which places them at a distinct advantage vis a vis new arrivals.

There are now some Basque leaders to see the dangers inherent in this situation. Some Churchmen have recognised the existence of a pastoral problem and some nationalist political leaders see the risks involved in alienating immigrants. A certain amount of conscious effort is therefore now being made to integrate immigrants into the local community. There are now Basque priests working in Southern Spain amongst potential migrants and Churchmen within the Basque Country itself are trying to provide newcomers with social facilities. On the political front members of E.T.A. have tried to organize portions of the non-Basque working classes.

Inevitably, integration is much more easily achieved in rural areas. In the intimate atmosphere of a village immigrants are under much stronger pressure to adopt local ways of life than is the case in the more impersonal and cosmopolitan cities. (Particularly when the city is as highly industrialized as Bilbao)*. As the bulk of immigrants are city dwellers this seems to make the problem of assimilating them particularly difficult.

This difficulty is shared by Basques and Catalans alike.[25] A recent study of immigrants in Catalonia underlined the extent to which they have retained their distinctive identities.[25] There are two factors, however, which pose more acute problems for Basque than Catalan communities. Firstly, the Basque language obviously presents more difficulties for immigrants than does Catalan. Secondly, of

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* It is worth mentioning that industry through found throughout the Basque Country is concentrated particularly in the Province of Vizcaya and, above all, in Bilbao. It is therefore significant that the nationalist movement now has its centre of gravity in the Guipuzcoa where immigrants are fewer in number.

the Basque population is confronted with large numbers of immigrants who have come from other fairly well developed regions and who have brought with them their own fairly fixed cultural and political values. In Catalonia, by contrast, there are relatively larger numbers of immigrants from very poor areas lacking well developed cultures and characterized by low levels of political awareness.[26]

Despite these problems there are at least two factors which, at the moment, are working more in favour of the Basque than the Catalan nation. In the first place survey data indicates that there is a higher rate of inter-marriage between Basques and non-Basques than there is between Catalans and non-Catalans.[27]* In the second place (and this may appear ironic) the Basque Provinces, in the past decade, have been the subject of more repressive measures than the Catalan Provinces - repressive measures which, in the short run at least, have served to consolidate nearly all sections of local opinion in opposition to the central government.** The large scale participation of immigrant workers in protest strikes, at the time of the Burges trial, is one indicator of this. Some observers feel that, in a more open political system militant local nationalism could provoke strong reactions from immigrant populations. One writer has suggested that immigrants ~~come~~ could play a role within Catalonia and the Basque Country, similar to the role of the Catholic population in Ulster.[28] At present, however, the central government has succeeded in enlarging the reserves of good will upon which local nationalists can draw and in partly offsetting the otherwise likely effects of population movements.

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* inter-marriage could of course work either way, as far as the question of assimilation is concerned, but on balance it is more likely to integrate the immigrant into the host co-munity rather than vice versa.

** this theme is treated at greate length below.

The Basque Church

Before proceeding to an examination of the present political situation in the Basque Country (and where relevant in Catalonia) the role of the Basque Church must be discussed. This is because the Church has traditionally exercised very great influence in Basque society and because the ~~Church~~ Basque people, taken as a whole, have been particularly loyal to it. It is not wholly coincidental, for example, that Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, was a Basque. Thus the Basque clergy, especially in rural districts but also in urban areas, have maintained a degree of daily contact with their parishioners which has been unknown in most other parts of Spain. Priests in this region have been accepted as part of the local community and have exercised leadership in community affairs. They have been regarded as something more than the providers of sacraments. Indeed, local community life has often revolved around the parish Church and priests have been intimately associated with the local social and even political life. This contrasts with the situation in parts of Catalonia (Barcelona in particular) where the Church lost effective contact with the great mass of people and where there was a fairly strong anti-clerical tradition.[29] In the Basque country the Church has even continued to ~~exist~~ exert considerable influence amongst the working classes who, elsewhere in Spain, have tended to become indifferent or hostile to organized religion. A few statistical references will provide some confirmation of this picture. In the Province of Barcelona (in 1967), for example there was one priest for every 1,528 people whilst in the Basque Country (excluding Navarra) the figure was one for every 535 persons.[30] Similarly, the Basque Country supplies a disproportionately large number of Spain's monks and nuns.[31] Finally, there are indications of particularly high Church attendances in the Basque Country.

This identification of priest and people helps to explain why the Basque clergy, in the main, supported the Republican cause during the Civil War in opposition to forces claiming to be fighting 'a Crusade'. Whilst nearly all other Spanish clergy were in General Franco's camp Basque priests, because of their sympathy with the local nationalist cause, were frequently found on the other side of the fence. In the heated atmosphere of that time this seemed, to many of Franco's followers, as a betrayal of both Spain and Spain's Catholic heritage. The inevitable upshot was some persecution of the Basque clergy. Hugh Thomas indicates that, in the aftermath of war, 278 Basque priests and 125 monks experienced deprivation, imprisonment, deportation to other parts of Spain and (in 16 cases) death.[32]

Since the Civil War the Church, as already observed, has played an important part in the propogation of the local language and culture. It has, however, also experienced serious internal difficulties. These difficulties can to some extent be seen as part of the world wide upheaval currently going on in the Roman Catholic Church but the local political situation has made the dilemmas of the Basque Church particularly acute. A major bone of contention has been the alliance which, until fairly recently at least, has existed between Church and State. Franco's regime has undoubtedly gained in authority as a result of Church support whilst the latter body has been rewarded with extensive privileges. The State, moreover, has had a say in episcopal appointments and has naturally used its influence to promote clergy sympathetic to its interests. Basque nationalists have therefore tended to regard official Church spokesmen with suspicion and as being agents of an anti Basque policy. It was noted, for example, that until the early 1960's local bishops were not appointed from amongst natives of the region. There was also

resentment because of Church acquiescence in official efforts to stamp out the Basque language. Rank and file clergy continued quietly to work alongside the local population but the position of Church leaders often gave offence.

In the past decade pressures from below have built up and have been reflected in divisions amongst the clergy.[33] The latter can now be roughly grouped in three categories. Firstly, there is a very small minority which is fervently pro Franco and which looks with horror upon Basque nationalism. They are mainly older clergy who resent recent changes in the Roman Church and who support the traditional alliance of Church and State. Secondly, there are many (probably constituting the great majority of Basque clergy) who sympathize with demands for local autonomy and who look for a democratic political system. In politics they are likely to be Christian Democrats or moderate socialists. In internal Church matters they usually approve of recent reforming trends. They, for example, often welcome the chance to conduct services in Basque.* Finally, there is a militant minority who, in politics, take a radical socialist position and who are also strongly committed to the nationalist cause. Some of these would accept the need for violent revolution as the means for achieving their goals and there are certainly many of them who sympathize with or assist the militant 'E.T.A.' As far as the Church is concerned their aim is to force their leaders to adopt new political positions and

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* It was only in 1966 that Basque was first used in a service. This happened in a Church in Bilbao recognized for its aid to the nationalist cause.

to promote a radical reform of what they regard as oppressively authoritarian ecclesiastical structures.

Priests of the latter school (who are usually from the post Civil War generation) have gained a good deal of their inspiration from a semi formal group of clerics which was formed in the mid 1960's in Vizcaya. This group, known as the 'Gogortasuna' group, through its meetings and contacts with sympathizers has helped to create some sense of esprit de corps amongst the younger and more militant clergy. Its members have been prominent in opposition political activities and in opposition to their own bishops. They have staged 'sit-ins' and hunger strikes designed to put pressure on bishops and obtain from them less equivocal denunciations of official policy and, in particular, local police methods. At present the group has been weakened by the exiling or imprisonment of many members. In late 1970, for example, there were some 26 Basque priests in gaol for political reasons including people from this original nucleus.* 34

The number of priests in goal is one measure of the opposition the State now has to face from significant sections of the Basque clergy. The presence of two priest at the Burgos trials was not something wholly extraordinary. Church premises, for example, have not only been used for relatively innocuous cultural purposes but they have also been the scene of nationalist political meetings - including meetings of E.T.A.** Likewise, clergy have helped in the

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*. Because of the terms of the Concordat between the Vatican and the Spanish State, priests have to be housed apart from other types of prisoner. This provision - agreed when the possibility of putting priests in gaol on a large scale seemed remote- is opposed by many of those involved. In practice priests are gaoled in a special prison in the remote Castillian Province of Zamora in which conditions are as harsh as in any other gaol.

** There are hardly any priests in E.T.A. but several have close contact with it and offer advice, including moral advice on the use of violence.

distribution of underground literature, the escape to France of wanted men and the organization of popular protest demonstrations. Not least, some use the pulpit to denounce the government, the police and the Basque region's economic elites.

Pressure from this sort of quarter highlights the extremely difficult and delicate position of official Church spokesmen in the Basque Country. A vocal minority amongst their subordinate demands radical action whilst ultra conservative Churchmen and the State join in condemning any concession to their point of view.** The difficulty has been particularly evident with regard to the question of torture. Faced with evidence of torture some bishops have preferred to deal in generalities rather than denouncing specific cases. Sich statements have outraged the Government without satisfying the more radical Churchmen. More recently (in April 1971) one bishop, that of Pamphora, has quite unequivocally denounced tortures the results of which he had seen with his own eyes. Such a statement indicates that the Basque Church, despite its divisions and equivocations, has become, even at the official level, a serious thorn in the flesh of the Spanish Government.

Opposition in the Basque Country

A portion of the Basque Church provides a focus for opposition to the Spanish government but opposition is now of a much more generalized kind. It comes from three other major sources in the society, opposition political parties, unofficial trade unions and professional or intellectual elements.[35]

**. There is one ultra conservative Catholic body, known as the Guerillas of Christ the King, which indulges in private acts of vandalism and even terrorism. Basque nationalists leaders and radical clergy are amongst their chief targets.

After the Civil War the opposition of Basque nationalists was led by the traditional Basque nationalist party - the P.N.V. From its headquarters in exile (in Paris) it sought to maintain its following and to direct operations against the Spanish authorities. The Socialists and, to a lesser extent, the Communist Party remained active amongst the local working classes but these bodies remained generally unsympathetic to the regional cause. The P.N.V., along with other opposition elements throughout Spain, thought that allied victory in the Second World War might lead to allied intervention in Spain and certainly would provoke the collapse of Franco's regime. It was because of this that, in 1946, an effort was made to unite all major opposition groups, including Basque and Catalan nationalists. Their relations were characterized, however, by mutual suspicion and there was a lack of energetic leadership. In any case Franco's regime was more firmly entrenched than it appeared (and foreign pressure merely had the effect of consolidating a degree of popular support for his government). In the Basque Country a high water mark was reached in the opposition's activities with a general strike, during 1947, which involved about 100,000 workers. It was promoted by the P.N.V., and its trade union wing, in alliance with the left wing trade unions. In appearence this was a major act of defiance, aimed against the government and the official trade unions, but in reality it produced no concrete results. The P.N.V.'s influence afterwards tended to decline and its dynamism to dwindle. Intermittent police action was generally sufficient to contain opposition activities.

Disatisfaction with the P.N.V.'s inactivity and impatience with its aging leadership led, in 1953, to the emergence of a radical splinter group, composed principally of students, which wished to adopt a more militant

policy. This group ultimately proved to be the forerunner of E.T.A. E.T.A. was set up in 1959, again mainly by middle class intellectuals, as a hierarchically structured and close knit conspiratorial organization. It was intended to combat the government by violent means, peaceful and popular resistance having been written off as ineffectual. Its first major foray (in 1961) was the derailing of a train carrying Carlist veterants to a meeting. After that it received serious police attention - having initially been dismissed as of little account. Arrests following this episode obstructed the organisation's development but it later undertook other activities. There were for example bank robbery intended to finance the organization and a television transmitting mast was blown up. Such gestures were a source of considerable embarrassment to the Spanish Government and its reaction was fierce. In 1968, for example, a state of emergency was declared throughout the Basque Country during which there were large scale round-ups of suspects. The climax of E.T.A.'s campaign came with the assasination of a local police chief notorious in the area for the savagery of his interrogation methods. It was following this episode that the Government decided on a show down and the Burgos trial was therefore staged.

The membership of E.T.A. is impossible to estimate. One difficulty is that, because of the prestige it currently enjoys in the Basque country, unlicenced people use its name when promoting political, trade union or other opposition activities. The organisation, therefore, appears larger and more ubiquitous than it probably is. It seems likely that, at the very most, it has little more than 1,000 committed adherents. Their influence has, however, been fairly extensive. This has been partly due to the structure of the movements

It has, infact, four "fronts" or specialised agencies. These are responsible for fund raising, the promotion of the local language and culture, the spread of propoganda and the conduct of guerilla operations. The second and third of these, in particular, bring E.T.A. into contact with significant sections of the local population.

Throughout its brief history E.T.A. has been plagued by factionalism. To chart the intricacies of its internal politics would be a lengthy process lying beyond the scope of this report.[36] It can be said, however, that there have always been at least two major tendencies within the organization. The first consists of those who first and foremost have been romantic nationalists prepared to use violence to obtain autonomy if not independence for the Basques. They subscribe to a socialist type of ideology but their socialism is of secondary importance. Others, however, (rather like some left wing French Canadian nationalists) see nationalism merely as a means toward the creation of a socialist society. For them independence is the pre-condition of a Basque socialist republic which will later set an example to and co-operate with similar republics elsewhere on the Iberian Peninsular. Whilst those in the first category tend to see all Spaniards as their enemies the latter argue that the Basque working classes should join with the workers throughout Spain against the common enemy, as they see it, - the capitalists ruling class and the state which is its instrument. At the present time the second tendency is in the ascendant. Moreover, following recent disruptions of E.T.A.'s leadership, there has been some switch of emphasis away from elite directed guerilla campaigns and towards mass political education. It is now being argued that a genuine socialist revolution cannot be

sparked off, even in the midst of a sympathetic population, if the mass of the people is not fully aware of what is involved. The fruits of this new approach remain to be seen but it looks as if violence, on a large scale, has for the time being been given a lower priority.

The socialist content of E.T.A.'s programme was developed in response to the P.N.V.'s presumed inadequacies. It was felt that the latter's moderate Christian Democratic approach was ill-suited to a highly industrialized society and would deny the nationalist movement influence amongst the steadily growing Basque working class. In fact recent developments have impelled portions of the P.N.V., and its trade union wing, to move leftward and to adopt a moderate Social Democratic position.

In the long run this means that the party might be able to extend its appeal beyond the middle and lower middle class elements, who now form the hard core of its supporters, and into the local working class. At present, however, Basque workers continue to be organized most effectively by Socialist, Communist, and to a lesser extent the left wing Catholic groups. * These groups have found a basis for co-operation within the unofficial Workers Commissions, which, particularly since 1964, have grown up throughout Spain. Though left wing groups may be divided over long term objectives the Commissions have provided them with some sort of temporary tactical unity. Their objectives

are of essentially two kinds. In the first place they are concerned with higher wages and better conditions. Secondly, they wish to destroy the present system of state controlled unions and replace it with independent organizations. The tendency, during the 1960's, for industrial conflict to grow in scope and intensity indicates the degree of support these Commissions have obtined and the extent of working class opposition to Franco's regime. Indeed, in Catalonia industrial and class conflict has for the time being, at least, become a more significant political issue than the regional question. The regional question is one cause of discontent, which forms grist to the oppositions mill, but broader economic and political matters received more attention. This may reflect some weakening of the Nationalist movement and suggests that immigration, in Catalonia, has indeed had some of the effects that nationalists feared. * In the Basque country, however, the present situation is perhaps a little more complex. The bulk of workers are probably more concerned with economic issues and with changing the Spanish political system that they are with the regional cause. Rpeated strike waves which, as recently as October, 1971, have brought large sections of industry in the Basque country(as well as other industrialised regions of Spain) to a halt have had economic demands and the weakening of the governments authority as their primary motives. Events at the time of the Burgos trial, however, suggest a certain solidarity on the part of workers in the Basque region with the local nationalists. At that time there were protest strikes all over Spain, not least in Catalonia, but stoppages were most complete in the Basque

x All the major opposition parties in Catalonia are branches of Spanish parties — even though they may wear special regional labels. There are no equivalents of the P.N.V. or E.T.A.

region. Of course the scale of these strikes(which had no post Civil War precedents except perhaps those of 1947) was partly because the trial awakened a general sence of indignation that had little specifically to do with the Basque Nationalist cause. It was more a question of revulsion against the State's methods. By the same token none nationalist opposition leaders found, in the trial, a ready stick with which to beat the government. Nevertheless, there are indications that mixed in with this complex of motives was more than a sneaking sympathy for the nationalist cause - a sympathy which E.T.A.'s activities and the State's harsh response has probably done much to awaken. It is a sympathy which is even to be found amongst workers of none Basque origin. Harsh official measures have called forth a significant degree of communal solidarity amongst groups which, in thelong run, might have diverging interests.

Other dissentient voices have been found amongst local intellectual and professional groups. Such elements are mainly recruited from the social strata which have traditionally provided Basque nationalism with its hard-core supporters. Present political circumstances have conspired, however, to push certain of these groups into positions of particular prominence. Thus some Basque intellectuals, along with some of their peers elsewhere in Spain, have used their prestige to publicize protests against official actions. They have, for example, signed public protests against the torturing of political prisoners. Above all, lawyers have found themselves in the opposition's vanguard. As an organized group they have been impelled by their professional values and interests to press for changes in the judicial system. They have, for example, demanded that political offences should not be tried before special tribunals and that

political prisoners should not be housed along with common criminals. As individuals they have defended those charged with political crimes. This was particularly important at the Burgos trial where lawyers (both Basque and non-Basque) helped to show to the world the arbitrary nature of the proceedings. * Such individuals represent many shades ofopinion. They include members of the Communist Party, " Christian Marxists", Socialists and Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and traditional nationalists. In some cases the groups with which they are associated have no special interest in the regional question and in most instances they are unsympathetic to E.T.A.'s brand of nationalism. Nevertheless, they show how even relatively moderate middle class Basque opinion has been consolidated in Opposition to the Spanish state as a result of official policy.

* These groups, of course, have their parallels in Catalonia. The Barcelona "College of Lawyers", for example, has been prominent in staging anti-government protest. Individual lawyers, writers, university teachers and other professional men have also been involved in and been punished for anti-government activities. A spectacular example of the political involvement of Catalan intellectuals was provided by a "sit-in", by what amounted to the Catalan intellectual elite, which was organized in protest against the Burgos trial.

Repression in the Basque Country

Oppoition has been consolidated by the repression which, particularly since 1968, has characterized the Spanish Government's dealings with regional movements and, above all, with Basque nationalism. This makes it necessary to scrutinize the repressive machinery which the Spanish state has at its desposal and how, in the Basque context, it has functioned. First, however, it is worth asking why the Spanish state has responded so ferociously to militant Basque nationalism. On the face of it, at least, the government would seem to be over-reacting and so playing the opposition's game. E.T.A. has worked on a theory that action will provoke repression which will provoke further resistance and so on, in a continuing upward spiral. In some measure they have been proved correct. It is true that repression has so far been more than sufficient for the containing of opposition but in the process there has been a hardening of opinion in the Basque country itself and a heightening of political tension throughout the rest of ~~the state~~ Spain.

In trying to explain the situation at least three points are worth bearing in mind. Firstly, it has to be remembered that on the Spanish right-wing, and in the Spanish army, there is a strong ideological committment to a unitary state which can provoke irrational reactions to the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ appearance of centrifugal forces within the Spanish polity. This seems to be borneout by the sometimes emotional nature of the huge pro-government demonstrations organized by Falangists and army officers at the time of the Burgos trial. Secondly, it is perhaps true that Basque nationalism, though a late-comer as compared with Catalan nationalism, has always had a roughter edge to it. The Basques have perhaps proved a

more stubborn foe for Spanish governments. Thus Basque militancy is particularly likely to produce an angry and perhaps frightened response. Finally, there is the Spanish government's fear that concessions to one nationalist movement would encourage others. In particular there is a fear of revitalizing Catalan nationalism. As a Spanish minister allegedly said - "Give the Basques an inch and the Catalans would take several miles".[37] The sympathy elicited for the Basque cause, in Catalonia, at the time of the Burgos trial might lend some substance to this view.

In its dealings with the Basque people the Spanish state can count on several repressive agencies. In the first place the region, in common with all other parts of Spain, is garrisoned by troops who are as important for their internal policing funtion as for their contribution to national defence. In an emergency the army could, if it remained loyal, nip in the bud any serious revolutionary outbreak. At present there are reformist elements within this body but key commands are controlled by individuals loyal to the regime. Some of these might subsequently accept some form of civilian control but others still view the army as the ultimate arbiter of the "general will". Except for the part played by military courts in legal proceedings the military's policing function is not always apparent but it is afactor with which all militant opposition must ultimately contend.[38]

Of greater importance in the day to day control of the Basque country are the state's police forces. First, there is the "Armed Police" force, ultimately dependent on the Ministry of the Interior in Madrid, which is responsible for the control of large urban centres. In rural, coastal, and

frontier areas, the policing function is performed by the very efficient para-military "Civil Guard". This body is particularly well disciplined and an especially effective repressive instrument. Finally, there is the political police - or "Brigada Social" - which owes a good deal of its present organization to post Civil War assistance from German advisors. These bodies must not be considered as irresistably efficient forces. For one thing there is frequent friction between the Civil Guard, with its own well developed esprit de corps, and other forces. For another, the "Armed Police" force contains a fair proportion of inexperienced recruits who are not always effective in the repression of opposition activities and who can be fairly easily demoralized. Nevertheless, particularly since 1968, large numbers of extra police (of all kinds) have been moved into the Basque country. In 1970, for example one estimate put the number of Civil Guards at 15,000.[39] In such circumstances clandestine opposition activity becomes difficult and the smallest sign of more open activity is liable to be pounced upon. Frequently police, made nervous by the extent of local hostility, over-react to what they regard as suspicious circumstances. A young people's church service for example can be construed as a potentially dangerous gathering with political implications and so leads to molesting and the taking of names. Such daily pin pricks help to contain opposition but they also serve to politicize ~~other~~ people ~~otherwise~~ previously uninvolved in any form of active resistance.

The police are assisted by an unspecified number of informers. Some of these are simply police under-cover agents but others are local citizens in ~~the~~ police pay. The latter are particularly important to the security forces for most

policemen are strangers to the region and so easily become the subjects of local suspicion. Moreover, militant nationalists make a point of using the Basque tongue and there are very few policemen capable of understanding it. This reliance on private informers is in some respects a source ofweakness. Particularly in close knit villages, or small towns, private informers are quite likely to be quickly unmasked and they may be inefficient in infiltrating into political groups. Intimidation and blackmail have led to the infiltration of the lower ranks of a body like E.T.A. but the higher ranks have been a more difficult proposition. [40]

The task of the security forces is to some extent, facilitated by an absence of effective contraints upon their behaviour. The law states that in normal times nobody can be arrested or have their premises searched without a warrant, held for more than 72 hours without appearing before the courts nor be physically mistreated. It also states that charges cannot be brought against priests without their bishop's permission. In practice these rules are frequently honoured as much in the breach as in the observance. The incidence of arbitary arrest, illegal detention and the mistreatment of prisoners is hard to calculate with accuracy but they are all undoubtedly fairly frequent phenomena. For example, a book published in Paris in 1970 listed 36 attested cases of systematic brutality - which may fairly be described as torture - being used to obtain confessions during 1968 and 1969.[41] Lengthy beatings, deprivation of food and sleep, near suffocation by drowning, threats against relatives, sustained efforts to produce a sense of degradation in prisoners, along with other forms of brutality, all seem to have been fairly commonplace. In the course of such proceedings,

prisoners, are held completely incommunicado, sometimes well beyond the 72 hour limit. Efforts by lawyers or relatives to track down detainees can be frustrated by various expedients, including moving them from place to place. Moreover, when - for political reasons - a state of emergency is declared, all the customary legal rights are temporarily withdrawn thus exposing prisoners to indefinite periods of detention, ill treatment or systematic torture.

It is privately admitted by lawyers, for example, that allegations against the police are sometimes exaggerated or ~~false~~ false. Stories ~~have~~ can been put about to discredit the security forces, and prisoners, afraid for themselves, have been known to give away information and subsequently justify themselves by suggestions of brutality. Also, it is apparent that the degree of force used depends on such factors as the seriousness of the case under investigation or the speed with which results are required. Frequently, ill treatment falls short of any thing that would be conventionally described as torture. Nevertheless, interviews with lawyers and priets who have seen the resulys of ill treatment make it plain that torture has been fairly often employed. Most of the defendants at Burgos, for example, were undoubtedly the victims of such treatment.

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In seeking redress against arbitary police behaviour, the resources available to citizens are extremely limited. This writer has heard of no successful prosecution for wronfful arrest in the Basque Country. Charges brought against the Governor of Guipuzcoa, for example, were countered by appointing him to Spain's legislature - the Cortes - and so granting him 'parliamentary immunity'. At the most

police have been suspended for a brief while for misuses of their power. In the case of brutality or torture, the courts have almost invariably dismissed allegations on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Evidence is, of course, hard to obtain as prisoners are usually kept out of sight until the visible signs of illtreatment have gone and doctors are often unable or unwilling to sign the necessary medical certificates. The courts must, however, accept much responsibility as they clearly are prepared to turn a blind eye . Senior government officials must also be held responsible for turning a blind eye. They do not necessarily encourage the police but they do little or nothing to discourage them. Usually allegations of arbitary police behaviour are summarily dismissed and if instructions prohibiting excesses are sent out, little is done to enforce them.

Recently, and especially since the Burgos trial, there have been signs of greater caution on the part of the police. A new regional police fuchief has taken some steps to refurbish his force's badly tarnished image.[42] For example, greater facilities are now available for visiting prisoners who are awaiting trial. There is also less obvious brutality. On the other hand it seems as if the police may be resorting to a more subtle means - namely drugs - for obtaining confessions. Members of the nationalist movement believe that two detainees are in mental hospitals as the result of such drug treatment.

In dealing with offences of a political nature the State generally uses special courts. These courst are of course, used to deal with political offences committed anywhere in Spain but their use for dealing with opposition in the Basque ~~Burgos~~ (and Catalan Provinces) has been particularly frequent and attracted particular attention. The history of such courts goes back to punitive post Civil War legislation aimed at rooting out all opponents of the victors.[43] Military tribunals

were then given sweeping powers for dealing with such offences as illegal association, illegal propaganda, and more serious offences involving terrorism or sabotage. The powers of the courts were all the more sweeping for being inprecisely defined. It was never wholey clear where the dividing line had to be drawn between their juristiction and that of the ordinary courts. Military courts, moreover, were bodies which, by their nature, handed out a very summary form of justice. Initially judges, prosecutors and defence councils were all serving officers under military discipline. There was also no room for the cross examination of witnesses or the careful weighing of evidence. In practice a presumption of guilt was attached to defenders and they had few legal resources upon which they could call. Sentences tended to be carried out rapidly and appeals could only be made within the military hierarchy

With the passing of time such courts were used with less frequency and in the early 1960's there were tentative effots to "liberalize" this system. Civilian lawyers were permitted to appear as defence councils and a special

"Public Order Tribunal" was created to deal with the bulk of political offences. Though still distinct from the ordinary courts it provided rather better facilities for defendants than did the military tribunals. Minor political offences, moreover, were entirely removed from the army's juristiction. But in 1968 responsibility for the trial of all political offences was, in principle , restored to the military. The army now has to waive its rights if the "Public Order Tribunal" is to be used. In most cases this happens but, as at Burgos, there are occasions when the army itself or the government causes the military to retain control over judicial proceedings. In the case of the Burgos trial this had a particular significance for it was precisely because of the activities of E.T.A. that earlier "liberalizing" tendencies had been reversed. Even in

the Basque country political offences are generally referred to the "Public Order Tribunal" but the Burgos trial well illustrated the particular harshness with which the State is (sometimes) prepared to act in dealing with local nationalist movements. Thanks to the presence of civilian defence councils, and the publicity that the trial attracted, it was made widely known that, under pressure, convictions would be made on the basis of flimsy evidence, in the absence of witnesses, after much of the defences case had been rejected out of hand and following apparent efforts to intimidate the defences spokesmen.

Not least of the defences difficulties, in this case, was the declaration, during the trial, of a state of emergency in the Province of Guipuzcoa (from which some of the most distinguished defence lawyers came). In principle, at least, that made these lawyers liable to arbitrary arrest and their offices to search without warrant. This sort of problem is, however, only one of the difficulties, confronting lawyers involved inthis type of work. Access to prisoners may some times be made difficult and the lawyers themselves subject to police surveillance. The tapping of the telephones of lawyers, for example, is not uncommon. *

Finally, brief mention has to be made of the prison conditions to which political offenders may besubjected, once convicted. The first anniversary of the Burgos trial has been celebrated by a hunger strike of over 1,00 Basque political prisoners, in all parts of Spain, designed to highlight the plight of some of their colleagues - particularly of those sentenced at Burgos. Their complaints of poor food, lack of reading material, isolation from fellow prisoners and infrequent visits from relatives are necessarily hard to verify but information

* At least one of the lawyers at Burgos has had his passport withdrawn. Another had his car burnt by private individuals whom the police did nothing to trace.

from former prisoners makes it plain that the Spanish prison authorities have a case to answer. There is every reason to believe, for example, that one of those originally sentenced to death at Burgos is in a steadily deteriorating mental and physical state.as a result of the conditions he must endure. There is at least a prima facie case for supposing that some Basque prisoners are being deliberately subjected to a singularly harsh prison life.

In addition to the approximately 2,100,000 inhabitants of the Spanish Basque country there are also about 200,000 Basques living in France. They inhabit the ~~"departements" of Labourd,~~ three départements ~~Basse-Navarre and Soule which all~~ border on the Franco Spanish frontier. They constitute a much less serious political problem than do their fellows in Spain and therefore warrant less attention in this report. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, some mention will be made of them.

The French Basque country differs in several important respects from Basque territory on the other side of the border. Firstly, it is an economically underdeveloped region constituting one of France's most depressed areas. During the ~~past~~ decade the areas very small industrial centre has contracted and unemployment has grown - factories have closed and new ones have not been opened. The region must therefore depend on small scale farming, fishing and a seasonal tourist traffic for its livelihood. Secondly, the region, because of its economic backwardness, has experienced a large scale migration of its population. Approximately 150,000 are to be found in Paris and many others in Latin America. Amongst these migrants is a very high percentage of the youngest and most able sections of the local population who are driven away by the lack of job opportunities. Thirdly, French Basques are, on the whole, much less politicized than their Spanish colleagues and have a much less developed national consciousness. Significant proportions of the population speak Basque and are interested in maintaining Basque traditions but relatively few have any form of active political involvement.x In Paris the region tends to be represented by Gaullist deputies of a conservative variety upon whom few local demands are made. Likewise, the Church in the area tends to be a very conservative body with

x The French public educational system and the mass media do not cater for the linguistic minority. In most cases, however, these sources of grievance have not been translated into political demands

little interest in mobilising the local population for radical political purposes.

For akk these reasons, the French Basques have thrown up no nationalist political movement to compare with the movement in Spain. There is a nationalist organization but its following is small. Recent events in Spain have encouraged some French Basques, particularly the young, to re-examine their position. For example, there are Basque exiles from Spain now working amongst French Basques with a view to encouraging a higher degree ofpolitical awareness. So far, however, their efforts have only made a limited impact.

On the other hand Spanish Basques can expect to receive a considerable amount of aid and comfort in the French Basque region. The existence of a friendly popula-tion on the other side of the frontier facilitates the smuggling of persons, literature and even arms.* Activists on the run, for example, can sometimes find refuge in France. Exiles living in France also find it relatively easy to have information passed back and forth across the border.

In combatting this type of traffic, the Spanish authorities can sometimes rely on the cooperation of their French counterparts. Basque lawyers in Spain, for example, cite cases of clients who have been quietly handed over to the Spanish police by French colleagues. Frequently this seems to be the result of local police initiatives but there is little evidence that the French government disapproves of such actions. On the ~~other~~ contrary there are instances of friendly French gestures being made toward the Spanish authorities. After the Burgos trial, for example, a prominent

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*. Traffic across the border is facilitated by two other factors. Firstly, it is relatively easy to make clandestine crossings of the Pyrenees. Secondly, the huge summer tourist traffic makes it impossible for the Spanish police to check everybody crossing officially.

Spanish exile who has publicized the Spanish Basque cause was expelled from the French Basque region and compelled to live elsewhere in France. Basque nationalists themselves sometimes suspect that French economic policy in the Basque country is deliberately geared to the maintenance of an inert region drained of all its most dynamic elements. Such assertions would be hard to verify but it is undoubtedly true that little has been done to develop the region and that French governments might have a vested political interest in preventing the emergence of a self-confident community willing to press nationalist demands.

CONCLUSION

At present the situation in the Spanish Basque country, on the surface, seems to be calm. Under the surface, however, there is great tension. The government's repressive measures have succeeded in removing a significant proportion of the regions most active nationalist and working class leaders- either by having them imprisoned or by driving them into exile - but there are many indications that local hostility to Franco's regime remains deep and widespread. During the crisis caused by the Burgos trial strikes, the closure of shops and the governments failure to organize demonstrations on the same scale as those elsewhere in Spain, all brought into the open the state of local opinion.* More recently Franco's traditionallsummer visit to San Sebastian has, from the public relations point of view, proved to be a failure. The absence of popular enthusiasm and the presence of many extra and sometimes clearly nervous policemen graphically illustrated the state of affairs in the Province where Basque nationalism now has its strongest foot-hold. Less spectacular events tell a similar story. Thus in the summer of 1971 Basque language teachers (all women) attending a professional gathering were charged with illegal association. Similarly, some sections of the local population look with apprehension upon the application of recent educational reforms which seem to offer greater state protection to the local language but which, in practice, could remove control over teaching of the language from private bodies, like the church, which have a real interest in its survival.

Faced with this type of pressure as many Basques as ever feelsthemselves to be in an occupied country with the

* Only in the 'cosmopolitan' city of Bilbao did the authorities succeed in organizing a substantial demonstration and that was relatively small. Elsewhere there were cases of ~~what~~ the police loosing control of whole townships for lengthy periods

security forces as their enemies and the local "upper classes" cast in the role of quislings. * In the Basque country more than any other part of Spain, including Catalonia, the Spanish government must rely upon force for maintaining its authority. In economic terms the region enjoys considerable prosperity but continuous attacks on the local culture and a very visible police presence give many Basques the real sense of forming an oppressed minority.

Within the Spanish government, and even the army, there are those who have had doubts about the efficacy of the harsher aspects of official policy. There were lengthy delays in staging the Burgos trial partly because of opposition from elements fearful of its effects upon international opinion. ** The same people sometimes privately regard stern repression as ultimately counter-productive. During the trial itself it became apparent that significant sections of the army were shocked by revelations of police torture and wished to avoid involvement in politically inspired judicial proceedings.*** It was perhaps pressure from such quarters that finally secured the commutation of the death sentences passed at Burgos. It seems unlikely, however, that moderate groups in the regime would be willing or able to compel any radical change in official polices. At present any relaxation of official pressure is likely to invite popular outbursts that the Spanish government could not tolerate.

x It is reported by local citizens that at the time of the Burgos trial, when tension was greatest, many of Bilbao's upper class moved out.

xx Prior to the trial, for example, the Foreign Ministry is believed to have carried ~~a lengthy~~ out a lengthy study of the likely effects of the trial upon foreign opinion and the implications these could have for Spanish association with the E.E.C.

xxx Army officers are infrequently involved in the interrogation of prisoners.

This means that, ultimately, one must look to Franco's opponents for a more constructive solution to the Basque problem. Until very recently significant elements amongst the opposition were, to say the least, reserved about major concessions to local nationalists. Communists and Socialists, in particular, continue to advocate the preservation of a unitary state. Recent events, however, have compelled some rethinking and there now seems to be a more general willingness to think about Basque autonomy within the framework of a federal union.x Such a solution would probably satisfy the majority of the Basque population and temporarily, at least, would even satisfy those whose eventual goal is an wholly independant Basque state. Moreover, some opposition groups now appreciate that failure to deal with moderate Basque demands could permit leadership of the nationalist movement to pass into more militant hands. E.T.A.'s views and aims are not shared by the bulk of Basques but, if nothing else, it has succeeded in strengthening the potential bargaining hand of its less militant rivals.

x It seems as if some Carlists would now look sympathetically on moderate Basque demands. In this connection it has to be mentioned that recently the Carlist stronghold of Navarra has been industrialized and experienced large scale immigration.

3

THE BASQUES (AND CATALANS)

by Dr. Kenneth Medhurst.

Introduction

In December 1970 the world's press briefly focussed its attention upon a military court room in the Spanish town of Burgos.[1] Sixteen Basque nationalists were being tried for a variety of offences, including an alleged assassination. Two of the accused were priests. Six of them were sentenced to death and their sentences were only commuted after the exertion of great international pressure upon Spain's government and following a heated political debate within the country itself.

The trial had been engineered by aggressively authoritarian elements within Franco's regime - particularly within the Spanish army. It was intended to deal a mortal blow to the militant Basque nationalist organisation E.T.A. (Freedom for the Basques) and to teach Basque nationalists of all types a salutory lesson.* In reality, however, the trial proved to be a serious embarrassment to Spain's government. The defendants, and their lawyers, exposed the essentially political nature of the proceedings and skilfully exploited an unprecedented opportunity for publicising their cause. Likewise, the trial demonstrated to the world the way in which the Spanish government deals with its political opponents and highlighted some of the more unsavoury or arbitrary aspects of the Spanish State's behaviour.

The problem of ~~ethnic~~ national minorities within the Spanish State, which the Burgos trial illuminated, is not a new one. Since the end of the nineteenth century Catalan nationalism has been a major political force.[2] Later, partly following the Catalan example, a Basque nationalist movement gathered momentum.[3] The demands of those involved varied from greater administrative autonomy for their respective regions to complete separation from Spain. But all were at one in reacting against the highly centralized state structure that eighteenth and early nineteenth century Spanish rulers had created.

* E.T.A.'s full Basque title is 'Euzkadi ta Akatasuna'

[Numbered bibliographical footnotes not yet included]

Catalans wished to re-assert the special identity of the region in which they lived instead of being administered through four centrally created provinces whose chief links were with Madrid rather than with each other.* Similarly, Basques articulated demands on behalf of the area populated predominantly by people of Basque stock and in which the ancient Basque language retained a foothold.** Catalan aspirations were largely satisfied in 1931 when the newly born Spanish Republic recognized the existence of a special autonomous region of Catalonia.[4] The recognition by Catalan nationalists that their fate was bound up with that of the Republic helps to explain why, in the Civil War of 1936-39, most Catalans rallied to the republican cause. Basque demands were not met until October 1936. The Spanish republican government then belatedly recognized an autonomous Basque Republic in return for local support for the former's military effort.[5]

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* These provinces are Barcelona, Gerona, Lerida and Tarragona. In each case the provincial capital bears the same name.

** The Spanish Provinces which nationalists regard as falling within "Euzkadi" - or the Basque 'national homeland' are Guipuzcoa (capital - San Sebastian). Vizcaya (capital Bilbao); Navarra (capital - Pamplona); and Alava (capital Vitoria). In practice the modern histories of Navarra and Alava have been very different from those of their neighbours. Alava, in particular, has a more ethnically mixed population containing many non Basques - the impact of Basque nationalism has therefore been limited in that area. Navarra (and to a lesser extent Alava) has been a stronghold of Carlism rather than Basque nationalism. Carlism was a nineteenth century arch-conservative dynastic movement which was regionally based but which became interested in the religious regeneration of Spain as a whole rather than in special regional demands. As will be seen there are also three French provinces, which are regarded as part of "Euzkadi". It should be made clear that Euzkadi has never, in fact, existed as a political entity.

Military victory for the insurgent forces of General Franco meant the destruction of special local political arrangements. The 'New Spain' was authoritarian and rigidly centralized in nature. Local nationalist parties, in common with all other opposition groups, were outlawed and the resulting political vacuum was filled by the one officially supported Falangist Party - or 'Movement' as it was later known. The Catalan and Basque regional governments were scrapped and their leaders executed , imprisoned or exiled. A Basque government continued to operate in exile but it became increasinly irrelevant to the internal Spanish political situation. In the case of those Basque Provinces (namely Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya) which had recognized the Basque Republic's authority there was even a loss of the small administrative privileges, the survival of which earlier Spanish governments had been prepared to allow.* On top of this there were determined efforts to stamp out the Catalan and Basque cultures and to eliminate those agencies which helped to give these regions their distinctive identities.

Present problems have to be seen against this background. The Civil War, and its aftermath, gave a new dimension to the distrust and bitterness which has characterized relations between Basques and Catalans, on the one hand, and Spanish

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* These surviving privileges were remnants of the local 'fueros' or special charters that had earlier been conceded by Spanish monarchs. The 'fueros' were withdrawn following local defeats in nineteenth century civil wars during which Basques had, to a large extent, been identified with the Carlist cause. The restoration of the 'fueros' was later one of the original and most potent motive forces behind Basque nationalism. It should be noted that Navarra and Alava, in return for supporting Franco's forces, have been allowed to retain some administrative privileges. They are minor in character but are without equal in Spain. Thus there is greater municipal autonomy in these provinces than elsewhere in the country and the two provincial councils have greater financial independence than their counterparts in the other forty eight provinces of metropolitan Spain.

governments based in Madrid, on the other.

The long standing feeling common amongst Catalans and Basques, that they constituted oppressed national minorities, received confirmation. Opposition to the re-created unitary state was driven underground but in some cases, at least, became all the more bitter for its failure to find adequate means of expression. In the rest of this discussion there will be a look at those factors which have fostered local nationalist movements and those factors which may explain the harsh responses that local nationalist demands have provoked within Spain. In particular there will be a discussion of the Basque problem and the form that it is currently taking. This is partly because of the interest aroused by the Burgos trial but also because of the peculiar intractability of the problem at this particular time.

The Root Causes of Local Nationalist Movements

Basque and Catalan nationalism must not be regarded as identical phenomena. These movements grew out of societies with different social structures and they took different forms. Whilst Catalan nationalism tended to be the forward looking nationalism of a modern minded community, Basque nationalism, at the outset, had a more romantic backward looking air about it. Moreover, the Catalan movement found expression through a variety of political parties, all tending to divide along class lines, but Basque nationalists, with few exceptions, supported the one Basque Nationalist Party (founded in 1894). The hard core of its mass support came from the region's socially conservative and intensely Catholic peasantry. Its leaders were drawn from the Basque lower middle and middle classes. Basque workers, by contrast, were principally organized under the umbrella of the Spanish

Socialist Party, which had little sympathy with regional movements. Similarly, 'upper class' Basque industrialists and financiers, with commercial interests all over Spain, had little to gain from the growth of a local nationalism.

Despite all this it is possible to make some generalisations about the genesis of the two movements. There are certain factors more or less common to both cases. The first of these is the relatively early growth of industry in the Catalan and Basque Provinces and the tendency, which still remains, for Spanish industry and industrial wealth to be concentrated in these areas. Thus in 1967 in Vizcaya (the Basque Province with the greatest concentration of industry) the income per capita was 65,000 Pesetas - a figure which was unsurpassed by any other Spanish province apart from Madrid.[6] Guipuzcoa and Barcelona came next on the list with 63,000 and 61,000 Pesetas respectively.*[7] Many other figures could be quoted which would confirm the same general picture of communities which, in economic terms, are relatively privileged and prosperous. On the surface this seems a curious basis for local nationalist movements nurtured on a strong sense of local grievance. Economic factors, however, have to be seen against the wider background of the political and psychological relationships between Basques, Catalans and the rest of Spain. In the first place resentment has been provoked by the feeling that the Spanish state, and more backward regions, are being subsidized at the expense of the Basque Country and Catalonia. Equally, there are feelings that links with Spain might act as a brake on the further economic growth of these areas. The central government and the spokesmen for other regions, on the other hand, naturally fear

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* Just to take one example, this is over double the size of the income per capita registered in the Province of Sevilla at the same time.

the consequences of loosing the benefits of association with Basques and Catalans and refuse to see why economic privileges (as they regard them) should also carry political privileges. Not least, at the present time, there is an unspoken fear of what would happen if other regions could no longer export their surpluses of under used or unemployed labour to more advanced northern areas.

These problems are compounded by friction and resentments of a perhaps less rational kind. The very prosperity of their regions has led some Basque's and Catalans to adopt a rather superior or patronising attitude towards the natives of other regions. Myths have grown up concerning the hard-working native of minority groups and rewards for hard work in the shape of a satisfactory socio-economic status. Such myths, in their turn. can give rise to self images to which people are expected to conform and which therefore take the form of self fulfilling prophecies. Conversely, those from more backward regions have tended to look with envy on their wealthier neighbours and have reacted against what they regard as their unfounded arrogance. Resentments of this type have been rationalized by accusing minorities of materialsim and of betraying Spain's traditional values. A situation has developed in other words, in which both sides tend to over-simplify complex problems and to think in terms of perhaps irrational but certainly influential stereotypes.[8]

Parallel problems arise out of relationships between local populations and the Spanish State. There seems to be, on the part of many Basques and Catalans, a sense of being alienated from offical institutions. This phenomena can be looked at under two headings. Firstly, there is a long standing and deeply rooted feeling that a highly centralized pattern of administration has been imposed on Catalonian and the Basque Country by politicians or officials who do not understand local problems and who neglect local insterests.[9] It is believed,

for example, that the present provincial divisions are instruments of a stifling central control rather than vehicles for the assertion of local demands. The fact that the provincial and municipal councils of the Basque and Catalan provinces generally provide more and better services than their counterparts in other regions serves merely to reinforce this sense of frustration. Secondly, there is the undoubted fact that ~~the~~ Basques and Catalans are under-represented in many of Spain's major public institutions. Before and even more, since the Civil War, disproportionately small numbers of Judges, civil servants, policemen and military personnel have been recruited from these groups. Between 1960 and 1964, for example, the Basque Provinces (including Navarra) supplied only 2.7 per cent of the students studying in Spain's army, air and naval academies, yet these same areas accounted for 6.2 per cent of the nation's total population.[10] Madrid, by contrast, accounted for 10 per cent of the nation's population yet it supplied 20.2 per cent of the studentsof the same academies.[11] Likewise, in 1967, only 4 per cent of the Directors General (divisional chiefs) within Spanish ministerial departments had originally come from Barcelona as against 21 per cent from Madrid.*[12]

This situation, originally at least, was not the product of a deliberately discriminatory policy on the part of the Spanish State. During the eighteenth century, for example, Basques played a particularly prominent part in the Spanish kingdom's central administration. Industrial development, however, provided the educated middle classesof Catalonia and the Basque Country with career opportunities in business and the professions. that were unavailable to comparable groups

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* It is only fair to comment here that a significant number of Basques can be found, at a high level, in certain branches of the civilian administration. But these people are either of Carlist background or come from the small social elite of the Basque Country which has traditionall maintained close links with Madrid.

in other parts of the country. The middle classes of Castille and Southern Spain frequently had to look to the bureaucracy for their material security but this became unnecessary for their Basque and Catalan counterparts. Thus new patterns of behaviour were created. Surveys suggest, for example, that career choices are made quite early and tend to be made in accordance with the expectations which are prevalent in a given locality.[12]

A 1963 survey of final year secondary school pupils indicated that 90 per cent of students in the Basque city of San Sebastian wished for a career in the private sector and nobody wanted to enter public service.[13] In Madrid the proportions were 68 and 31 per cent respectively.[14]

Such choices may not always be the result of deliberate discrimination but that has not necessarily meant an absence of friction. A predominance of Castillians (and other non Basques and Catalans) in ~~this~~ official posts has helped to feed on already strong sense of grievance. Local leaders, in business or the professions, have not only felt geographically remote from Spain's real centre of political power but they have also sensed difficulty in lobbying government departments on behalf of their interests. There is a belief, for example, that just after the Civil War a discriminating[ory] policy was pursued, for a time, against Catalan business.

Inevitably the nature of recruitment into the bureaucracy is sooner or later blamed for such decisions. This, in its turn, encourages local elite groups to redouble their commitment to business or other private activities and so the vicious circle is closed. Of equal importance is the friction that can be engendered on the spot between local populations and minor local functionaries of the central government. In a situation where the State (and not locally elected bodies) is responsible for administering most services of local

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interest there are many opportunities for such friction. This, of course, is not a problem confined to the Catalan and Basque Provinces but there the large percentage of 'outsiders' in public service adds to the difficulties - not least in a dictatorship which offers ample opportunity for high-handed official behaviour. The fact that in these areas the bulk of civil servants, policement, judges and soldiers are from other regions means that there is little room for trust in relationships between the citizen and the state. At ~~least~~ best the local populations feel they are paying for the support of an army of parasitical bureaucrats. At worst, in times of crisis, a sense of being an occupied territory, is easily engendered.

Conflicts of the type mentioned above are further exacerbated by the relatively high levels of political awareness to be found in the Basque and Catalan regions. Not only are these the most economically developed parts of Spain but they are also the most politically sophisticated. There are deep rooted local traditions of popular involvement in civic affairs without parallel elsewhere in Spain. Such traditions are in marked contrast with those of large parts of Castille, for example, where public affairs have generally been the concern of very small local elites. One mark of this civic consciousness is the relatively high quality (which has already been noted) of the services supplied by Basque and Catalan local authorities. Many municipalities in Guipuzcoa, for example, have long had their own facilities for the case of the aged and the sick. Until quite recently the bulk of municipalities in other regions were not even supplying the most elementary local services.[15] Another measure of this phenomenon is the propensity of Basques and Catalans for ~~the~~ forming or joining special interest groups clubs and voluntary associations. Even Spain's official trade unions, which meet with particularly strong opposition in the Basque and Catalan regions, seem to work more effectively in these areas.[16]

The net effect of this situation is that local opposition to the state is not only likely to be particularly widespread in the Basque Country and Catalonia but is also likely to take fairly sophisticated forms. In 1951, for example, there was a boycott of public transport in Barcelona which eventually induced the government to remove a particularly unpopular Provincial Governor.[17] The population of the Basque Country has also shown considerable solidarity in the face of official pressures. One indicator which can be mentioned at this stage is the local absention rate in recent elections. In elections (held in September 1971) for the 1/6th of Cortes

members who are chosen by popular vote the officially recorded turnout on the Province of Vizcaya was 33 per cent. In the city of San Sebastian (in Guipuzcoa) the figure was only 26 per cent. This was in spite of all the blandishments of official propaganda and of a legal obligation to vote. In Guipuzcoa it was also in spite of a "sitting member" who had shown unusual independence of mind.[18] In view of all the other available evidence, such figures cannot signify apathy so much as a deliberate repudiation of existing political arrangements by a politically conscious and well organized populace.

Group solidarity is promoted above all, of course, by the existence of distinctive national identities and a sense of belonging to distinct national communities. Vital to the nurturing of such a national consciousness is the existence of distinctive local languages and cultures. Indeed, modern Catalan nationalism ~~front~~ first found expression through a literary revival. Catalan (partly because it is closer to Spanish and so easier to acquire) has been spoken by larger groups of people than has been the case with the Basque tongue. In both cases, however, the language has become a badge of nationhood and has been spoken by significant proportions of the local population. Precisely because of this Franco's regime, in the aftermath of the Civil War, did its best to eliminate the use of languages other than Spanish. Until the early 1950's, at least, there was a strict ban on the use of Basque and Catalan in public places or for educational purposes. Thus local languages could not be used for public meeting or in public worship. There was also a ban on street or shop signs written in non-Spanish tongues. Particularly in the Basque country there were even attempts to stamp out the casual use of the local language anywhere outside of the home. A Basque of school age during the 1940's (who is now a priest) recalls uttering

a few words of his language during a game of street football and, as a result, being promptly marched off to a local police station where, on the spot, he was ordered to pay a fine.[19] In the educational sphere controls were particularly strict. Basque school teachers, for example, were dismissed unless they could prove their 'political reliability'. The places of these dismissed were often filled by recruits from other regions who were indifferent or hostile to local traditions. Non-Basque priests, called in to staff the region's large number of private Catholic schools, were not least amongst those falling into this category.* The use of the vernacular by pupils therefore became liable to punishment. A command to 'Hablar Cristiano' -(i.e. to speak the language of Christians!) was frequently uttered.

By the 1950's it was apparent that these measures, might make the spread of local languages difficult, and certainly cause much irritation, but that they could not wipe out non Spanish tongues. Simultaneously, the Spanish State, feeling itself to be more secure, began to rely rather less on repression for ensuring its survival. Thus small concessions began to be made to local sentiment. Local festivals of the folkloric variety were again sometimes ~~in the open (or Catalan)~~ permitted ~~reappeared~~. Likewise, the everyday use of the vernacular was again tolerated.**

On another level, the State instituted a chair of Catalan at Barcelona University (even if it did have difficulty in attracting candidates of the highest quality). In the Basque Country the Academy of the Basque Language was permitted to

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*. It has to be remembered that throughout Spain most secondary schools are Church controlled.

** In 1963 this writer heard Catalan being spoken in the headquarters of the Governor of the Province of Barcelona.

function - albeit as a wholly private body without state aid.

In nearly all these cases concessions were generally interpreted as little more than sops to local opinion. There are sound reasons for accepting this view. University chairs were of little interest to most Catalans and in the Basque Country there was not even this form of official support for the local language.

A lot of the most ~~sue~~ useful study of Basque was undertaken outside the Basque Country, at the Sorbonne, or by private individuals. The Academy of the Basque language was not only denied the funds needed for much of its work, but it was also prevented from working with Basques on the French side of the Pyrenees. Recently much has been done to standardize and update Basque but this work has not received offical encouragement.* Moreover, the vernacular is only exceptionally permitted as an instrumentof instruction. In the Basque Country an officially recognised school has recently been opened (in San Sebastian) where education is carried on in Basque. This is, however, an exception and the approximately 800 pupils it has already attracted suggests a large unsatisfied demand for this sort of facility. As it is children brought up exclusively in Basque are inevitably at a disadvantage in the educational system.

Though hard evidence is difficult to come by it does seem as if official policies have had some effect upon linguistic habits. Above all the need to learn Spanish in order to achieve educational success (and hence to obtain the best paid jobs) puts pressure upon the speakers of local languages. Surveys suggest that married couples (brought up before, during or just after the Civil War) who habitually communicate

* The Basque language in fact embraces three distinct dialects. Prior to the Civil War, at least, it was also an archaic tongue and not always a useful means of communication in a modern industrial society. The archaic form of the language is still spoken but determined private efforts are being made not only to standardize its grammar but also to update its vocabulary.

with their children in Spanish or on a bilingual basis. Certainly, in the Basque Country, at least, there was, until about 1960, a decline in the numbers using the vernacular. Moreover, there are indications that discriminating educational policies can affect the degree of skill with which a language is used. A recent survey of housewives (published 1970) suggested that more people could understand the Catalan or Basque languages than could speak them. The numbers able to read or write these languages were still smaller. In the Basque Country, for example, there wer indications that something like 50 per cent of housewives understood Basque 46 per cent spoke it, 25 per cent read it and only 12 per cent wrote it.* In other words the absence of formal instruction in languages other than Spanish seriously reduces literacy rates and the numbers with access to local literatures. References to specific individuals graphically illustrate the same point. This writer knows of highly educated Basques (who prior to going to school knew no Spanish) who are more literate in Spanish, French or even English than they are in their own mother tongue. In so far as the utility or vitality of a language depends on the maintenance of lively literary traditions this is a potentially significant factor.

Such problems are compounded by the attitude of the mass media toward Basque and Catalan. After the Civil War publication in these languages was wholly illegal and there was certainly no question of broadcasting in them. Recently there has been some modification of official policy but no substantial change. Official spokesmen can now point to a number of periodicals, literary reviews and books published in local languages and can cite them as evidence of their good will.** But, in reality, these officially tolerated

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* The comparable figures for Catalonia were 90 per cent 77 per cent, 62 per cent and 38 per cent.

** Of course such publications are, in any case, subject to censorship.

publications are only likely to be of interest to small intellectual minorities. There is relatively little provision for mass audiences. Recently some daily newspapers in the Basque country have begun to publish some items in Basque but usually there is little more than one page on one day of the week. It could be argued that this fairly reflects the numbers able to take advantage of the service but this is certainly not true of broadcasting. Though something like 50 per cent of the population understands Basque the state controlled television monopoly provides no Basque language programmes. Radio offers some Basque programmes but these are infrequent and usually come from purely local stations. The State, when it comes to the potentially most influential of the mass media, largely ignores the interests of linguistic minorities.*

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* The gap is partly filled by an underground press but this necessarily has a limited impact. It is also worth noting the considerable and frequently clandestine traffic in gramaphone records of Basque and Catalan songs.

Despite such obstacles the Catalan language has, at the least, held its own in the past decade and there are indications that the Basque language has done more than this. In the latter case a considerable share of the credit must go to special part-time schools, known as 'Ekastolas',[21] which have recently proliferated in the Basque Country. From the late 1950's until the present these have grown fairly steadily in numbers. There are no reliable statistics on the subject but some observers maintain there could now be as many as 300 of them. Until very recently, at least, they were all purely private, self-supporting bodies working quite outside the ~~offered~~ official education system. They have been created, often as a result of grass roots initiatives, by groups anxious to preserve the local linguistic heritage. Their foundation has been encouraged by nationalist political organizations like E.T.A., but also by ostensibly non-political agencies - notably the local Roman Catholic Church. Particularly in rural areas the Church has played an especially significant part in promoting the 'Ekastolas' movement. It has made premises available, supplied teachers and sometimes extended its protection when 'Ekastolas' have come under police surveillance.

Surveillance of this sort indicates that though 'Ekastolas' are legally tolerated they often have to operate under difficult conditions. The effort to propagate the Basque language must, at present, be regarded as a potentially hostile political act. Moreover, 'Ekastolas' sometimes become centres of more overt forms of resistance. Thus those involved in the work of these bodies frequently come across obstacles put in their path by public officials. In common with other voluntary bodies in Spain their incorporation requires an official licence and the State often makes difficult the acquisition or renewal of the licence. There are reports of unaccountable bureaucratic delays and of arguments over building or health regulations with which organizations operating on very small budgets could never hope to comply. There are also reports of police demands for lists of all students, staff and financial backers. This

latter requirement can be especially daunting for the mere fact of appearing on such a list is sometimes to invite suspicion. The lists form part of the general stock of police information about potentially dissident elements.

Within the past 12 months the State has found a new and perhaps more subtle method for diminishing the potential political dangers of the 'Ikastolas' movement. This takes the form of supplying official financial backing to certain of these schools. On the face of it this seems to be a major concession to local opinion. In reality, however, it is more like a 'divide and rule' tactic. The schools singled out for assistance are generally those least in need of it. They are the schools, supported by wealthy elements in Basque society, where the more archaic forms of Basque are taught and in which the emphasis is on the purely literary rather than the political aspects of the Basque cause. This tactic seems to be meeting with some success. The State now appears to some as a champion of the Basque language and so sows some dissension amongst potential opponents. Some Churchmen sponsored 'Ikastolas', for example, seem willing to accept official aid and, one supposes, the supervision which presumably goes with it. Others are stubbornly resisting this tendency but are in danger of finding their influence diminished. Nevertheless, the 'Ikastolas' have made a significant contribution to the dissemination of the Basque language and most of them, albeit with very limited resources, will probably remain outside the official orbit.*

An interesting feature of the work of the 'Ikastolas' has been the small but not insignificant number of pupils who are immigrants, or the children of immigrants, attracted to the Basque Country from other parts of Spain. This inevitably raises the whole question of immigration into the Basque and Catalan regions. It is an

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* The fact that pupils can only attend in their spare time shows that those attending must be highly motivated.

important question for immigration on a large scale could obviously lead to the creation of less homogeneous local populations and so perhaps weaken local nationalist movements.

igration

As Spain's principal industrial regions the Basque Country and Catalonia have long been the scene of major population movements. Initially these took the form of movements from the local rural hinterlands into cities like Bilboa or Barcelona. Such localized population movements continue but they have long since been superseded in importance by migration flows from other parts of Spain. A large part of the pre-civil war working-class of Catalonia, for example, was drawn from the much more backward Andalusian area (in Southern Spain). The Basque region initially attracted most of its immigrants from more northerly and more developed areas but recently it too has drawn migrants from the South. The net result of these processes was demonstrated by a survey, done in 1966, which found that 38 per cent of a sample of heads of households, and their wives, dwelling in the Basque provinces, had been born elsewhere.[22] In Catalonia immigrants have come to constitute an even larger proportion of the local population. Apart from Madrid the Basque and Catalan Provinces have had the fastest growing population rates in Spain and in both cases immigration has played a major part.[23] In the Basque Provinces, at least, probably more than 50 per cent of the local working-classes are now non-Basque in origin.

Most of this immigration has to be seen against the background of Spain's recent rapid industrial growth and of the tendency for this growth to be concentrated in already industrialized regions. The unemployed or underemployed of backward areas have been attracted by the possibilities of work in more dynamic communities. Sometimes, however, the supply of immigrant labour has outstripped the demand. At one point in the early 1950's, for example, Bilboa businessmen pressed the local Governor to seek a halt to immigration

as immigrants were too numerous to employ or house.[24]

Local nationalists have sometimes seen non-economic forces at work. They suspect that immigration has deliberately been encouraged by the Spanish Government in order to destroy the homogeneity of the hostile local populations. There is little concrete evidence to support this view though it seems likely that the government appreciates the existence of this possibility and will not strive officiously to reverse the trend. It cannot be wholly without significance that, in the case of the Bilboa businessmen which has just been mentioned, the Governor allegedly replied that he would close the railway station to migrants when local businessmen acted to check the Basque nationalist cause.

In the long run demographic tendencies certainly do seem to be working against local nationalist movements. The possibility of local communities assimilating such large numbers of immigrants seems remote. Indeed, sections of the native born populations have sometimes perhaps done harm to their own cause. Particularly in the Basque Country there has sometimes been a tendency to shirk from social contact with newcomers and from making the effort needed to integrate them into the local community. In extreme cases Basques have manifested feelings of racial superiority to those from other regions. More often local nationalists have been openly resentful of people who, it has been feared, are contributing to the destruction of local traditions. Various factors have contributed to the friction and the feelings of mutual hostility engendered in these circumstances. The official policy of housing immigrants in their own largely segregated areas is a case in point. The tendency for immigrants and natives to lead distinct lives is inevitably reinforced. There is also a possibility of tension arising as a result of the relatively low socio-economic status of many immigrants. Whilst immigrants now constitute a large proportion of the local working-class they form a fairly small proportion of lower middle-class groups (such as clerical workers and shopkeepers) and a still smaller fraction of

middle-class professional people. Moreover, when it comes to the obtaining of houses and the provision of other services the native born tend to ahve contacts and a knowledge of local conditions which places them at a distinct advantage vis a vis new arrivals.

There are now some Basque leaders to see the dangers inherent in this situation. Some Churchmen have recognised the existence of a pastoral problem and some nationalist political leaders see the risks involved in alienating immigrants. A certain amount of conscious effort is therefore now being made to integrate immigrants into the local community. There are now Basque priests working in Southern Spain amongst potential migrants and Churchmen within the Basque Country itself are trying to provide newcomers with social facilities. On the political front members of E.T.A. have tried to organize portions of the non-Basque working classes.

Inevitably, integration is much more easily achieved in rural areas. In the intimate atmosphere of a village immigrants are under much stronger pressure to adopt local ways of life than is the case in the more impersonal and cosmopolitan cities. (Particularly when the city is as highly industrialized as Bilbao)*. As the bulk of immigrants are city dwellers this seems to make the problem of assimilating them particularly difficult.

This difficulty is shared by Basques and Catalans alike.[25] A recent study of immigrants in Catalonia underlined the extent to which they have retained their distinctive identities.[25] There are two factors, however, which pose more acute problems for Basque than Catalan communities. Firstly, the Basque language obviously presents more difficulties for immigrants than does Catalan. Secondly, of

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* It is worth mentioning that industry through found throughout the Basque Country is concentrated particularly in the Province of Vizcaya and, above all, in Bilbao. It is therefore significant that the nationalist movement now has its centre of gravity in the Guipuzcoa where immigrants are fewer in number.

the Basque population is confronted with large numbers of immigrants who have come from other fairly well developed regions and who have brought with them their own fairly fixed cultural and political values. In Catalonia, by contrast, there are relatively larger numbers of immigrants from very poor areas lacking well developed cultures and characterized by low levels of political awareness.[26]

Despite these problems there are at least two factors which, at the moment, are working more in favour of the Basque than the Catalan nation. In the first place survey data indicates that there is a higher rate of inter-marriage between Basques and non-Basques than there is between Catalans and non-Catalans.[27]* In the second place (and this may appear ironic) the Basque Provinces, in the past decade, have been the subject of more repressive measures than the Catalan Provinces - repressive measures which, in the short run at least, have served to consolidate nearly all sections of local opinion in opposition to the central government.** The large scale participation of immigrant workers in protest strikes, at the time of the Burges trial, is one indicator of this. Some observers feel that, in a more open political system militant local nationalism could provoke strong reactions from immigrant populations. One writer has suggested that immigrants could play a role within Catalonia and the Basque Country, similar to the role of the Catholic population in Ulster.[28] At present, however, the central government has succeeded in enlarging the reserves of good will upon which local nationalists can draw and in partly offsetting the otherwise likely effects of population movements.

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* inter-marriage could of course work either way, as far as the question of assimilation is concerned, but on balance it is more likely to integrate the immigrant into the host co-munity rather than vice versa.

** this theme is treated at greate length below.

The Basque Church

Before proceeding to an examination of the present political situation in the Basque Country (and where relevent in Catalonia) the role of the Basque Church must be discussed. This is because the Church has traditionally exercised very great influence in Basque society and because the ~~Church~~ Basque people, taken as a whole, have been particularly loyal to it. It is not wholly coincidental, for example, that Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, was a Basque. Thus the Basque clergy, especially in rural districts but also in urban areas, have maintained a degree of daily contact with their parishioners which has been unknown in most other parts of Spain. Priests in this region have been accepted as part of the local community and have exercised leadership in community affairs. They have been regarded as something more than the providers of sacraments. Indeed, local community life has often revolved around the parish Church and priests have been intimately associated with the local social and even political life. This contrasts with the situation in parts of Catalonia (Barcelona in particular) where the Church lost effective contact with the great mass of people and where there was a fairly strong anti-clerical tradition.[29] In the Basque country the Church has even continued to ~~exist~~ exert considerable influence amongst the working classes who, elsewhere in Spain, have tended to become indifferent or hostile to organized religion. A few statistical references will provide some confirmation of this picture. In the Province of Barcelona (in 1967), for example there was one priest for every 1,528 people whilst in the Basque Country (excluding Navarra) the figure was one for every 535 persons.[30] Similarly, the Basque Country supplies a disproportionally large number of Spain's monks and nuns.[31] Finally, there are indications of particularly high Church attendances in the Basque Country.

This identification of priest and people helps to explain why the Basque clergy, in the main, supported the Republican cause during the Civil War in opposition to forces claiming to be fighting 'a Crusade'. Whilst nearly all other Spanish clergy were in General Franco's camp Basque priests, because of their sympathy with the local nationalist cause, were frequently found on the other side of the fence. In the heated atmosphere of that time this seemed, to many of Franco's followers, as a betrayal of both Spain and Spain's Catholic heritage. The inevitable upshot was some persecution of the Basque clergy. Hugh Thomas indicates that, in the aftermath of war, 278 Basque priests and 125 monks experienced deprivation, imprisonment, deportation to other parts of Spain and (in 16 cases) death.[31]

Since the Civil War the Church, as already observed, has played an important part in the propogation of the local language and culture. It has, however, also experienced serious internal difficulties. These difficulties can to some extent be seen as part of the world wide upheaval currently going on in the Roman Catholic Church but the local political situation has made the dilemmas of the Basque Church particularly acute. A major bone of contention has been the alliance which, until fairly recently at least, has existed between Church and State. Franco's regime has undoubtedly gained in authority as a result of Church support whilst the latter body has been rewarded with extensive privileges. The State, moreover, has had a say in episcopal appointments and has naturally used its influence to promote clergy sympathetic to its interests. Basque nationalists have therefore tended to regard official Church spokesmen with suspicion and as being agents of an anti Basque policy. It was noted, for example, that until the early 1960's local bishops were not appointed from amongst natives of the region. There was also

resentment because of Church acquiescence in official efforts to stamp out the Basque language. Rank and file clergy continued quietly to work alongside the local population but the position of Church leaders often gave offence.

In the past decade pressures from below have built up and have been reflected in divisions amongst the clergy.[33] The latter can now be roughly grouped in three categories. Firstly, there is a very small minority which is fervently pro Franco and which looks with horror upon Basque nationalism. They are mainly older clergy who resent recent changes in the Roman Church and who support the traditional alliance of Church and State. Secondly, there are many (probably constituting the great majority of Basque clergy) who sympathize with demands for local autonomy and who look for a democratic political system. In politics they are likely to be Christian Democrats or moderate socialists. In internal Church matters they usually approve of recent reforming trends. They, for example, often welcome the chance to conduct services in Basque.* Finally, there is a militant minority who, in politics, take a radical socialist position and who are also strongly committed to the nationalist cause. Some of these would accept the need for violent revolution as the means for achieving their goals and there are certainly many of them who sympathize with or assist the militant 'E.T.A.' As far as the Church is concerned their aim is to force their leaders to adopt new political positions and

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* It was only in 1966 that Basque was first used in a service. This happened in a Church in Bilbao recognized for its aid to the nationalist cause.

to promote a radical reform of what they regard as oppressively authoritarian ecclesiastical structures.

Priests of the latter school (who are usually from the post Civil War generation) have gained a good deal of their inspiration from a semi formal group of clerics which was formed in the mid 1960's in Vizcaya. This group, known as the 'Gogortasuna' group, through its meetings and contacts with sympathizers has helped to create some sense of esprit de corps amongst the younger and more militant clergy. Its members have been prominent in opposition political activities and in opposition to their own bishops. They have staged 'sit-ins' and hunger strikes designed to put pressure on bishops and obtain from them less equivocal denunciations of official policy and, in particular, local police methods. At present the group has been weakened by the exiling or imprisonment of many members. In late 1970, for example, there were some 26 Basque priests in gaol for political reasons including people from this original nucleus.* 34

The number of priests in goal is one measure of the opposition the State now has to face from significant sections of the Basque clergy. The presence of two priest at the Burgos trials was not something wholly extraordinary. Church premises, for example, have not only been used for relatively innocuous cultural purposes but they have also been the scene of nationalist political meetings - including meetings of E.T.A.** Likewise, clergy have helped in the

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*. Because of the terms of the Concordat between the Vatican and the Spanish State, priests have to be housed apart from other types of prisoner. This provision - agreed when the possibility of putting priests in gaol on a large scale seemed remote- is opposed by many of those involved. In practice priests are gaoled in a special prison in the remote Castillian Province of Zamora in which conditions are as harsh as in any other gaol.

** There are hardly any priests in E.T.A. but several have close contact with it and offer advice, including moral advice on the use of violence.

distribution of underground literature, the escape to France of wanted men and the organization of popular protest demonstrations. Not least, some use the pulpit to denounce the government, the police and the Basque region's economic elites.

Pressure from this sort of quarter highlights the extremely difficult and delicate position of official Church spokesmen in the Basque Country. A vocal minority amongst their subordinate demands radical action whilst ultra conservative Churchmen and the State join in condemning any concession to their point of view.** The difficulty has been particularly evident with regard to the question of torture. Faced with evidence of torture some bishops have preferred to deal in generalities rather than denouncing specific cases. Sich statements have outraged the Government without satisfying the more radical Churchmen. More recently (in April 1971) one bishop, that of Pamphora, has quite unequivocally denounced tortures the results of which he had seen with his own eyes. Such a statement indicates that the Basque Church, despite its divisions and equivocations, has become, even at the official level, a serious thorn in the flesh of the Spanish Government.

Opposition in the Basque Country

A portion of the Basque Church provides a focus for opposition to the Spanish government but opposition is now of a much more generalized kind. It comes from three other major sources in the society, opposition political parties, unofficial trade unions and professional or intellectual elements.[35]

**. There is one ultra conservative Catholic body, known as the Guerillas of Christ the King, which indulges in private acts of vandalism and even terrorism. Basque nationalists leaders and radical clergy are amongst their chief targets.

After the Civil War the opposition of Basque nationalists was led by the traditional Basque nationalist party - the P.N.V. From its headquarters in exile (in Paris) it sought to maintain its following and to direct operations against the Spanish authorities. The Socialists and, to a lesser extent, the Communist Party remained active amongst the local working classes but these bodies remained generally unsympathetic to the regional cause. The P.N.V., alongwith other opposition elements throughout Spain, thought that allied victory in the Second World War might lead to allied intervention in Spain and certainly would provoke the collapse of Franco's regime. It was because of this that, in 1946, an effort was made to unite all major opposition groups, including Basque and Catalan nationalists. Their relations were characterized, however, by mutual suspicion and there was a lack of energetic leadership. In any case Franco's regime was more firmly entrenched than it appeared (and foreign pressure merely had the effect of consolidating a degree of popular support for his government). In the Basque Country a high water mark was reached in the opposition's activities with a general strike, during 1947, which involved about 100,000 workers. It was promoted by the P.N.V., and its trade union wing, in alliance with the left wing trade unions. In appearence this was a major act of defiance, aimed against the government and the official trade unions, but in reality it produced no concrete results. The P.N.V.'s influence afterwards tended to decline and its dynamism to dwindle. Intermittent police action was generally sufficient to contain opposition activities.

Disatisfaction with the P.N.V.'s inactivity and impatience with its aging leadership led, in 1953, to the emergence of a radical splinter group, composed principally of students, which wished to adopt a more militant

policy. This group ultimately proved to be the forerunner of E.T.A. E.T.A. was set up in 1959, again mainly by middle class intellectuals, as a hierarchically structured and close knit conspiratorial organization. It was intended to combat the government by violent means, peaceful and popular resistance having been written off as ineffectual. Its first major foray (in 1961) was the derailing of a train carrying Carlist veterants to a meeting. After that it received serious police attention - having initially been dismissed as of little account. Arrests following this episode obstructed the organisation's development but it later undertook other activities. There were for example bank robbery intended to finance the organization and a television transmitting mast was blown up. Such gestures were a source of considerable embarrassment to the Spanish Government and its reaction was fierce. In 1968, for example, a state of emergency was declared throughout the Basque Country during which there were large scale round-ups of suspects. The climax of E.T.A.'s campaign came with the assasination of a local police chief notorious in the area for the savagery of his interrogation methods. It was following this episode that the Government decided on a show down and the Burgos trial was therefore staged.

The membership of E.T.A. is impossible to estimate. One difficulty is that, because of the prestige it currently enjoys in the Basque country, unlicenced people use its name when promoting political, trade union or other opposition activities. The organisation, therefore, appears larger and more ubiquitous than it probably is. It seems likely that, at the very most, it has little more than 1,000 committed adherents. Their influence has, however, been fairly extensive. This has been partly due to the structure of the movements

It has, infact, four "fronts" or specialised agencies. These are responsible for fund raising, the promotion of the local language and culture, the spread of propoganda and the conduct of guerilla operations. The second and third of these, in particular, bring E.T.A. into contact with significant sections of the local population.

Throughout its brief history E.T.A. has been plagued by factionalism. To chart the intricacies of its internal politics would be a lengthy process lying beyond the scope of this report.[36] It can be said, however, that there have always been at least two major tendencies within the organization. The first consists of those who first and foremost have been romantic nationalists prepared to use violence to obtain autonomy if not independence for the Basques. They subscribe to a socialist type of ideology but their socialism is of secondary importance. Others, however, (rather like some left wing French Canadian nationalists) see nationalism merely as a means toward the creation of a socialist society. For them independence is the pre-condition of a Basque socialist republic which will later set an example to and co-operate with similar republics elsewhere on the Iberian Peninsular. Whilst those in the first category tend to see all Spaniards as their enemies the latter argue that the Basque working classes should join with the workers throughout Spain against the common enemy, as they see it, - the capitalists ruling class and the state which is its instrument. At the present time the second tendency is in the ascendant. Moreover, following recent disruptions of E.T.A.'s leadership, there has been some switch of emphasis away from elite directed guerilla campaigns and towards mass political education. It is now being argued that a genuine socialist revolution cannot be

sparked off, even in the midst of a sympathetic population, if the mass of the people is not fully aware of what is involved. The fruits of this new approach remain to be seen but it looks as if violence, on a large scale, has for the time being been given a lower priority.

The socialist content of E.T.A.'s programme was developed in response to the P.N.V.'s presumed inadequacies. It was felt that the latter's moderate Christian Democratic approach was ill-suited to a highly industrialized society and would deny the nationalist movement influence amongst the steadily growing Basque working class. In fact recent developments have impelled portions of the P.N.V., and its trade union wing, to move leftward and to adopt a moderate Social Democratic position.

In the long run this means that the party might be able to extend its appeal beyond the middle and lower middle class elements, who now form the hard core of its supporters, and into the local working class. At present, however, Basque workers continue to be organized most effectively by Socialist, Communist, and to a lesser extent the left wing Catholic groups. * These groups have found a basis for co-operation within the unofficial Workers Commissions which, particularly since 1964, have grown up throughout Spain. Though left wing groups may be divided over long term objectives the Commissions have provided them with some sort of temporary tactical unity. Their objectives

are of essentially two kinds. In the first place they are concerned with higher wages and better conditions. Secondly, they wish to destroy the present system of state controlled unions and replace it with independent organizations. The tendency, during the 1960's, for industrial conflict to grow in scope and intensity indicates the degree of support these Commissions have obtained and the extent of working class opposition to Franco's regime. Indeed, in Catalonia industrial and class conflict has for the time being, at least, become a more significant political issue than the regional question. The regional question is one cause of discontent which forms grist to the oppositions mill, but broader economic and political matters received more attention. This may reflect some weakening of the Nationalist movement and suggests that immigration, in Catalonia, has indeed had some of the effects that nationalists feared. * In the Basque country, however, the present situation is perhaps a little more complex. The bulk of workers are probably more concerned with economic issues and with changing the Spanish political system that they are with the regional cause. Rpeated strike waves which, as recently as October, 1971, have brought large sections of industry in the Basque country(as well as other industrialised regions of Spain) to a halt have had economic demands and the weakening of the government's authority as their primary motives. Events at the time of the Burgos trial, however, suggest a certain solidarity on the part of workers in the Basque region with the local nationalists. At that time there were protest strikes all over Spain, not least in Catalonia, but stoppages were most complete in the Basque

x All the major opposition parties in Catalonia are branches of Spanish parties - even though they may wear special regional labels. There are no equivalents of the P.N.V. or E.T.A.

region. Of course the scale of these strikes(which had no post Civil War precedents except perhaps those of 1947) was partly because the trial awakened a general sence of indignation that had little specifically to do with the Basque Nationalist cause. It was more a question of revulsion against the State's methods. By the same token none nationalist opposition leaders found, in the trial, a ready stick with which to beat the government. Nevertheless, there are indications that mixed in with this complex of motives was more than a sneaking sympathy for the nationalist cause - a sympathy which E.T.A.'s activities and the State's harsh response has probably done much to awaken. It is a sympathy which is even to be found amongst workers of none Basque origin. Harsh official measures have called forth a significant degree of communal solidarity amongst groups which, in thelong run, might have diverging interests.

Other dissentient voices have been found amongst local intellectual and professional groups. Such elements are mainly recruited from the social strata which have traditionally provided Basque nationalism with its hard-core supporters. Present political circumstances have conspired, however, to push certain of these groups into positions of particular prominence. Thus some Basque intellectuals, along with some of their peers elsewhere in Spain, have used their prestige to publicize protests against official actions. They have, for example, signed public protests against the torturing of political prisoners. Above all, lawyers have found themselves in the oppositions vanguard. As an organized group they have been impelled by their professional values and interests to press for changes in the judicial system. They have, for example, demanded that political offences should not be tried before special tribunals and that

political prisoners should not be housed along with common criminals. As individuals they have defended those charged with political crimes. This was particularly important at the Burgos trial where lawyers (both Basque and non-Basque) helped to show to the world the arbitrary nature of the proceedings. * Such individuals represent many shades ofopinion. They include members of the Communist Party, " Christian Marxists", Socialists and Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and Traditional nationalists. In some cases the groups with which they are associated have no special interest in the regional question and in most instances they are unsympathetic to E.T.A.'s brand of nationalism. Nevertheless, they show how even relatively moderate middle class Basque opinion has been consolidated in Oppoition to the Spanish state as a result of official policy.

* These groups, of course, have their parallels in Catalonia. The Barcelona "College of Lawyers", for example, has been prominent in staging anti-government protest. Individual lawyers, writers, university teachers and other professional men have also been involved in and been punished for anti-government activities. A spectacular example of the political involvement of Catalan intellectuals was provided by a "sit-in", by what amounted to the Catalan intellectual elite, which was organized in protest against the Burgos trial.

Repression in the Basque Country

Oppoition has been consolidated by the repression which, particularly since 1968, has characterized the Spanish Government's dealings with regional movements and, above all, with Basque nationalism. This makes it necessary to scrutinize the repressive machinery which the Spanish state has at its desposal and how, in the Basque context, it has functioned. First, however, it is worth asking why the Spanish state has responded so ferociously to militant Basque nationalism. On the face of it, at least, the government would seem to be over-reacting and so playing the opposition's game. E.T.A. has worked on a theory that action will provoke repression which will provoke further resistance and so on, in a continuing upward spiral. In some measure they have been proved correct. It is true that repression has so far been more than sufficient for the containing of opposition but in the process there has been a hardening of opinion in the Basque country itself and a heightening of political tension throughout the rest of ~~the State~~ Spain.

In trying to explain the situation at least three points are worth bearing in mind. Firstly, it has to be remembered that on the Spanish right-wing, and in the Spanish army, there is a strong ideological committment to a unitary state which can provoke irrational reactions to the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ appearance of centrifugal forces within the Spanish polity. This seems to be bornaout by the sometimes emotional nature of the huge pro-government demonstrations organized by Falangists and army officers at the time of the Burgos trial. Secondly, it is perhaps true that Basque nationalism, though a late-comer as compared with Catalan nationalism, has always had a rougher edge to it. The Basques have perhaps proved a

more stubborn foe for Spanish governments. Thus Basque militancy is particularly likely to produce an angry and perhaps frightened response. Finally, there is the Spanish government's fear that concessions to one nationalist movement would encourage others. In particular there is a fear of revitalizing Catalan nationalism. As a Spanish minister allegedly said - "Give the Basques an inch and the Catalans would take several miles".[37] The sympathy elicited for the Basque cause, in Catalonia, at the time of the Burgos trial might lend some substance to this view.

In its dealings with the Basque people the Spanish state can count on several repressive agencies. In the first place the region, in common with all other parts of Spain, is garrisoned by troops who are as important for their internal policing funtion as for their contribution to national defence. In an emergency the army could, if it remained loyal, nip in the bud any serious revolutionary outbreak. At present there are reformist elements within this body but key commands are controlled by individuals loyal to the regime. Some of these might subsequently accept some form of civilian control but others still view the army as the ultimate arbiter of the "general will". Except for the part played by military courts in legal proceedings the military's policing function is not always apparent but it is afactor with which all militant opposition must ultimately contend.[38]

Of greater importance in the day to day control of the Basque country are the state's police forces. First, there is the "Armed Police" force, ultimately dependent on the Ministry of the Interior in Madrid, which is responsible for the control of large urban centres. In rural, coastal, and

frontier areas, the policing function is performed by the very efficient para-military "Civil Guard". This body is particularly well disciplined and an especially effective repressive instrument. Finally, there is the political police - or "Brigada Social" - which owes a good deal of its present organization to post Civil War assistance from German advisors. These bodies must not be considered as irresistably efficient forces. For one thing there is frequent friction between the Civil Guard, wit its own well developed esprit de corps, and other forces. For another, the "Armed Police" force contains a fair proportion of inexperienced recruits who are not always effective in the repression of opposition activities and who can be fairly easily demoralized. Nevertheless, particularly since 1968, large numbers of extra police (of all kinds) have been moved into the Basque country. In 1970, for example one estimate put the numberof Civil Guards at 15,000.[39] In such circumstances clandestine opposition activity becomes difficult and the smallest sign of more open activity is liable to be pounced upon. Frequently police, made nervous by the extent of local hostility, over-react to what they regard as suspicious circumstances. A young people's church service for example can be construed as a potentially dangerous gathering with political implications and so leads to molesting and the taking of names. Such daily pin pricks help to contain opposition but they also serve to politicize other people previously uninvolved in any form of active resistance.

The police are assisted by an unspecified number of informers. Some of these are simply police under-cover agents but others are local citizens in the police's pay. The latter are particularly important to the security forces for most

policemen are strangers to the region and so easily become the subjects of local suspicion. Moreover, militant nationalists make a point of using the Basque tongue and there are very few policemen capable of understanding it. This reliance on private informers is in some respects a source ofweakness. Particularly in close knit villages, or small towns, private informers are quite likely to be quickly unmasked and they may be inefficient in infiltrating into political groups. Intimidation and blackmail have led to the infiltration of the lower ranks of a body like E.T.A. but the higher ranks have been a more difficult proposition. [40]

The task of the security forces is to some extent, facilitated by an absence of effective contraints upon their behaviour. The law states that in normal times nobody can be arrested or have their premises searched without a warrant, held for more than 72 hours without appearing before the courts nor be physically mistreated. It also states that charges cannot be brought against priests without their bishop's permission. In practice these rules are frequently honoured as much in the breach as in the observance. The incidence of arbitary arrest, illegal detention and the mistreatment of prisoners is hard to calculate with accuracy but they are all undoubtedly fairly frequent phenomena. For example, a book published in Paris in 1970 listed 36 attested cases of systematic brutality - which may fairly be described as torture - being used to obtain confessions during 1968 and 1969.[41] Lengthy beatings, deprivation of food and sleep, near suffocation by drowning, threats against relatives, sustained efforts to produce a sense of degradation in prisoners, along with other forms of brutality, all seem to have been fairly commonplace. In the course of such proceedings,

prisoners, are held completely incommunicado, sometimes well beyond the 72 hour limit. Efforts by lawyers or relatives to track down detainees can be frustrated by various expedients, including moving them from place to place. Moreover, when - for political reasons - a state of emergency is declared, all the customary legal rights are temporarily withdrawn thus exposing prisoners to indefinite periods of detention, ill treatment or systematic torture.

It is privately admitted by lawyers, for example, that allegations against the police are sometimes exaggerated or ~~false~~ false. Stories have been put about to discredit the security forces, and prisoners, afraid for themselves, have been known to give away information and subsequently justify themselves by suggestions of brutality. Also, it is apparent that the degree of force used depends on such factors as the seriousness of the case under investigation or the speed with which results are required. Frequently, ill treatment falls short of any thing that would be conventionally described as torture. Nevertheless, interviews with lawyers and priets who have seen the resulys of ill treatment make it plain that torture has been fairly often employed. Most of the defendants at Burgos, for example, were undoubtedly the victims of such treatment.

In seeking redress against arbitary police behaviour, the resources available to citizens are extremely limited. This writer has heard of no successful prosecution for wrongful arrest in the Basque Country. Charges brought against the Governor of Guipuzcoa, for example, were countered by appointing him to Spain's legislature - the Cortes - and so granting him 'parliamentary immunity'. At the most

police have been suspended for a brief while for misuses of their power. In the case of brutality or torture, the courts have almost invariably dismissed allegations on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Evidence is, of course, hard to obtain as prisoners are usually kept out of sight until the visible signs of illtreatment have gone and doctors are often unable or unwilling to sign the necessary medical certificates. The courts must, however, accept much responsibility as they clearly are prepared to turn a blind eye . Senior government officials must also be held responsible for turning a blind eye. They do not necessarily encourage the police but they do little or nothing to discourage them. Usually allegations of arbitary police behaviour are summarily dismissed and if instructions prohibiting excesses are sent out, little is done to enforce them.

Recently, and especially since the Burgos trial, there have been signs of greater caution on the part of the police. A new regional police fuchief has taken some steps to refurbish his force's hardly tarnished image.[42] For example, greater facilities are now available for visiting prisoners who are awaiting trial. There is also less obvious brutality. On the other hand it seems as if the police may be resorting to a more subtle means - namely drugs - for obtaining confessions. Members of the nationalist movement believe that two detainees are in mental hospitals as the result of such drug treatment.

In dealing with offences of a political nature the State generally uses special courts. These courst are of course, used to deal with political offences committed anywhere in Spain but their use for dealing with opposition in the Basque (and Catalan Provinces) has been particularly frequent and attracted particular attention. The history of such courts goes back to punitive post Civil War legislation aimed at rooting out all opponents of the victors.[43] Military tribunals

were then given sweeping powers for dealing with such offences as illegal association, illegal propaganda, and more serious offences involving terrorism or sabotage. The powers of the courts were all the more sweeping for being imprecisely defined. It was never wholey clear where the dividing line had to be drawn between their juristiction and that of the ordinary courts. Military courts, moreover, were bodies which, by their nature, handed out a very summary form of justice. Initially judges, prosecutors and defence councils were all serving officers under military discipline. There was also no room for the cross examination of witnesses or the careful weighing of evidence. In practice a presumption of guilt was attached to defenders and they had few legal resources upon which they could call. Sentences tended to be carried out rapidly and appeals could only be made within the military hierarchy

With the passing of time such courts were used with less frequency and in the early 1960's there were tentative efforts to "liberalize" this system. Civilian lawyers were permitted to appear as defence councils and a special "Public Order Tribunal" was created to deal with the bulk of political offences. Though still distinct from the ordinary courts it provided rather better facilities for defendants than did the military tribunals. Minor political offences, moreover, were entirely removed from the army's juristiction. But in 1968 responsibility for the trial of all political offences was, in principle, restored to the military. The army now has to waive its rights if the "Public Order Tribunal" is to be used. In most cases this happens but, as at Burgos, there are occasions when the army itself or the government causes the military to retain control over judicial proceedings. In the case of the Burgos trial this had a particular significance for it was precisely because of the activities of E.T.A. that earlier "liberalizing" tendencies had been reversed. Even in

the Basque country political offences are generally referred to the "Public Order Tribunal" but the Burgos trial well illustrated the particular harshness with which the State is (sometimes) prepared to act in dealing with local nationalist movements. Thanks to the presence of civilian defence councils, and the publicity that the trial attracted, it was made widely known that, under pressure, convictions would be made on the basis of flimsy evidence, in the absence of witnesses, after much of the defences case had been rejected out of hand and following apparent efforts to intimidate the defences spokesmen.

Not least of the defences difficulties, in this case, was the declaration, during the trial, of a state of emergency in the Province of Guipuzcoa (from which some of the most distinguished defence lawyers came). In principle, at least, that made these lawyers liable to arbitary arrest and their offices to search without warrant. This sort of problem is, however, only one of the difficulties, confronting lawyers involved inthis type of work. Access to prisoners may some times be made difficult and the lawyers themselves subject to police surveillance. The tapping of the telephones of lawyers, for example, is not uncommon. *

Finally, brief mention has to be made of the prison conditions to which political offenders may besubjected, once convicted. The first anniversary of the Burgos trial has been celebrated by a hunger strike of over 1,00 Basque political prisoners, in all parts of Spain, designed to highlight the plight of some of their colleagues - particularly of those sentenced at Burgos. Their complaints of poor food, lack of reading material, isolation from fellow prisoners and infrequent visits from relatives are necessarily hard to verify but information

* At least one of the lawyers at Burgos has had his passport withdrawn. Another had his car burnt by private individuals whom the police did nothing to trace.

from former prisoners makes it plain that the Spanish prison authorities have a case to answer. There is every reason to believe, for example, that one of those originally sentenced to death at Burgos is in a steadily deteriorating mental and physical state.as a result of the conditions he must endure. There is at least a prima facie case for supposing that some Basque prisoners are being deliberately subjected to a singularly harsh prison life.

In addition to the approximately 2,100,000 inhabitants of the Spanish Basque country there are also about 200,000 Basques living in France. They inhabit the three départements ~~"departements" of Labourd, Basse-Navarre and Soule~~ which all border on the Franco Spanish frontier. They constitute a much less serious political problem than do their fellows in Spain and therefore warrant less attention in this report. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, some mention will be made of them.

The French Basque country differs in several important respects from Basque territory on the other side of the border. Firstly, it is an economically underdeveloped region constituting one of France's most depressed areas. During the past decade the areas very small industrial centre has contracted and unemployment has grown - factorys have closed and new ones have not been opened. The region must therefore depend on small scale farming, fishing and a seasonal tourist traffic for its livelihood. Secondly, the region, because of its economic backwardness, has experienced a large scale migration of its population. Approximately 150,000 are to be found in Paris and many others in Latin America. Amongst these migrants is a very high percentage of the youngest and most able sections of the local population who are driven away by the lack of job opportunities. Thirdly, French Basques are, on the whole, much less politicized than their Spanish colleagues and have a much less developed national consciousness. Significant proportions of the population speak Basque and are interested in maintaining Basque traditions but relatively few have any form of active political involvement.[x] In Paris the region tends to be represented by Gaullist deputies of a conservative variety upon whom few local demands are made. Likewise, the Church in the area tends to be a very conservative body with

x The French public educational system and the mass media do not cater for the linguistic minority. In most cases, however, these sources of grievance have not been translated into political demands

little interest in mobilising the local population for radical political purposes.

For all these reasons, the French Basques have thrown up no nationalist political movement to compare with the movement in Spain. There is a nationalist organization but its following is small. Recent events in Spain have encouraged some French Basques, particularly the young, to re-examine their position. For example, there are Basque exiles from Spain now working amongst French Basques with a view to encouraging a higher degree ofpolitical awareness. So far, however, their efforts have only made a limited impact.

On the other hand Spanish Basques can expect to receive a considerable amount of aid and comfort in the French Basque region. The existence of a friendly population on the other side of the frontier facilitates the smuggling of persons, literature and even arms.* Activists on the run, for example, can sometimes find refuge in France. Exiles living in France also find it relatively easy to have information passed backs and forth across the border.

In combatting this type of traffic, the Spanish authorities can sometimes rely on the cooperation of their French counterparts. Basque lawyers in Spain, for example, cite cases of clients who have been quietly handed over to the Spanish police by French colleagues. Frequently this seems to be the result of local police initiatives but there is little evidence that the French government disapproves of such actions. On the ~~other~~ contrary there are instances of friendly French gestures being made toward the Spanish authorities. After the Burgos trial, for example, a prominent

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*. Traffic across the border is facilitated by two other factors. Firstly, it is relatively easy to make clandestine crossings of the Pyrenees. Secondly, the huge summer tourist traffic makes it impossible for the Spanish police to check everybody crossing officially.

Spanish exile who has publicized the Spanish Basque cause was expelled from the French Basque region and compelled to live elsewhere in France. Basque nationalists themselves sometimes suspect that French economic policy in the Basque country is deliberately geared to the maintenance of an inert region drained of all its most dynamic elements. Such assertions would be hard to verify but it is undoubtedly true that little has been done to develop the region and that French governments might have a vested political interest in preventing the emergence of a self-confident community willing to press nationalist demands.

At present the situation in the Spanish Basque country, on the surface, seems to be calm. Under the surface, however, there is great tension. The government's repressive measures have succeeded in removing a significant proportion of the region's most active nationalist and working class leaders- either by having them imprisoned or by driving them into exile - but there are many indications that local hostility to Franco's regime remains deep and widespread. During the crisis caused by the Burgos trial strikes, the closure of shops and the government's failure to organize demonstrations on the same scale as those elsewhere in Spain, all brought into the open the state of local opinion.* More recently Franco's traditionall summer visit to San Sebastian has, from the public relations point of view, proved to be a failure. The absence of popular enthusiasm and the presence of many extra and sometimes clearly nervous policemen graphically illustrated the state of affairs in the Province where Basque nationalism now has its strongest foot-hold. Less spectacular events tell a similar story. Thus in the summer of 1971 Basque language teachers (all women) attending a professional gathering were charged with illegal association. Similarly, some sections of the local population look with apprehension upon the application of recent educational reforms which seem to offer greater state protection to the local language but which, in practice, could remove control over teaching of the language from private bodies, like the church, which have a real interest in its survival.

Faced with this type of pressure as many Basques as ever feel themselves to be in an occupied country with the

* Only in the 'cosmopolitan' city of Bilbao did the authorities succeed in organizing a substantial demonstration and that was relatively small. Elsewhere there were cases of the police loosing control of whole townships for lengthy periods.

security forces as their enemies and the local "upper classes" cast in the role of quislings. * In the Basque country more than any other part of Spain, including Catalonia, the Spanish government must rely upon force for maintaining its authority. In economic terms the region enjoys considerable prosperity but continuous attacks on the local culture and a very visible police presence give many Basques the real sense of forming an oppressed minority.

Within the Spanish government, and even the army, there are those who have had doubts about the efficacy of the harsher aspects of official policy. There were lengthy delays in staging the Burgos trial partly because of opposition from elements fearful of its effects upon international opinion. ** The same people sometimes privately regard stern repression as ultimately counter-productive. ~~The~~ During the trial itself it became apparent that significant sections of the army were shocked by revelations of police torture and wished to avoid involvement in politically inspired judicial proceedings. *** It was perhaps pressure from such quarters that finally secured the commutation of the death sentences passed at Burgos. It seems unlikely, however, that moderate groups in the regime would be willing or able to compel any radical change in official polices. At present any relaxation of official pressure is likely to invite popular outbursts that the Spanish government could not tolerate.

* It is reported by local citizens that at the time of the Burgos trial, when tension was greatest, many of Bilbao's upper class moved out.

** Prior to the trial, for example, the Foreign Ministry is believed to have carried ~~out~~ out a lengthy study of the likely effects of the trial upon foreign opinion and the implications these could have for Spanish association with the E.E.C.

Army officers are infrequently involved in the interrogation of prisoners.

This means that, ultimately, one must look to Franco's opponents for a more constructive solution to the Basque problem. Until very recently significant elements amongst the opposition were, to say the least, reserved about major concessions to local nationalists. Communists and Socialists, in particular, continue to advocate the preservation of a unitary state. Recent events, however, have compelled some rethinking and there now seems to be a more general willingness to think about Basque autonomy within the framework of a federal union.x Such a solution would probably satisfy the majority of the Basque population and temporarily, at least, would even satisfy those whose eventual goal is an wholly independant Basque state. Moreover, some opposition groups now appreciate that failure to deal with moderate Basque demands could permit leadership of the nationalist movement to pass into more militant hands. E.T.A.'s views and aims are not shared by the bulk of Basques but, if nothing else, it has succeeded in strengthening the potential bargaining hand of its less militant rivals.

x It seems as if some Carlists would now look sympathetically on moderate Basque demands. In this connection it has to be mentioned that recently the Carlist stronghold of Navarra has been industrialized and experienced large scale immigration.