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BASQUE NATIONALISM

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In late 1970 the trial in Spain of sixteen Basques, alleged members of a separatist group called ETA, provoked a series of events which journalists have labelled "the greatest political crisis of the Franco years." The events in question included a general strike in the two Basque provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya, imposition of a state of emergency in those areas, fear of a general strike in the nation, closure of universities, street demonstrations in Madrid and Granada, pleas of clemency from the Vatican, several foreign governments and a large number of Spain's intellectuals, and detention of many leaders of non-Basque political opposition groups. When the Burgos military tribunal handed down harsh penalties, including nine death sentences, the army was placed on alert and all eyes were turned upon Franco who alone had the power to stay the executions. In a nation-wide address Franco defused the situation by commuting the death penalties to long term imprisonment.

It would be erroneous to conclude from these events that the relatively obscure Basque nationalist movement is currently striking a responsive chord throughout non-Basque sectors of Spanish society. In fact it would be more accurate to state that a groundswell of popular support for the accused developed despite their Basque nationalist pretensions. The trial at Burgos simply served as a convenient

cause celebre for the spectrum of Spanish opposition groups. However, if the recent events cannot be interpreted as general approbation for Basque nationalist aims, it is equally evident that Franco's defusing of the immediate crisis accomplished little for the ongoing governmental effort to cope with the Basques' challenge to centralist authority within Spain's political life. Furthermore, it is likely that Basque nationalism will continue to grow and that the level of violence will escalate. This prediction follows from a consideration of the history of the Basque nationalist movement.

The Basque country straddles the French-Spanish frontier at a point where the western range of the Pyrenees meets the Cantabrian seacoast. Four of the provinces (Guipuzcoa, Vizcaya, Alava, and Navarra) and three of the former provinces (Labourd, Basse Navarre, and Soule) of the present French Department of the Basse Pyrenees constitute the Basque area. In terms of size, population, and economic importance the Spanish provinces dominate with about 6/7 of the total land area of slightly more than 20,000 square kilometers and 10/11 of the total population of 2.2 million persons.¹ While the total land area is quite small (less than one hundred miles across on either an east-west or a north-south tangent) the broken nature of the landscape and the exposure to the sea provide the Basque country with a wide variety of ways of life. These include pastoralism in the higher mountains, villages of peasant agriculturalists in the rolling hills of the northern regions, large agricultural estates in the flat arid plains of the southernmost areas, and fishing and merchant marine activities along the seacoast. The two Spanish Basque provinces of Vizcaya and

Guipuzcoa, the hotbeds of the modern Basque nationalist movement, are among the most highly industrialized regions of the Iberian peninsula and enjoy the highest rate of per capita income in Spain (Payne 1967: 85). Bilbao, the capital city of Vizcaya, is a major financial, industrial, and shipping center for the nation. Finally, in recent years tourism has become an important factor in the economy of the Basque area.²

These economic resources and activities are distributed unevenly. The Spanish Basque area has a diversified, broadbased economy, including agriculture, fishing, light and heavy industry, shipping and tourism. It is one of the most dynamic regional economies in Spain, which has meant rapid population growth as migrants from other parts of the nation flock to the industries of Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa (Arana, J. D. 1968:13). This might be contrasted with the situation in France where the regional economy of the Basque area, based largely upon pastoralism, peasant agriculture, and a short summer tourist season, is one of the weakest within the economic structure of the nation.³ The French Basque area has long been characterized by a relatively static population (Lhande 1910).

Basque nationalism, in its several forms ranging from the desire for greater Basque autonomy within the structure of the Spanish and French states to the aspiration for a free Euzkadi or Basque nation carved out of Spain and France, is a much greater challenge to Madrid than to Paris. The two million Spanish Basques constitute about 7% of the national population and in terms of Spain's GNP their importance far outdistances that of their relative numbers (Linz 1966:200).

A frequent complaint in the Spanish Basque area is that the Basque provinces contribute much more to the nation than they receive in return in the form of services. A popular Basque protest song likens Spain to a

cow with its muzzle in the Basque country and its udder in Madrid. In France the Basques constitute only about .4% of the national population and their economic contribution to the nation is negligible. French Basques receive more in the form of governmental services and family subsidies than they pay in taxes. Thus, Basque nationalism, both from the Basques' and central governments' viewpoints, is a much more serious issue in Spain's political life. This accounts in part, but only in part, for the fact that Basque nationalist action and central government reaction to the Basque question is currently concentrated on the Spanish side of the frontier.

Of the two million inhabitants of the Spanish Basque provinces only about 600,000 may be regarded as culturally Basque, if ability to use the Basque language is taken as the defining criterion (Lecuona 1965). This situation is the result both of the previously mentioned influx of non-Basque factory workers and the historical retrogression of the Basque language and culture out of the southern plains and into the mountainous regions of the northern portion of the Basque country.

Presently, the language is no longer spoken throughout most of the southernmost provinces of Alava and Navarra. These areas have undergone a large measure of hispanicization and are considerably less fertile, if not wholly sterile, ground for Basque nationalism. Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa, the industrial bastions of northern Spain, remain the major staging areas for the movement.

But who are the Basques and upon what grounds do they argue their claims for greater autonomy or outright nationhood? The Basque country has lacked political sovereignty since the Middle Ages, consequently the

Basques lack a political identity as recognized by the community of nations. However, their claim to ethnic uniqueness within the broad panorama of European peoples and cultures is particularly strong. The testimony of their language, which linguistics have as yet been unable to relate to any other (Gallop 1930a), their blood type frequencies (Levine 1967: 45), which physical anthropologists find to differ radically from those of surrounding European populations, and the evidence of the archaeological record, which suggests that the Basques were in situ in the Pyrenees well before the subsequent invasions of Western Europe of Indo-European speaking tribes, invasions which were to shape the ethnographic makeup of most of Europe as we know it today, all strengthen the Basques' claim to a unique ethnic identity. Not to be disregarded is the Basques' own awareness that they differ from other Spaniards and Frenchmen--an identity which leads Basque nationalists and Basque contrabandists alike to take the French-Spanish frontier lightly. It is this sense of ethnic awareness translated into political activism which fosters the climate in which Basque nationalism persists.

While modern day Basque nationalism, with a penchant in at least some circles to work for political separatism, is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon, for the ardent nationalist the historical antecedents of the movement are not to be reckoned in years or even centuries, but rather in terms of millenia. The annals of Strabo provide accounts of the ferocity of resistance to Roman rule by at least some of the mountain tribes of the present day Basque area. Basque resistance was equally successful against later Visigothic, Frankish

and Arab invaders. By the tenth century the powerful kings of Navarra had established and consolidated a kingdom which encompassed all of the present day Basque area, as well as other parts of southern France and northern Spain. However, with the exception of the short-lived reign of Sancho El Mayor from the 1000 to 1035, political organization in the Basque country showed a tendency for fragmentation and internecine warfare.

By the twelfth century the kingdom of Navarra had been reduced to an area which approximates the present day Spanish province of Navarra and a small area of the French Basque country known as Basse Navarre. The present day Spanish Basque provinces of Alava and Guipuzcoa were under the aegis of the king of Castille and the province of Vizcaya had been brought within the orbit of that kingdom through a royal marriage. The remaining parts of the French Basque country were passing successively under the control of the Frankish kings to the north, the kingdom of Bearn to the east, and the crown of England to the west. By the sixteenth century the present day French-Spanish frontier was crystallized and the Basques' loss of political sovereignty was complete, since in 1512 the kingdom of Navarra fell to the Catholic kings and in 1590 Basse Navarre was annexed by the French monarchy.⁴

While sixteenth-century developments signalled the end of effective Basque political sovereignty it did not mean the total loss of political autonomy. In both Spain and France the monarchies were not regarded as political overlords but rather as political allies. Local affairs continued to operate in terms of a set of charters, termed fueros in Spain and fors in France, duly recognized by the respective central

governments, and which guaranteed to the Basques a large measure of home rule and a degree of independence even in foreign affairs (Garcia Venero 1945). Thus in each of the provinces internal affairs were governed by local councils. These councils were made up of popularly elected officials thus giving the Basque area a kind of primitive peasant democracy in a period when most of western Europe was characterized by feudal forms of government. When these peasant assemblies met to legislate, great precautions were taken to reduce the influence of the church and the aristocracy. Clergymen were prohibited out of hand from attending and lawyers were excluded on the grounds that they might use glib oration to confuse issues. The local aristocracy and monarch could send a representative to the proceedings but solely in the capacity of observer without either voice or vote. Furthermore, the king was required to attend personally or to send a representative to swear to uphold the foral privileges. Other aspects of the charters further underline the fact that the Basque provinces were not completely integrated politically into either Spain or France. The local councils controlled the budget for such internal affairs as road building and the school system. The Basques were free from taxation, from customs duties, and from conscription into the army for the purpose of fighting outside of the Basque area (Altamira 1949: 336).

In some cases the Basques were treated by the central power as a foreign government. The Basques were allowed to establish customs houses along the Ebro to tariff in-coming Spanish goods. In the sixteenth century, Basque commercial interests, along with other "foreign interests," were denied access to the Spanish trade with the New World

colonies (Gallop 1930b: 495). The court of Navarra continued to function. The Spanish crown sent a viceroy to Navarra (the only such crown authority outside of the New World colonies). The Spanish king Ferdinand VII was also known as Ferdinand II of Navarra. French Basques and Spanish Basques were allowed to enter into agreements with one another to remain neutral in wars between Spain and France. They were also able to send diplomatic missions to other foreign governments to negotiate commercial treaties.

This state of affairs was never totally acceptable to the central governments of Spain and France. However, despite several attempts to abrogate Basque privileges, the charters remained in effect until the end of the eighteenth century in France and the mid-nineteenth century in Spain. The French Basque fors succumbed to the centralist philosophy of the victors in the French Revolution. Measures which were more designed to undermine the power of the French aristocracy proved equally prejudicial to French Basque regional autonomy. While the measures were resisted both through oratory in Parliament and occasional armed resistance in the Basque countryside, the French Basques were stripped of all their privileges and the area was itself incorporated into the new Department of the Basse Pyrénées with the seat of government being conceded to Pau, the Bearnais city to the east.

In Spain the eighteenth century was characterized by the ascension of the Bourbon dynasty to the throne. The Bourbons were particularly centralist minded and launched several political assaults upon Basque privileges. With the early nineteenth-century advent of a liberal regime in Madrid, state centralization became an overriding

national goal in Spain. The Basques aligned their cause of regional autonomy with the Church's fear of a liberal government and the frustrations of the followers of Don Carlos, a pretender to the Spanish throne. This coalition, known as the Carlists, initiated a civil war against Madrid.⁵ The First Carlist War ended in 1839 with the defeat of the Carlist forces. In the subsequent treaty of Vergara, the court of Navarra was abolished but the Basques received a promise of respect for their traditional liberties. However, a rider clause to the effect that the fueros would be respected insofar as they did not prejudice Spanish constitutional unity opened the door to renewed attacks on Basque autonomy (Garcia Venero 1945: 94). By the 1870s the Carlists were again in a position to trigger a civil war. However, they went down to defeat and this time most of the foral privileges were simply abolished.

The Basque provinces, and particularly Navarra, were the main staging area for Carlism and, throughout the nineteenth century, constituted the backbone of the movement. This penchant for Carlism reflected a strong conviction on the part of the Basques that the best means of protecting their political autonomy was to control the reins of government in Madrid. If the Basques' adherence to the Carlist cause constituted rebellion against Madrid, this rebellion was not tinged with separatist overtones. In short, the two Carlist wars represent recourse to violence in order to effect change within the political life of the Spanish nation.

The two Carlist wars, which were largely fought in the Basque provinces, decimated the countryside, encumbered the population with huge debts in the form of war retributions, and left a standing army of

occupation. It also created a climate of intimidation aimed at undermining Basque culture through such methods as outlawing the language in the printed media. Therefore by the end of the nineteenth century Spanish Basques were faced with the fact that with stunning rapidity they had lost the fueros and their leadership, and their culture was under attack in their very homeland.

It was out of this climate that the modern Basque nationalist movement was born. The movement was essentially the product of an urban environment and led by urban people, particularly from Bilbao, the capital city of Vizcaya, and San Sebastian, the capital of Guipuzcoa. This fact arouses curiosity when we consider that by the turn of the present century both Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa were undergoing rapid industrialization, a development which attracted to those provinces a large influx of Spanish laborers.⁶ Consequently, the Basques had become a minority group in their own urban centers and the Basque language was heard but rarely on the streets of Bilbao and San Sebastian. Among most Basque intellectuals the language was denigrated as the "language of the stable" and was never employed for literary purposes or commerce, or in the school system. For example, the Basque provinces produced three titans of the famous literary generation of 1898, Miguel de Unamuno, Pio Baroja, and Ramiro de Maeztu; none of these men, however, wrote in Basque. So we find that by the end of the nineteenth century the true stronghold of Basque language and culture in Spain was to be found in the rural districts of Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa, where the language was used as the vernacular by peasant farmers and coastal fishing populations. Yet Basque nationalism was launched

from an urban platform in 1894 and by urbanites, who were ignorant of the language and who had but a peripheral knowledge of traditional Basque culture. The founder of the movement, a young lawyer named Sabino Arana, learned the Basque language as an adult and then through his writings, set about the task of purifying it of its foreign influences, that is, of its Spanish loan words. This exercise in linguistic purism only served to deepen the gulf between the urban Basque nationalists and the native Basque speakers of rural areas.

Sabino Arana launched his movement by penning a virulent attack upon Spanish institutions and Spaniards. He delighted in the fact that Spain was in the throes of losing most of her overseas possessions, and when Cuba fell to the American forces Arana was arrested for sending a congratulatory telegram to the president of the United States (Garcia Venero 1945: 251). In his book Bizkaya por su independencia⁷ Arana called for the outright independence of the Basques while decrying the evident process of Castilianization of the Basque country. Arana coined the new term Euzkadi to refer to an independent Basque nation. He advocated the expulsion of all French and Spanish from Basque soil. He coined pejorative terms to refer to non-Basques and laced his writings with a racist view that Spaniards were inferior beings while the Basques were the most ancient pure race remaining in Europe. He railed against intermarriage with non-Basques, a position that Miguel de Unamuno was to denounce as "absurd racial virginity" (Carr 1966:556).

Arana struck a responsive chord among some sectors of the urban middle classes, students, and the Basque clergy. He was, however,

faced with a degree of apathy in the rural areas and with outright hostility from most Basque industrialists who feared government retaliations against the Basque country (Payne 1964: 411 ; Garcia Venero 1945: 227, 251). Arana's personal career was both hectic and short-lived. As the prime mover in the movement he would found a journal or a newspaper from time to time, publish a few issues, and then suffer governmental censorship and, in some instances, imprisonment. Arana's activist following was always relatively small in numbers, but it is obvious that he was verbalizing the frustrations of a majority in Vizcaya for in 1898 he was elected as a representative to the provincial government. He was to die shortly thereafter, a young man in his late thirties, broken by his numerous terms in prison; thus his followers had a ready-made candidate for elevation to the status of martyr (Basaldua 1953).

While Sabino Arana provided the movement with its martyr, he also created its organization and programs. In 1893-1894 he laid the groundwork for a new political force in the Basque country called the Partido Nacionalista Vasco or Basque Nationalist Party. About 1893 he wrote the principles of the party from a Vizcayan viewpoint and with the philosophy of Jaungoikua eta Lagi zarra ("God and old laws").⁸

With the death of Sabino Arana in 1903 the formative stages of Basque nationalism were completed. From 1903 to 1921 the movement gained in strength and local political respectability, particular in Vizcaya where in 1918 the Basque Nationalist Party gained control of the Diputación or provincial government. From the outset there was a polemic within the ranks of the nationalists concerning the degree to

which Basque separatism was an attainable or even desirable goal. A strong faction argued for agitation for return to the foral system of government within the Spanish nation. The nationalists also took a great deal of interest in international development in Europe and particularly the growing tendency to give the grievances of European ethnic minorities a serious airing. In 1916 the Basque nationalists sent a delegation to the Conférence des Nationalités in Lausanne to press Basque political claims (Garcia Venero 1945: 284). This notion that the solution to the "Basque problem" might lie in developments on the wider European scene continues this day. Some present day nationalists view with hope federalist ideas such as the common market and the possible political unification of Europe. The idea is that traditional nations might be dissolved and membership in such a United Europe might be along ethnic lines, at which point Basques might press their claim of ethnic uniqueness.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century there was a notable cultural revival in the Basque country which, if it failed to jell into a significant literary movement (as was characteristic of cultural revitalization in Catalonia for example), nevertheless stimulated renewed interest in Basque folklore, folk dancing, prehistory, and ethnology (Garcia Venero 1945: 279). The Basque nationalists sponsored numerous folk festivals, competitions between bertsolariak (rural bards), and athletic contests involving traditional Basque sporting events. In a different vein the movement sponsored serious scholarship (Garcia Venero 1945: 395-404), notably in the area of archeological excavations, the collection of folklore, Basque linguistics, the

ethnography of rural life, and the sociology of urbanization and social problems in the industrial zones. Scholarly journals such as La Revista Internacional de Estudios Vascos (1907) and Eusko-Folklore (1921) were founded. These efforts were to culminate in 1919 in the First Congress of Basque Studies (Primer Congreso 1919) sponsored by the Provincial Government.

The power base of the Basque Nationalist Party was to remain urban but the message began to lean heavily upon the use of rural symbols as a means of invoking traditional values (Abrisqueta 1962). Since the rural areas were the last remaining strongholds of the Basque language and had undergone considerably less influx of non-Basque populations with attendant Castilianization, the nationalists laced their speeches with praise for the farming way of life and the supposed independent and honest character of the Basque farmer. The Basque baserria or farmstead was elevated to the status of bastion of Basque culture. The nationalists also railed against the already discernible twentieth-century tendency of peasants leaving the land, since such a movement threatened to destroy the last vestiges of Basque culture. With such an approach it is probably not surprising that the nationalists enjoyed little success in radicalizing the very people they purported to defend - the peasants (Garcia Venero 1945: 396). Nor is it too surprising that an urban nativist political movement would opt for rural symbolism. It might be argued that the brute facts of the effects of the urban environment upon maintenance of Basque culture had become too obvious for anyone to hope to reverse the trend. It might also be argued that the nationalists were in part simply verbalizing the frustrations of too rapid urbanization, a kind of back to nature and traditional values reaction.

In any event the Basque Nationalist Party enjoyed some initial successes before being forced underground in 1921 under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. With the new climate of political freedom that swept Spain with the advent of the Republic in 1931, the Basque Nationalist Party was able to surface on the national scene. A major development was the transfer of control within the party to its younger, more active members. By 1931 the first generation of Basque nationalists created in the days of Sabino Arana had aged, and under the repression of Primo de Rivera many of its members had become disillusioned with attendant fragmentation of the movement. However, in 1931 a new dynamism emerged under the leadership of José Antonio Aguirre, a young twenty-seven-year-old lawyer, industrialist, and former president of the powerful youth organization Acción Católica in Vizcaya.⁹ Aguirre and other young members of the leadership core successfully campaigned for election to the Spanish Cortes, or Parliament, in Madrid. If the first generation of Basque nationalists had laid the foundations for a Basque cultural revitalization and achieved local political gains, the second generation converted the movement into a serious and respectable factor in Spain's political life. It was also to constitute the leadership in the Basque provinces during the fateful months of 1936 when Spain embarked upon its most recent Civil War.

By 1931 the Basque Nationalist Party had wrested control of the electorate in Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa from the traditional Carlist party. The Basque delegates to the parliament in Madrid began to clamor for home rule. In June, 1932 a congress was held in Pamplona to discuss adoption of a Statute of Autonomy. The Navarrese rejected the plan by

a vote of 123 to 109 while the delegates of the other three provinces adopted it. On November 11, 1932 the statute was approved by a plebiscite in the three provinces of Alava, Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya. The only province which they failed to carry was Navarra, which remained Carlist in political orientation, although even there Basque nationalism was making great inroads (Toynbee 1937: 40-41; Peers 1937: 112).

The Republican government in Madrid, however, failed to act on the plebiscite despite the fact it had already granted a Statute of Autonomy to Catalonia. Many Basque Nationalists believe that the Republican government, always suspicious of the Spanish church, distrusted the Basques for their traditional clericalism. The Basques' demand for direct relations with the Vatican posed a major obstacle to granting of the statute. In any event the Spanish Civil War began in 1936 and the beleaguered Republican government hastily granted the Basques their autonomy. In October of that year Aguirre, then the leader of the Basque delegation to Madrid, was named president of the Basque government. Most of Navarra and Alava had already fallen to the forces of General Franco, but the provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya prepared for war, fielded an army, issued passports and a currency, and sent out diplomatic missions to foreign countries. This first Basque government represented a coalition of political forces including Spanish Republicans, Socialists, and Communists, however, Basque nationalists held the key posts including the presidency.

The effort was to be both painful and short-lived. The Basque army was outnumbered and under equipped, and the Basque provinces, along

with Asturias and Santander, were cut off from the remaining Republican-held areas of Spain. Within nine months Basque resistance collapsed and the Basque government was in exile in Paris. Many thousands of Basques were either in prison camps or in exile. The aftermath of the Civil War was extremely difficult for the Basque country. An occupation army remained behind, all Basque language publications were prohibited, and it was made illegal to use the language in public. Persons with activist records in the Basque Nationalist Party were tried, some of them receiving prison sentences and others being executed.¹⁰ Therefore, at the conclusion of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, those Basque nationalists remaining in Spain were either in prison or paralyzed through fear into inactivity. Thousands of nationalists were in exile in France and many were emigrating to join relatives in the Basque diaspora, notably in Latin America. The coalition Basque government continued to operate in Paris where it propagandized against the Franco regime. The Basque Nationalist Party was headquartered in the French Basque area where most of its efforts were directed toward assisting refugees to become established locally or to emigrate. Exiled Basque political leaders residing in Latin America directed their efforts to radicalizing local Basques. They enjoyed considerable success and were able to found anti-Franco political journals, notably in Buenos Aires, Caracas, Santiago de Chile, and Mexico City.

A further blow to Basque nationalism came in the form of the German invasion of France. Aguirre and other members of the Basque government were forced to flee out of fear that the German authorities would extradite them to Spain. Thus during the Second World War most of the

leadership in both the Basque government and the Basque Nationalist Party fled to Latin America. There they were to form nuclei of Basque resistance, notably in Buenos Aires, Caracas, and Mexico City, which began to propagandize against the Franco regime (and continue to do so to this day). Financing these activities did not prove to be overly difficult since the Basque community in Latin America constitutes a wealthy business elite, and many of the nouveau riche Basque businessmen were refugees who were financed by the Basque Nationalist Party.

At the conclusion of the Second World War euphoria swept the movement, for Franco's days appeared to be numbered. In the eyes of the international community Franco was identified with Hitler and Mussolini. Spain was boycotted both politically and economically by the community of nations and exiled Spanish political groups gained new respectability since they would likely dictate the political future of the Spanish nation. The leadership of the Basque nationalists returned to France and planned the details of their return to power. However, Franco proved to be considerably more resilient than was expected. He turned Spain in upon itself declaring that the nation would get along without the rest of the world. The years from 1945 to 1951 were particularly difficult. Spain was still smarting from its terrible Civil War and the imposed economic and political isolation precluded Spain's participation in the Marshall Plan and frustrated most of its efforts at self help.

In 1951 the optimism of the Basque nationalists was destroyed. The United States, pursuing a cold war policy of containment of communism, approached the Franco regime with a request for air bases. Franco

exacted in return diplomatic recognition and massive amounts of economic and military aid. The American pact spelled the beginning of the end of Spain's isolation. Recognition by the U. S. provided Franco with a modicum of international respectability; correspondingly, Spanish resistance groups such as the Basque nationalists suffered a serious blow.

These developments produced profound disillusionment among the Basque nationalists. The movement was no longer the heir apparent to political authority in northern Spain, but rather was relegated overnight to the status of an unrealistic, outlawed utopian dream. At the same time the aging process in the leadership ranks became apparent. The second generation of Basque nationalists, accustomed to exercising real political power during the Spanish Republic and the few months of Euzkadi's existence, now found themselves in the position of initiating anew the process of politicization at the grass roots level--a task that would have to be carried out in the face of almost impossible odds. What's more, the leadership had become increasingly conservative and more given to moderation in its actions. Its financial support was also derived almost exclusively from businessmen and professional persons who were ambivalent on the issue of total commitment to revolutionary activities. The decade of the 1950s was therefore characterized by decay and indecisiveness in the leadership ranks. Some died (Aguirre himself died in 1960) and others simply withdrew from what they regarded, with much bitterness, to be a lost cause. At the same time the seeds of schism were blooming within the ranks of the Nationalists. By 1954 the leaders of the Basque Nationalist Party were concerned with revitalization of its youth group or Eusko Gaztedi (Basque Youth) known as EGI. Young persons were encouraged to become involved in propagandizing by distributing clandestine

literature, surreptitiously writing slogans on walls, and placing Basque flags throughout the Spanish Basque area. The first sign of schism appeared when a faction of EGI rejected this moderate course of action in favor of a hard-line approach. This group founded a new organization known as ETA (Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna, or Euzkadi and Freedom) which was openly separatist and which announced through its literature that violence on the part of the Franco regime would be met by violence.

Until the early part of the 1960s, ETA was considerably less activist than its platform promised. The new movement was an anathema for the Basque Nationalist Party which continued to monopolize the sources of financial support for Basque nationalism. ETA became increasingly desperate and initiated a series of robberies in the Spanish Basque provinces. It also tried to intimidate some of the contributors to the Basque Nationalist Party. The early 1960s also witnessed the beginning of ETA terrorism in the form of bombings which were carefully planned as warnings that would not take human lives.

The early 1960s were also characterized by a parallel, but largely independent, acceleration of resistance among Basque clergymen. In part encouraged by a growing concern within the Catholic Church for strong stands on the issue of human rights, the young clergymen in Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa began to confront their bishops (whose appointments must be approved by the Franco government and hence are subjected to political considerations), and engaged in public denunciations of what they regarded as the perpetration of cultural genocide against their parishioners.¹¹

In 1960, 339 Basque priests signed a document of protest calling for a papal investigation of the Basque question. In many respects the challenge from the clergy was a more serious problem for Franco than that of the Basque political organizations. Good relations with the Spanish Church and the Vatican constitute one of the keystones of the policy of the Franco regime. In return for Church support Franco makes a number of concessions including paying the salaries of Spanish priests and allowing the Church disciplinary control over its clergy. Consequently, the vociferous priests had to be treated circumspectly and were in a position to take public stands that were unthinkable for the most ardent Basque nationalist layman.

The decade of the 1960s was therefore characterized by an acceleration of Basque resistance on two fronts--the civil and clerical. On the civil front the ETA organization increased its activities, notably armed holdups and bombings to the point that by the mid-1960s it had the strongest claim to leadership of Basque nationalist activism.

By 1967 the first nonwartime deaths plagued Basque nationalism. ETA members and Spanish police were dying in gun battles. In 1968, ETA assassinated Meliton Manzananas, the chief of police of the province of Guipuzcoa. The response from Madrid was imposition of martial law in Guipuzcoa. This was quickly extended to Vizcaya. The police rounded up hundreds of suspects including many dissident clergymen. The Basque country was awash with rumors and accusations of police brutality and tortures. Convicted members of ETA received long prison sentences with the prosecution asking for the death penalty in some cases.

Throughout the 1960s the rift between the ETA and the Basque Nationalist Party deepened. For ETA activists the leadership of both the

Basque Nationalist Party and Basque government-in-exile had grown old and were locked into a kind of marriage of convenience with the Franco regime. That is, in return for a measure of tolerance of their propaganda activities, the leadership of the established Basque Nationalist Party and Basque government-in-exile eschewed day-to-day violence as a legitimate means of attaining its goals while at the same time hedging on the question of total separatism. Conversely, the leaderships of these more established Basque nationalist entities viewed ETA as an upstart whose activities were both immature and ill-timed. The greatest fear in the Basque Nationalist Party circles was that ETA would bring down the full force of the Franco regime upon the Basque provinces, or, by virtue of committing atrocities, it would alienate the Basque masses from the cause of Basque nationalism, or both.

To further exacerbate the division, the ETA movement turned sharply to the left of the political spectrum. Its propaganda became increasingly laced with the notion that the free Basque state of Euzkadi should be established upon Marxist-Leninist principles.¹² The incompatibility between such a platform and the articles of political doctrine formulated by Sabino Arana (See Note 8) is obvious. In point of fact, the ETA movement has itself been splintered into at least two factions on the issue of whether the primary goal is Basque nationalism as a narrowly defined local issue or Basque nationalism as a facet of the wider struggle of the oppressed peoples of the world--i.e. Basque nationalism as part of an international movement.

While the ideological division between ETA and the more traditional elements of the Basque Nationalist movement are largely irreconcilable,

curiously this had not loomed as the major bone of contention between them. Rather the major issue remains disagreement over the question of tactics. The difference lies at the level of a distinction between heart and mind, emotions and intellect. Whereas ETA, through its activities, mobilizes and vindicates a play upon Basque nationalist emotionalism, the Basque Nationalist Party and Basque government-in-exile, through their caution, are better able to engage in political pragmatism. The issue is thus one of patience. ETA, organized as a kind of hyper-secret terrorist organization which surely numbers but a few hundred members, strikes out immediately against perceived injustices of the day; however, its long range program and political goals remain obfuscated by lack of organization and clearly defined platform. The Basque Nationalist Party, on the other hand, counsels patience and is willing to let the present imbalance of justice go unredressed in the interest of achieving the long range goal of a return to power in the Basque country. Consequently, the Basque Nationalist Party concentrates upon organization, and its membership numbers many thousands both in and out of Spain. The party leaders remain impressed with the odds against the success of Basque nationalism and hence cautions that any attempt at a final push to overthrow Spanish hegemony in the Basque country must be made only at a time when there are other propitious events within the political life of the Spanish nation. The classic example remains, of course, the experiences of 1936 when the Basque nationalists swept into power on the coattails of the Spanish Civil War. The point to be made is that there is no real difference between ETA and the Basque Nationalist Party concerning the legitimacy of the use of violence. Rather the difference lies

in the perception of the pragmatics of resorting to violence. ETA employs violence as a daily tool of intimidation, the Basque Nationalist Party views violence as a one-shot means of regaining power-- a shot which should only be fired when the chances of success are much greater than at present.

The division over tactics is best exemplified in the dilemma of the 1960s for EGI, the youth organization of the Basque Nationalist Party. As we have seen, ETA was born through a schism in EGI. As ETA became increasingly activist, EGI was torn between the appeal that activism seems to hold for the young and its continued adherence to the goals of the Basque Nationalist Party. Thus, due to the challenge and appeal of ETA activism, the 1960s have witnessed an acceleration in EGI activism. The Basque Nationalist Party, while not particularly happy with the situation, has had to underwrite acceleration of EGI activities, if for no other reason than to stem the tide of possible defections among the ranks of its younger members. The fact that this increase in EGI activism coincides with a general aging in the leadership generation (the generation of 1931) of the Basque Nationalist Party, suggests that the Party is likely to play an increasingly activist role in the future.

The disagreement between ETA and the Basque Nationalist Party (with its youth group EGI) has led to overt competition. All three groups publish and distribute their own clandestine literature and maintain autonomous leadership structures. For many years the Basque Nationalist Party has sponsored an annual peaceful demonstration at different locations in the Basque country. This manifestation is

called Aberri Eguna or Day of the Nation. In 1966 when the Party announced that Aberri Eguna would be held in Vitoria (Alava), ETA promptly called for its own Aberri Eguna in Irun (Guipuzcoa).

However, one might posit that aside from their disagreements there remains a modicum of common purpose, or at least a relationship of mutual convenience, between ETA and the Basque Nationalist Party. There is a certain ambivalence detectable in the Party's condemnation of ETA activism, since ETA's blows are directed at the common enemy. Conversely, it is unlikely that ETA could have survived if it were not for the many years of effort by the Basque Nationalist Party. We might say that ETA is reworking ground already broken by the Basque Nationalist Party. If Basque nationalism were an entirely new idea, the extremist tactics of ETA would likely have proven to be too radical for the Basque public. Finally, both groups are fully aware that Basque nationalists are a minority in a region which percentagewise is but a small part of the whole of the Spanish nation. Consequently, regardless of ideological and tactical differences, at one level each Basque nationalist faction welcomes the existence of other groups of Basque resistance.

The second front of Basque resistance during the 1960s was the clergy. The 1960 document of protest signed by 339 priests and sent to the Vatican demonstrated clearly the deep sense of dissatisfaction felt by Basque clergymen in Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa. It may be suspected that many more clergymen who failed to sign the document were nevertheless in sympathy with its points. The document was signed by young and elderly clergymen alike, and the leaders behind the document were largely middle-aged priests. This point is significant since, as we shall see,

it provides the basis for discerning a striking parallel with developments in the secular movements. The priests who led this early movement had witnessed the creation of Euskadi in 1936, many served as chaplains in the Basque army, and some had suffered incarceration after the war. Thus, when the 1960 document was formulated, clerical support of Basque nationalism was not an entirely new element upon the scene. However, it should be noted that the generation of Basque clergymen who lived through the Spanish Civil War were always extremely guarded about providing official support for the Basque government or Basque Nationalist Party. Accusations to the contrary, the priests were never involved directly in the Basque Nationalist Party, nor did they, as a group, take stands on political matters regardless of the personal predilections of each. The Basque Nationalist Party itself refuses to admit priests as members. Any public support of the nationalists took the form of moralizing about their human rights rather than commenting upon their political goals.

The 1960 document cast down the gauntlet before both Franco and the Basque church hierarchy. In the early 1960s the clergy, young and old alike, acted in concert and challenged both the Basque bishops and the State, but the attacks remained strictly on a plane of defense of human rights. By the mid-1960s however, the young clergy was outstripping the elder generation in vociferousness and stubbornness. At first hesitantly and then with growing determination the government began to detain and jail activist priests. At the same time, young priests became more identified with secular political groups, and rumors increased to the effect that young priests were helping fugitive members of ETA escape into France. The young priests openly confronted

the bishops with hunger strikes, demonstrations, and sermons. Proposals such as turning in mass resignations or group travel to Rome to picket the Vatican were given serious consideration. The radical activism of the young clergy, and the accelerating response on the part of the Franco government combined to produce a schism in the ranks of Basque nationalist-oriented clergy analogous to that between ETA and the Basque Nationalist Party. As with the secular resistance groups, the division amongst the clergy turned upon the question of tactics. As with the seculars, persons on different sides of the split were ambivalent towards one another, rather than openly hostile.

In any event, the Franco regime has ceased to brook open opposition from the clergy. It has obviously decided to risk straining relations with the Vatican since priests are arrested for such things as ill-advised comments in Sunday sermons. Arrested priests are frequently tried by military tribunals and there is a new priests' wing at the prison of Zamora.

As with most historical movements, the closer one gets to the present the more difficult it is to discern patterning and direction in the course of events. It is fair to state that the future course of political history in the Basque country is far from clear at present. This statement holds true for the Spanish governmental officials who are faced with the task of rooting out a political ideal which is flourishing in its home soil. Equally, it holds for the Basque nationalists who recognize the tremendous odds against the movement, who have enjoyed considerable recent successes in radicalizing the populace, but who in the process have exhausted the probable efficacy of peaceful means of resistance. One thing is clear, the past ten years have

witnessed a new commitment on the part of the Spanish government to extricate the Basque problem from the national political life. At the same time it has been a decade of expansion and growth of Basque nationalism accompanied by factioning which has produced some nationalist groups dedicated to terrorism. The recent trial in Burgos must be regarded as a defeat for those (on both sides) who advocate a peaceful solution to the Basque question. The fact that a trial of Basque terrorists could undermine the international respectability of the Franco regime and tilt Spanish domestic affairs in the direction of political chaos is a clear moral victory for ETA. In retrospect the trial may have transferred the mantle of leadership of Basque resistance from the more moderate Basque Nationalist Party to ETA. If this is the case the Basque resistance forces are likely to up the ante of violence.

Some Implications

The fundamental importance of ethnic nationalism is acclaimed by the recent proliferation of separatist movements throughout much of the world.¹³ In many of the developing nations of Asia and Africa the euphoria that accompanied the demise of colonialism and the political optimism that characterized the creation of new nations have recently been deflated by the resurgence and accentuation of tribal or ethnic differences. Since, in the words of Lucian Pye, (1967:183) "political scientists were intellectually ill-prepared for the collapse of empires and the formation of new states," scholars began to take another look at the process of nation-building in Europe thus hoping to get a better perspective with which to dissect the problems associated with nation-building in the new states. Many of these studies were both of a

descriptive and prescriptive nature. In devising models of the integrated political system, and drawing on the European experiences, students of political development hoped to be able to abstract some guidelines which would assist the political leaders of the developing societies to implement integrative policies.

However, it is equally apparent that ethnic nationalism is not restricted solely to "immature" political systems. With very few exceptions, nations are ethnically heterogeneous and few have been totally immune from political demands pressed by one or more ethnic groups enclaved within the national life. Groups (or at least segments within groups) such as the Welsh, Scots, Bretons, Flemish, and Basques include the desire for political autonomy in their platforms. The claims of French Canadians, Chicanos, Red Power advocates, some American Jews and certain Black Americans demonstrate that the political life of North America is likewise effected by ethnic nationalism.

We would not presume, in the limited context of the present article, to assail or even discuss the entire literature on political development and nation-building. However, we do believe that the case study of Basque nationalism may be instructive for political scientists, particularly those theorizing about political development in nation-building, who assume (either explicitly or implicitly) that ethnic nationalism is like to occur when:

- 1) an ethnic group occupies a position of economic deprivation within a nation, and
- 2) when such an ethnic group is isolated either physically or conceptually from the mainstream of the national life.

Characteristic of this school of thought is that economic development and technological changes will ultimately eliminate sectional and/or ethnic differences. Improved communications and, particularly the greater use of mass media are seen as creating, over time, a single national purpose among groups whose interests were traditionally divergent. Thus Pye (1963: 10) states, "the widely recognized problem of creating political concensus in most of the new states, is in part one of building new and more universal means of national communications, of establishing more effective channels of communications and transportation so that all segments of the society can become more closely involved with each other." Coleman (1960: 345) notes, "the problem of integration and building concensus in African territorial political systems is largely a problem of developing patterns of communications." While Deutsch (1966: 99) maintains that [what counts], "is not the absence or presence of any particular variables, but the presence of sufficient communications facilities." "When several populations clusters are united through intervening settlements or through more communications and more economic activity ... then people begin to think of themselves as a country" (Deutsch 1969: 6).

In the case of the Basques, however, despite several centuries of efforts by Madrid and Paris to exert their centralist authority, a modern ethnic nationalism movement emerged near the turn of the present century. In the Spanish Basque instance the movement made its appearance among an economically privileged group (the Basque country has enjoyed the highest per capita income of Spain throughout most of the twentieth century). Furthermore, the economy of the Basque

area is integrated almost totally into Spanish economic life. The majority of Basque products are marketed elsewhere in Iberia and Basque industries are dependent for their labor supply upon extensive in-migration from other areas of Spain. The development of the modern Basque nationalist movement has transpired precisely during a period characterized by a veritable revolution in the use of communications and mass media. Today the movement is gaining in strength despite the fact that even in the most isolated Basque villages the radio and television set are commonplace and programming is dominated by a carefully censored centralist political viewpoint. Formal education at the primary school level is mandatory in every Basque village and the curriculum is under the direct control of Madrid. Similarly, it is impossible to argue that Basque nationalism is the product of ethnic group particularistic values. The movement has drawn its leaders from the educated urban classes and clergy, persons who by virtue of their intellectual formation should be precisely the most likely to have a cosmopolitan world view and hold universalistic values.

In conclusion, we would not deny that further industrialization, in-migration of non-Basques into the Basque area, and the diffusion of mass media pose serious challenges to the future viability of the Basque Nationalist movement. Basque Nationalists themselves underscore this point when they occasionally blow up the transmitter which brings Spanish National Television to their region. However, we would suggest that the Basque case (and possibly the cases of other nationalistically inclined ethnic groups enclaved within the Atlantic community of modern nations) cast doubt upon the contention that an efficient system of internal communications is an automatic guarantor of political integration.

NOTES

¹The population of this area includes a substantial number of people who are not Basques, people who have immigrated from other areas of Spain. The exact figures on the number of Basques are difficult to come by since both the Spanish or French governments do not make any distinctions in their census figures.

²For a statistical comparison of the Spanish regions see, Linz (1966).

³For a recent discussion of this problem consult Enbata, January 1964. This is a journal of the French Basque nationalist group.

⁴For more historical information see Gallop (1930b: 495), Ormond (1925), and Ortueta (1963).

⁵For a discussion of the Carlist Wars and the ideological basis of Carlismo see, Carr (1966: 155-196), Herrero (1956), and Schumacher (1962: 343-364).

⁶The extent of industrial development in the Basque region is illustrated by the following figures: in 1877 Spain was producing 1.58 million tons of iron ore, 1.04 million tons of which were produced in the province of Vizcaya. By 1900 Spain was producing 21.5% of the world's output of iron-ore. Of Spain's 252 iron-ore mines, 106 were concentrated in Vizcaya and over 75% of the nation's miners worked in Vizcaya. By the turn of the century the Bilbao complex was the leading producer of steel in Spain (Chilcote 1968). During the same period, Basque financial interests grew to the point where Basque bankers became the single most important financial interest in Spain (Carr 1966: 435).

⁷The complete writings of Sabino Arana are available in the recently published Obras Completas (1966).

⁸The platform of the party was expressed in thirteen articles as follows:

Article 1 -- Bizkaya, upon entering a Republican confederacy, does so according to the acceptance of the political doctrine expounded by Arana Goiri'tar Sabino [Sabino Arana y Goiri] in the slogan Jaungoikua eta Lagi Zarra, which is explained in the following articles.

Article 2 -- Jaun-Goikua-Bizkaya will be Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman in all aspects of its internal affairs and its relations with other peoples.

Article 3 -- Lagi-Zarra-Bizkaya will be freely reconstituted. It will reestablish, with complete integrity, the essence of its traditional laws, called Fueros. It will restore the good practices and customs of its predecessors. It will be constituted, if not exclusively, then principally, of families of the Basque race. It will establish Basque as its official language.

Article 4 -- ETA-Bizkaya will be established upon perfect harmony and accord between the religious and political orders, between the divine and the human.

Article 5 -- Distinction between Jaun-Goikua and Lagi Zarra Bizkaya will be established with a clear and marked distinction between the religious and political orders, between the ecclesiastical and civil.

Article 6 -- Precedence of Jaun Goikua over Lagi Zarra Bizkaya will be established with a complete and unconditional subordination of the political to the religious; of the State to the Church.

Article 7 -- Confederation -- Since Bizkaya is by race, language, faith, character and custom a sister of Alava, Benabarra [Basse Navarre], Guipuzcoa, Laburdi [Labourd], Navarra and Zuberua [Soule], it will become allied or confederated with these six peoples to form a whole called, Euskalerrria, but without surrendering its particular autonomy. This doctrine will be expressed in the following principle: Bizkaya libre en Euskalerrria libre [Free Bizkaya in a Free Basque Country].

Article 8 -- The Basque confederation will be formed by all of the Basque states with each entering willingly and with all having the same rights in the formation of its [the confederation's] foundations.

Article 9 -- The necessary bases for a solid and durable national unity are: unity of race as far as is possible, and Catholic unity.

Article 10 -- The essential bases to insure that the Basque states entering the union will retain equal autonomy and identical faculties are: freedom to secede, and equality of obligations and rights within the Confederation.

Article 11 -- Once the Confederation is established each member state will have the same rights and identical obligations.

Article 12 -- The Confederation will unite its members solely in terms of the social order and international relations, in all other respects each will maintain its traditional absolute independence.

Article 13 -- All of the articles in this document and political doctrine are irrevocable.

(Quoted in Garcia Venero 1945: 244-245)

Article 9 reflects the nationalist's dilemma that much of the population of the Basque country, including many ardent nationalists, possessed shaky geneological claims to Basque descent. This fact lends substance to the somewhat jocular criticism that in order to be a confirmed Basque nationalist one must possess at lease one non-Basque last name or be ignorant of the Basque language!

⁹ For biological material on Aguirre see, Basaldua (1956). For Aguirre's views on Basque nationalism and his experiences during the Civil War, see, Aguirre (n.d.; 1943).

¹⁰ For the treatment of the Basque clergy by the Franco regime see Le clergé Basque (1938), author anonymous.

¹¹ In a letter sent to Pope Paul in 1968, a group of Basque priests dramatically appealed to the Pope by maintaining that the Basques were an oppressed minority whose culture was being destroyed by both the Madrid and Paris governments. See Anon. (1968).

¹² ETA publishes an underground paper, Zutik, in which the views of the party are publicized.

¹³ For a broad discussion of separatist movements see, Connor (1967). For case studies of separatist movements in Southeast Asia, Wales,

Scotland, Brittany, Quebec, and Africa, consult Connor (1968), Davies (1968), Schwartz (1970), Hayward (1969), Wilson (1967), Hargrove (1970), Mazrui (1969), and Hanna (1969). For a more theoretical discussion on the question of ethnicity and ethnic conflict, see Melson and Wolpe (1970) and Horowitz (n.d.).

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