Chapter 24
Climax and Collapse of Spanish Liberalism, 1899-1931

After the creative, liberalizing decade of the 1880s in Spain, that of the 1890s brought disillusionment and defeat. The Spanish-American War, with its subsequent Treaty of Paris, had a shock effect on public opinion but produced no catharsis. The country had achieved a degree of economic and cultural development and for the moment, at least, a stable political system, but still had not made the fundamental breakthroughs to industrialization, social reform and harmony, and a functioning democracy. For lack of education, interest, ambition, or faith, or a combination of several of these, most of the population ignored political life. In such a situation, reorientation and revitalization of civic energies would be difficult to achieve.

Criticism of corruption, misgovernment, and lack of attention to real problems had grown throughout the decade, and finally reached a climax after 1898. The demand was for "regeneration," and regenerationism was for a time the commonly held but disparately and diffusely defined goal of most political and civic groups. For several years the central figure of regenerationism was the social and institutional historian and reformer Joaquín Costa. Of humble Aragonese origins, Costa was obsessed by the problem of Spanish "decadence" and the ignorance and apathy of the country. He was not a politician and never achieved a clear-cut program or following, but stressed education and economic development. Fully conscious of the trauma inflicted by nineteenth-century liberalism, he urged a new agrarian reform that would emphasize technology combined with cooperative organization. During the 1880s and 1890s chambers of agriculture had been formed in various parts of Spain to advance local interests, and early in 1899 Costa brought them together in a National Producers League. The following year middle class chambers of commerce in Castile and Aragón organized a National Union, led by Basilic Paraíso, which was joined by Costa's group. It soon became clear, however, that Paraíso and his followers were mainly concerned with protecting middle class economic interests and had much less dedication to broad national reform. Costa then broke with them.

Highly critical of caciquismo (boss rule), Costa rejected the regular party system and thought in terms of an independent new national movement representing the solid lower middle classes. He stressed social unity and the need to channel regional and social institutions toward a more productive future without maiming traditional usages more than was necessary. His "third force" never took effective form, and at one point he rejected parliament altogether, talking of the need for an "iron surgeon" to mend Spain. Subsequently he looked toward a republican civic breakthrough.

The dissatisfaction of the Spanish fin de siècle gave rise to a new genre of national analysis and critique that became known as the "disaster" literature. This had actually begun about 1890, and bore some resemblance to the writings of seventeenth-century arbitristas. Disaster literature was accompanied by a new spirit of national evaluation and criticism in the next generation of belle-lettristas, the so-called Generation of Ninety-Eight. The result was the most extensive effort ever made by Spanish intellectuals to take stock of the country and its problems.

The currents of regenerationism were manifold, for in a sense nearly everyone was a regenerationist after 1898. They were also divided, fissiparous, and in some instances mutually antagonistic, splitting...
both vertically and horizontally. The catastrophe gave a strong impulse to regionalism in Catalonia (and to a lesser extent in the Basque country) because it deepened the lack of confidence in the Spanish system and posed economic dilemmas for Catalan industry and commerce. The growth of regionalism further diminished national unity while dividing the forces of middle class progressivism and reform. The Republican minority was still sharply divided. The small Spanish Socialist party was growing slowly but refused to collaborate with other groups and remained an orthodox Marxist party, devoted to class struggle. The anarchist fringe had considerable indirect influence which they exerted toward apoliticism and abstentionism, reducing participation in the system. The belle-lettists of Ninety-Eight eventually retreated into esthetics. The new forces of regeneration—or of revolution—were thoroughly at odds with each other, and the resulting triangular and quadrilateral struggles tended to cancel each other out. Most Spaniards still had little desire to become involved.

Silvela

At the beginning of 1899 one political figure stood out as potential leader of a new national orientation: Francisco Silvela. He had differentiated himself from Cánovas's politics eight years earlier, and his program of reformist conservatism gave him a position of moral superiority when contrasted with all other regular Conservative and Liberal party leaders. His dissident Constitutional Union was expanded after the death of Cánovas to a broader Conservative Union that reunited all factions of the old Conservative party save the Romero Robledo gang and a small group of intransigent canovistas. Silvela emerged as the most popular politician in Spain and was chosen by the queen regent to succeed Sagasta as prime minister in March 1899.

Silvela was the first leader of the era to speak, in his words, of "a true revolution made from above"; he stood on a platform of dynamic conservatism that proposed reduction of international involvement, reform and purification of administration and elections, economic development, tax and fiscal reform, and the harmonizing of regional interests. His new government included one Catalanist, the jurist and historian Duran i Bas, and a leading hero of patriotic conservatism, General Camilo Polavieja, who was at the time the political focus of a significant current of post-Carlist right-wing opinion and also of moderate Catalanist sympathies. Thus Silvela broadened his government at both the center and the right. The recently elected Liberal parliament of 1898 was dissolved, and new elections were scheduled for April 1899.

Silvela was determined to set a standard of electoral honesty, and consequently the contest of 1899 was the fairest yet held under the 1876 constitution. The government's Conservative majority was the most modest--222 deputies--that the regime had seen, while the Liberals elected 122, an all-time high for the opposition under the turno. Silvela's liberalization of electoral administration was henceforth accepted by both sides, and the flagrant caciquismo of 1876-1898 was never again employed to the same degree under the constitutional monarchy.

Silvela government was more sharply divided than ever. By 1899 the Conservatives were Silvelists, Pidalists, Romerists, Polaviejists, or partisans of the Holy Sepulchre [Cánovas]. The Liberals were Sagastans, Moretists, Monterists, Gamacists, or Canalejists. There were centralist, possibilist, progressivist, federal, and revolutionary Republicans. The Carlists were divided between the parliamentary faction and partisans of withdrawal, and the Integrist between orthodox and heterodox. To the fierce conflict of these groups between themselves might be added the followers of Costa, Paraíso, the apolitical Chambers of Commerce, the Socialists, anarchists, and regionalists.

The biggest achievement of the Silvela government was financial reform, associated with the name of its finance minister, Raymundo Fernández Villaverde. Service on the debt amounted to 60 percent of state income, and in recent years the budget had been severely unbalanced. The "Villaverde reform"
imposed stringent reductions on expenditure and reorganized and extended the system of taxation. The overall tax load was increased but was also made slightly more progressive, with new direct taxes on corporate and personal income. This reform set the norms of state finance for the next eight years, during which period the budgets were balanced, the national debt reduced somewhat, and a solid currency and stable price level maintained as the Spanish economy continued its modest but steady rate of expansion.

Approval of the Villaverde reform, however, required reorganization of the cabinet. Polavieja resigned as war minister in protest against reduction of military expenditures. There was a brief taxpayers' strike by Catalan businessmen, accompanied by the resignation of the one Catalan member of the cabinet, giving a further boost to regionalist resentment and further dividing national energies. After the cabinet was reconstituted, new social legislation was passed to regulate labor accidents and the employment of women and children. At that point the new minister of war, another general, insisted on imposing his personal choices in the army command. The government reached an impasse, and Silvela resigned before the close of 1900.

After two interim ministries, Silvela returned to power in 1902, but he had already lost confidence in the possibility of effective reform. Local government reorganization was blocked, and further attempts at honest elections brought intense hostility from the established cliques. A wealthy man, Silvela lacked burning personal ambition. He was a devout Catholic who preferred to open cabinet meetings with formal prayer, and he found the political arena increasingly distasteful. Alienated and discouraged, Silvela resigned in 1903 both as prime minister and as leader of the Conservative party. The first regenerationist in power had largely, though not entirely, failed.

**Division of the Liberal Party**

Of the architects of the Restoration system, only Sagasta survived the disaster of 1898. He was not a regenerationist, for his catalog of reforms had largely been exhausted during the 1880s, nor did his brand of realism induce him to suppose that rapid reform of the country was possible. Sick old man though he was, he remained head of the Liberal party and formed his last government in 1901-1902. It attempted only two things, a minor education reform and a new measure, inspired in part by legislation in France, that would have required government registration of all Catholic orders.

Anticlericalism moved to the forefront of Spanish affairs after 1900. The turning in of the country on itself, an extended spirit of criticism, and the growth of secularist and antireligious attitudes all played a part. More concretely, the privileged position of the church and its control of primary and secondary education roused enmity among liberals and progressives. Antipathy toward the orders was increased as a result of their involvement in the Philippines, the increase of their number in Spain after many French monks and nuns fled government persecution north of the Pyrenees, and especially because of impressions formed, whether correctly or not, of the wealth of the orders. In typically Sagastine fashion, one of the "Old Shepherd"'s last political acts was an effort to reach understanding with the Vatican over the registration of orders, minimizing injury to Catholic interest. This brought the splitting off of the left wing of the party, José Canalejas's Democrat faction.

Sagasta died in 1903, leaving the Liberal party leaderless. It was divided to some extent over policy matters, but even more by factional jockeying for status among would-be successors. None of them had Sagasta's prestige, and after 1903 the Liberals split into several subgroups identified with individual leaders.

The political system thus became much more heterogeneous after 1900. To the succession problem of the Conservatives were added the multidirectional cleavage of the Liberals and the rise of the regionalist movements. The two main Catalanist groups came together in a Lliga Regionalista in 1901, and in Galicia a Unión Galaico-Portuguesa was formed, though with much less support. The republican
groups in turn bid to become a major new element by forming an electoral Republican Union in 1903.

**Alfonso XIII**

In this political atmosphere of uncertainty and cleavage the young Alfonso XIII, posthumous son of Alfonso XII, came of age at sixteen in 1902. He was bright but not well educated, courteous and charming but somewhat wanting in self-discipline. Of an energetic nature, he became a prodigious hunter and was an early lover of sports cars.

The constitutional system of Spain, however, required that the king rule to some extent as well as reign. Sovereignty lay with "King and Cortes," and the crown had to play a discretionary role in appointing and maintaining the unity of parliamentary ministries. Alfonso XII and the queen regent had been able to rely on Cánovas and Sagasta. Alfonso XIII had no such good fortune, dealing with a much more divided and antagonistic--and also more representative and democratic--parliament. Throughout his reign he was faced with a variety of options and with strongly conflicting opinions from varying sources, several of which were often about equally qualified. The crown had to grant confidence to or withdraw it from the leaders and groups with the strongest support or the most viable programs. The parliamentary system was not yet fully self-sustaining, which was not the fault of young D. Alfonso. In the exercise of his constitutional prerogatives he was later accused of being a manipulator and of harboring authoritarian tendencies. That he willingly used them to thwart the majority will was, however, never clear, at least until 1931. When that moment finally arrived, he did not contest the issue but relinquished his royal authority.

Perhaps D. Alfonso's major weakness was that his conception of Spanish affairs was excessively political. He thought in terms of Spain's security, unity, and prestige, but had less knowledge of social, economic, cultural, and religious problems. He was not well acquainted with leading Spaniards. His mother had been an unpopular foreign queen and regent, and he had grown up in a rather restricted family circle. Outside contacts were limited mostly to the upper aristocracy and military and civilian tutors. Even in his mature years Alfonso XIII was not in touch with business, regional, or cultural leaders. He dealt mainly with aristocratic friends, politicians, and a few favorites from the army hierarchy. Indeed, the military was the only other sector of Spanish life with which he had association, and from the beginning D. Alfonso tried to establish himself as an "army king," zealous of the interests of the military and, he hoped, a center of military affection.

During the first ten years of his reign, Alfonso XIII exercised his discretionary powers in government with considerable success. This period developed in four phases: a) a Conservative phase of five separate ministries from 1902 to 1905; b) a Liberal phase of five Liberal ministries from 1905 to 1907; c) the Conservative government of Antonio Maura from 1907 to 1909; and d) the two Liberal ministries of 1909-1912, chief of which was the two-and-one-half-year government of Canalejas.

When Silvela resigned in 1903, D. Alfonso not illogically gave approval to a new ministry headed by Silvela's former colleague, the reformist Conservative Fernández Villaverde. Though a capable lawyer and financial administrator, Villaverde was not a skilled politician. He was groping toward a more progressive policy than that represented by old-style conservatism, but this inspired the opposition of most Conservative forces, who brought him down within five months. Villaverde was succeeded by the former Liberal Antonio Maura, who was in the process of establishing his leadership over the major elements that had made up the Conservative party. Maura was much stronger and more energetic than either Silvela or Villaverde, but at the close of 1904 the government became involved in a contest of wills with the royal family over a minor issue. The queen mother (former queen regent), who exercised considerable influence during the first years of the young Alfonso's reign, opposed Maura for being what she feared was too reformist and too domineering. She was determined that the well-known conservative general and former war minister Polavieja, a particularly devoted friend of the royal
family, should be appointed to the key post of captain general of Madrid. The Maura government opposed this for political reasons. Since constitutional authority on such matters was equally divided between the government and the crown, an impasse was reached and the entire ministry resigned. After a brief transition government, the only Conservative alternative, Villaverde, once more formed a ministry, but again only a few months were needed to show that he could never rally either a Conservative majority or a majority of the Conservatives.

Thus in mid-1905, for the first time in his reign, D. Alfonso turned to the Liberals. A general Liberal caretaker ministry was organized under Eugenio Montero Ríos for the purpose of holding new elections and was supported by all factions of the party. The 1905 elections marked another step in the liberalization and regularization of the electoral process and were free of the grosser forms of coercion. Nevertheless, it was still easy to rally a government majority—though not so heavy as in the days of the Restoration—for in nearly one-third of the districts (mostly rural) no opposition candidates presented themselves.

Because of the intensification of the social and regionalist problems, the Liberal phase lasted less than two years. Strikes were increasing, though technically they were illegal, and anarchists in Catalonia and several other regions were more active. Another round of bomb explosions, following that of the 1890's, started in Barcelona in 1906. Regionalist feeling waxed stronger, while the army officer corps, largely though not entirely quiescent for a quarter-century, became uneasy. Officers were disgruntled because of low pay and budgetary restrictions and because of numerous criticisms heaped on the army after 1898. In an age of rampant militarism in Europe, the Spanish army had comparatively little prestige and not too much money; Spain was the only large country in Europe whose armed forces were not expanded during the first decade of the twentieth century. In addition, the army was sometimes used as a police force to quell disorders, a role that many officers found distasteful. Finally, of all the divisive elements in the country, none seemed more insidious to the military than regional nationalism, which threatened to tear Spain apart and was tinged with insults to the Spanish flag and army. A slur against the military in a Catalan humor magazine in 1905 led to a sacking of its press and editorial office by a mob of officers. This violence was followed by a sharp wave of protest from the military all over Spain, demanding satisfaction for the army against subversive attacks.

In response, the Liberals broke in two. Montero Rios and approximately half of them tried to protect civil guarantees and free speech, while the centralist Moret and others were willing to give the army satisfaction. Hence the crown appointed a minority Liberal government under Moret, early in 1906, that passed a Law of Jurisdictions establishing jurisdiction of military courts over publications or news items that referred to the military. This marked the reentry of the army as a special political force in Spanish affairs. The Law of Jurisdictions was the first, and for a long time the only, major break in the constitutional system of the Restoration. For thirty years the system had become increasingly liberal and democratic, and after a brief interruption it continued to move in that direction during the decade that followed 1906.

[586] **Antonio Maura and the "Revolution from Above"**

The Moret government was a minority ministry unable to stand on its own feet after the latest split in the Liberal party. During the remainder of 1906 it was followed by three equally short-lived Liberal minority governments, none of which could build viable support. Their main tactic was to try to rally all factions of the Liberals behind an anticlerical program, but this was inadequate as a unifying ploy. Hence early in 1907 the crown summoned a new government under the leader who by that time stood as the undisputed chief of the Conservatives, Antonio Maura.

Maura was the most imposing and charismatic Spanish political figure of his time. He had begun his career as a member of the Gamacist wing of the Liberal party (Gamazo was his father-in-law) and came into prominence as a frustrated reformer in 1893, when he made the only serious attempt to solve the
Cuban problem (see p. 511). Maura became a regenerationist sui generis after 1898 and, following Gamazo's final break with Sagasta, joined the Silvelist Conservatives. He inherited and developed the Silvelist program: basic reforms to ensure genuine constitutional government, the establishment of local government autonomy to uproot caciquismo, reform of social legislation, protection of Catholic interests, stimulation of the economy, and strengthening of the nation's defenses, especially the navy. Like Silvela and Costa, Maura was determined to enlist the support of the fuerzas vivas—the lower-middle-class "living forces" of Spanish society that often did not bother to vote. In so advanced a city as Barcelona, only 10 percent of the electorate had voted in 1899.

Maura was an intense moralist who often scorned ordinary politicians. He was also the most powerful parliamentary orator of his day. His pride, austerity, and eloquence, along with his ideals and forceful determination, projected the strongest personal mystique of any leader in Spain; he was one of only two politicians whom the king always addressed in formal terms. As early as 1904 he was the most imperious figure in politics, and he was able to attract active new middle class currents to the Conservative party, thus broadening its base slightly. In his first government of 1903-1904, however, he had shown a tendency toward high-handedness and scorn for opposition opinion. In his zeal to eliminate old-style caciquismo, his government had simply kicked out local administrators and put its own men in their place. Maura may have been the undisputed idol of activist Conservatives, but he had become the number-one enemy of the Liberals and the left. If his charismatic qualities elicited support, his arbitrary manner and refusal to compromise also provoked a most intense hostility.

Elections were held in April 1907, within weeks of the formation of the new Maura government. Not suffering from the diffidence of Silvela, Maura was determined to achieve a large and firm majority that would give him a solid base for major reforms without threat of political interruption. Hence his interior minister, Juan de la Cierva, reversed the trend of the decade and exercised considerable government pressure in the balloting. Mayors who had been elected by formal vote kept their seats, but in areas where local officials had previously been named by the central government, new appointments were made in sizable numbers to ensure a Conservative vote. Thus the Conservatives gained 256 seats, giving them firm control of the new parliament, but opposition protests were more numerous and virulent than they had been in years. At the opening of the Cortes, all the opposition deputies boycotted the sessions devoted to the verification of credentials. The other new development of the elections was the emergence of Solidaridad Catalana, a union of Catalan regional groups composed of the nationalist Lliga, Catalan republicans, and Catalan Carlists. These groups coalesced in opposition to the Law of Jurisdictions and in determination to wrest some form of local government autonomy. The Solidaridad alliance gained control of Catalan opinion, prevented electoral manipulation, and swept the balloting in Catalonia.

Maura soon showed that he was not unsympathetic to moderate Catalanism, with which he hoped to achieve an understanding. His first goal, however, was a basic local government autonomy bill which he called "a law for the uprooting of caciquismo." This was the latest of some twenty local government reform measures that had been proposed over the past thirty years. It would have given local governments general autonomy over municipal and provincial affairs, but at the same time tried to guarantee the interests and representation of the fuerzas vivas by providing for the election of municipal governments partly through the corporate suffrage of economic and cultural groups. Moreover, provincial deputies, who were being chosen by direct vote though bereft of authority, would be elected by the councils. Under the parliamentary committee system, the measure was temporarily blocked by the Liberal and leftist minorities.

Maura proposed to face the social question on the basis of freedom under the law. His government legalized the right to strike (and also the use of the lockout) in 1908. It was the first to attempt a modest degree of state regulation of agrarian rents. The first steps were also taken toward a system of labor
conciliation tribunals, regulation of labor contracts, and establishment of minimum wages. A National Insurance Institute was created in 1908, marking the beginning of what by the 1920s became a fairly large voluntary insurance system. The system of municipal justice was reformed so that judges and prosecutors would be named by the judicial system itself rather than by politicians. Another important change was the government's Electoral Reform Law of 1907 improving the methods of registering the electorate and recording ballots, thus diminishing the opportunity for electoral fraud.

The second Maura government lasted more than two and a half years and was one of the two longest parliamentary ministries of twentieth-century Spain. It finally broke down over the issue of disorder and repression. With anarchist outbursts on the rise and the court and jury system encountering difficulty in prosecuting offenders, the government proposed a special Law for the Repression of Terrorism in 1908, giving authorities the right to close anarchist centers and newspapers and deport anarchists.

Though the past generation had been full of anarchist assassinations and attempted assassination of heads of state and government leaders both in Spain and throughout Europe, the opposition seized the opportunity to launch a major anti-Maurist alliance. Maura was a vigorous leader but not a skillful politician. He detested jockeying, backslapping, and compromise, and his supercilious manner infuriated his foes. He scorned the function of publicity and newspaper propaganda, contemptuously dismissing it as the "street rattle." After the government's clear stand on terrorism, the left-wing Catalanists broke with the Lliga and came out in general opposition to his autonomist proposals as too authoritarian. In conjunction with the Liberal leaders Moret and Canalejas, a broad alliance of the left was formed in opposition to the antiterrorist law. Street mobs were brought out against the government, which was forced to withdraw the measure, and the local government reform remained stalled in the Cortes. The cooperation between most republicans and some of the Liberals was then expanded into a Left Bloc against the Maura ministry, proposing to overturn it and combat clericalism. For the first time since 1875 a major part of one of the two chief constitutional parties made a tactical alliance, albeit shortlived, with enemies of the regime.

Maura's downfall was precipitated by the need to send troops across the straits in 1909 to protect the Spanish position in northern Morocco. Sudden call-up of reserves caused much hardship in Madrid and Barcelona, and it was used by trade unions and other leftist elements in the Catalan capital as a pretext for a general strike that mushroomed into the "Tragic Week" of July 1909. Barricades went up in many parts of Barcelona; one-third of the religious buildings in that city were damaged or wholly destroyed, and more than one hundred people killed. In the aftermath, four men were executed in symbolic punishment. One of them was Francisco Ferrer, an anarchist agitator who operated a "rationalist school" in Barcelona and had helped to incite the assassination attempt on the king in 1906, when a score of people were murdered by a bomb in Madrid. In general, the repression that followed the Tragic Week was comparatively moderate, but a few of the individual sentences were excessive. The whole episode provoked almost the entire opposition to demand (with great verbal violence) that Maura resign. The clamor was reinforced by carefully orchestrated protests from the international left in key European cities. Though the government had not transgressed the letter of the constitution, the Liberals made it clear that they would use their tactical alliance with the republicans to wreck the system unless Maura were dismissed. Don Alfonso felt that there was no other prudent course than to give in and appoint a Liberal ministry under Moret.

*Canalejas*

The Moret government was only a transition ministry. Moret did not have the united support of the Liberals and instead was using the tactical Left Bloc as a means of building personal support outside the regular two-party structure. He could achieve success only by being allowed to dissolve the Cortes and hold new elections, but neither the crown nor all the Liberals would follow his lead. Instead, early
in 1910, D. Alfonso appointed a new government under the most vigorous and imaginative of the Liberal chiefs, the somewhat younger politician José Canalejas.

Canalejas presided over the last strong government of the constitutional monarchy, from February 1910 to November 1912. He was in some ways the antithesis of Maura. A politician to his fingertips and a backslapper, he fully understood the importance of publicity and allowed himself no hauteur. Up until 1910 key leaders normally restricted campaigning to their own districts, and parties were built around local notables. By contrast, Canalejas became the first national politician of the century, campaigning nationwide and personally mobilizing support.

Canalejas wanted to continue the liberalization of Spanish affairs that had moved only by fits and starts for the past two decades. This meant social reform and economic stimuli, as well as more understanding of the regionalists' demands than other Liberals were willing to offer. In minor cabinet positions he had attempted several times to deal with the clerical problem, and he believed that Spain required a more vigorous foreign policy. Though he had helped form the Left Bloc, for him it was only a temporary maneuver to preserve civil and political liberty. A strict constitutionalist and monarchist, he understood the importance of the two-party system and wanted to improve rather than to destroy it. Thus, to the discomfiture of some of his Liberal colleagues, he immediately made overtures to conciliate Maura and the Conservatives. The results of the 1910 elections were the most balanced yet achieved under the regime: 219 Liberals and 102 Conservatives.

The Canalejas government, even more than its Maurist predecessor, became the principal reform ministry of early twentieth-century Spain. It restructured local government finance and a part of the tax system, lowering excises to benefit the poor while raising rents on urban property (a favorite investment of the wealthy). For the first time in Spanish history a government launched a major publicity campaign in favor of social reform. Canalejas made preparations to introduce a wide series of measures, thinking in terms of a national wage arbitration system, expanded regulation of labor conditions, an accident compensation plan, and a modest land reform for poor peasants. Meanwhile, his government carried out a new military reform that reduced somewhat the discrimination against the poor in recruitment. Canalejas also planned to begin a solution to the regionalist dilemma through a bill that would grant partial autonomy to a regional confederation of the four Catalan provinces.

The greatest excitement was engendered, however, by his attempt to deal with the red-hot clerical issue. Canalejas was a devout Catholic and had obtained dispensation to set up an ordained chapel in his family home. As a realistic progressive, however, he believed that the privileges and discriminatory power of the Catholic church in Spain had to be brought under control, or at least regulation, in order to achieve a free and harmonious society. The major objects of anticlerical hostility were the orders, some of which were accused of economic exploitation and discrimination. Consequently the Canalejas government passed the Padlock Law temporarily prohibiting the establishment of further orders in Spain--which now had more than any other Catholic country in the world--until the question of regulation had been settled. Clerical and conservative opinion mounted an allout attack on Canalejas, replete with major demonstrations, that almost equaled the other side's earlier attack on Maura.

Meanwhile, strikes had increased markedly since 1909. Canalejas respected the individual strike as a normal instrument of collective bargaining, but dealt vigorously with coercive general strikes when attempted on the local level. Revolutionary outbursts by small anarchist groups were directly repressed. The government's declaration of martial law in time of crisis drew the customary attacks from the left, and Canalejas was murdered by an anarchist outside the interior ministry building in November 1912.

The tragedy of Canalejas's death was fully appreciated at that moment, but its fatefulness became clear only with the passing of time. He was the last prime minister of the regime who possessed the qualities
of prestige, skill, wisdom, and imagination needed to combine reform with political order. In the decade 1913-1923 Spain made considerable social, economic, and cultural progress, but its political life degenerated, even while becoming freer and more democratic.

**Breakup of the Party System, 1913-1915**

After the murder of Canalejas, the crown delegated authority to the next strongest Liberal leader, the Conde de Romanones, to continue Canalejist reforms on the basis of the existing parliamentary majority, which still had two and a half years to run. This infuriated Maura. The Conservative leader, bitter at having been deposed by an extra-parliamentary alliance, had been willing to respect Canalejas, but like Canalejas himself, he expected the rotation of parties to resume as soon as the Canalejas government ended. The decision of the crown to allow the Liberals to remain in power so long as they had a majority was constitutionally irreproachable, but to Maura violated the unwritten rule that power should be equally alternated. At the beginning of 1913 Maura announced publicly that he would not cooperate in another government or even remain as leader of the Conservative party unless the crown renounced the present ministry and the whole Liberal party, as presently constituted, for having violated the stability and authority of the political system. Thus the Conservative leader responded to the Maura No! campaign of earlier years with a posture of absolute defiance, placing D. Alfonso in the position of either ignoring him or excluding from consideration the bulk of the forces in Spanish politics.

The Romanones ministry lasted eleven months and was broken by its major achievement: presentation of a measure of limited Catalan autonomy under a regional Mancomunitat, or federation of local government of the four Catalan provinces. It was a modest measure that gave the Mancomunitat no new powers other than a concentration of those facilities already in the hands of each of the four participating provincial governments, but it split the Liberals, who saw it as the first step in dividing the unity and sovereignty of Spain. The Romanones government was voted down, leaving the Mancomunitat legislation to be passed by its successor.

With the Liberals unable to govern, the crown had to turn to the [592] Conservatives. Maura refused to cooperate without authority to ignore the "subversive" Liberals altogether, and the crown could not concede that authority. At this point a majority of Conservatives drew apart from Maura as idóneos ("fit"—that is, fit to compromise and form a functioning government). Their leader, Eduardo Dato, was empowered to form the next government and hold elections early in 1914. These revealed the total fragmentation of the political system. Though Dato's interior minister, José Sanchez Guerra, attempted the usual government pressures and manipulations, they no longer sufficed. Political factions were now too experienced and the electorate better educated and more determined. In 1914, for the first time in Spanish history, a government failed to win a majority of seats in an election that it administered. Of the 400 seats, the majority Conservatives of Dato could garner only 188 (and the opposition Maurists-Ciervists another 26). The main group of Liberals under Romanones won 85, and Garcia Prieto's splinter Democrats (heirs to the earlier Canalejist progressives) held 36.

Meanwhile the place of Antonio Maura as a Conservative leader gave way to Maurism as a factional movement, appealing particularly to patriotic middle class youth who wanted unity and renovation within the existing structure of society. Maura continued to insist on "pure constitutionalism," but his intransigence made it impossible for him to function within the actual constitutional system of Spain. The direction of the subsequent Maurist Youth movement with their street propaganda, mass meetings, and overtones of the integral nationalism of Charles Maurras was extraparlamentary and almost extraconstitutional. To conservative middle class Spaniards, the frustration of Maura was, however, symbolic of the frustration and insecurity of the existing system.

After 1913 the old party structure broke up, primarily because of the changes in Spanish society. Its multiple regional and social as well as cultural and religious cleavages could no longer be
accommodated within a simple system. Still, there was more continuous tenure among parliamentary representatives in Spain under the constitutional monarchy than under the French Third Republic, and the number of prime ministers was no greater than under the constitutional monarchy in Italy. Both the Liberal and Conservative factions retained support in many parts of the country, and parliamentary deputies were comparatively young. Nearly half the deputies in Maura's parliament of 1907 had been under fifty. The politicians of Spain [593] were still, however, predominantly lawyers and intellectuals (that is, writers or journalists). There were very few businessmen or representatives of other professions or interests. Politics was still the work of a special intelligentsia.

The electoral system was slowly becoming more honest, as the experience of 1899 to 1914 testified. True caciquismo functioned only in Galicia and a few other rural districts. Even in the south, elections were sometimes being directly contested. Central government interference in local administration was steadily reduced, and by the early twentieth century local government officials were removed by central fiat as a rule only in the more backward regions of the west and south. Nonetheless, most rural districts were still single-member parliamentary constituencies that could often be dominated by local notables. The real electoral battles were fought in the multi-member "circumscriptions" of the larger towns or more heavily populated areas where a system of semiproporportionate representation of majority and minority lists prevailed.

The major problem was that of reconciling differing regional and social interests through the political system. Most of the largest modernizing middle class, that of Catalonia, had split off into regionalism. Basques and others threatened to do the same. In the big cities many had voted for the republican groups since 1893, but in the countryside Liberal and Conservative factions were still secure. Yet after 1913 they were so divided by personality, ambition, and conflicting programs that they could no longer provide stable government or an outlet for reform.

**Spain in the Vortex of European Imperialism**

The enervation and self-searching that followed the loss of the last remnants of the old colonial empire left Spanish government without great ambition to participate in the final round of modern European imperial expansion that came in the early twentieth century. By that time spheres of influence in most of Africa and Asia were clearly delimited; one of the remaining territories of any importance was the sultanate of Morocco, the northern part of which lay within Spain's historic radius of interest. In 1902 France, with an eye toward the absorption of most of Morocco, proposed an understanding with Spain that would have reserved approximately the northern third of Morocco as a Spanish sphere. The Silvela government rejected the agreement, partly for fear of offending Britain (whose interests were excluded) and partly to avoid becoming involved in new colonial difficulties. Spain did have economic as well as military and diplo-

[594] matic interests in Morocco; they were mostly in the form of capital invested in Spanish and Hispano-French mining enterprises outside Melilla, easternmost of the two chief Spanish presidios on the north Moroccan coast. A subsequent treaty of 1904 arranged by France provided for recognition of a smaller Spanish sphere of interest in northern Morocco.
Turmoil within the sultanate, involving attacks on French citizens and interests, gave France its excuse to intervene. Spain was faced with the same issue in miniature in 1908-1909 after assaults by local kabyles against mining works in northeast Morocco. Maura, who up to that point had scrupulously avoided infringing the nominal authority of the sultanate, found himself forced to commit troops to Morocco (indirectly leading to the Tragic Week in Barcelona and his own downfall). Canalejas was subsequently forced to take an energetic stand in order to prevent France from excluding Spain from Morocco altogether. Within the country there was little enthusiasm for a policy of neocolonialism in Morocco, but the Canalejas government felt that it would be too damaging to national self-esteem and Spain's place in the world for France to take over completely what had always been Spain's sphere of interest in northwest Africa. Moreover, it seemed imprudent to permit a foreign power to occupy the other side of the straits, threatening Spain's strategic position. Official protectorates for both France and Spain were set up by treaty in 1913, but the Spanish zone included only the northern 5 percent of Morocco. This was a poor, comparatively barren region inhabited by warlike kabyles rarely controlled even by the sultanate. At first Spanish sovereignty consisted of only a few peripheral military outposts and the establishment of a capital at Tetuán, where a local Moroccan caliph was appointed under Spanish supervision. Almost no effort was made to occupy or directly administer this forbidding, hostile region.

At the beginning of the century Spain's international prestige was again at extremely low ebb. Alfonso XIII's goodwill visits and contacts among foreign royalty were useful, but the international leftist campaign mounted against Maura in 1909 was not unsuccessful in refurbishing the image of a black, inquisitorial Spain. When the World War broke out, no Spanish interests were involved and the official policy of neutrality was the only sane course. The efforts of the crown as an intermediary between civilian relatives and war prisoners in the embattled areas created a more positive image, as did frustrated efforts on behalf of negotiation. Meanwhile, many Liberals and some leftists began to urge Spanish intervention on the side of the Entente, the "progressive" side, and this further added to domestic tensions during the war years.
Economic Development and Social Change

The first third of the twentieth century was an era of significant economic development, raising Spanish income in the late 1920s to a plateau that it would not see again for another twenty-five years. Catalonia continued to lead the way in industrial development, followed by the Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa. At first the loss of Cuba had a harsh effect on the Catalan economy, whose exports had been based on the Cuban market. Moreover, cotton manufactures had been experiencing difficulty since the early 1890s, and the first years of the century were hard. Barcelona and Valencia provinces between them accounted for 30 percent of all Spanish exports, but Barcelona textile exports dropped off badly after 1900. Conditions improved in later years but only by fits and starts, and the pressures on textile production explain part of the social conflict in Catalonia. By 1913, however, Spanish trade had increased considerably, and the World War provided a greatly expanded export market, stimulating production. The most important development was in Valencian citrus production, which by 1930 accounted for 21 percent of exports.

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<td>1870-79</td>
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<td>92,378</td>
<td>1920-29</td>
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The period 1900-1930 was a time of general industrial expansion. Steel, centered mainly in Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, and Asturias, benefited from foreign investment; production rose by 263 percent from 1900 to 1913, expanded further during the war, then increased another 235 percent during the 1920s. The starting base was very low, of course, and by 1930 the total was still only one million tons, not yet sufficient for national needs. The major new industry in Catalonia was chemicals. Hydroelectric resources were also developed in Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa, as was an expanded shipbuilding industry, stimulated by the naval programs first of the Liberals (1888) and then of the Conservatives (1908).

Other sectors fared more poorly. By the early twentieth century Catalan shipping had been nearly wiped out because its owners could not finance the conversion to steam. The railway system languished and could not improve its stock and technology for lack of traffic and capital. Mining later declined as well. Exhaustion of the better and more easily worked veins made low-quality Basque iron ore less attractive for export; production dropped by half between 1913 and 1929, and the output of other categories of Spanish ores also dropped during the 1920s.

Simply put, Spain even after the World War had not yet reached the stage of industrial takeoff. The only two regions in which the value of manufactures exceeded that of agriculture were Catalonia and the two main Basque provinces, but even there such a level was not achieved until after the stimulus of the war. All the factors-geographical, economic, and cultural--that had retarded development in the nineteenth century were still present, though to a lesser degree. Progress was being made and the standard of living was rising, but after 1910 Spanish society was living in an era of vastly rising expectations. Political and social ideologies derived from the [597] achievements of the most advanced
countries were being advanced in a Spain whose economy was not yet prepared to accommodate their demands. What was by northwest European standards a nineteenth-century rural economy was required to meet the challenge of twentieth-century urban and industrial conflict.

Government cannot be entirely absolved of responsibility for this. There was never a serious program to stimulate economic development, and the failure becomes more significant when contrasted with the attention which Italian government in those same years gave to awarding contracts, subsidies, and other encouragement to Italian industry. Such an orientation was, of course, somewhat more difficult in Spain and was discouraged even more by the nation's quiescent role in diplomatic and military affairs. A pacific country, avoiding competition in the European maelstrom, felt less need to foster strategic industries or the nucleus of a military-industrial complex.

The Achilles heel of the Spanish economy was its agriculture, where much of the nineteenth century had been wasted. Structural and technological improvements with which some countries had greatly expanded productivity had still not been introduced in Spain. There was some extension of irrigation, but major hydraulics projects, as preached by Costa, were lacking; what was achieved, as in the Levant, was done by small mechanical pumps and wells. Despite the large olive oil output, producers did not organize well for export, and Italy, for example, cornered most of the market in Argentina. There was a great extension of sugar beet production after the loss of Cuba and the steep protection given by the 1899 tariff, but artificial stimulation led to overproduction.

Grain remained the base of the agrarian economy, particularly in the center of Spain. After 1905, the area devoted to wheat cultivation expanded once more; from 3,460,000 hectares in 1903-1907 it rose to 4,200,000 in 1928-1932. A 20 percent extension of tillage was accompanied by a 33 percent increase in production, indicating only a 9 percent rise in productivity over a twenty-five year period. This very modest achievement was due in considerable measure to greater use of chemical fertilizers. General yield per hectare was still only half that of France, where admittedly the land was naturally more fertile and the climate more beneficent. Though scarcely dramatic, the growth in cereal production enabled Spain to become virtually self-sufficient in grain by 1930.

The trend toward genuine commercial agriculture, begun on some of the larger estates in the eighteenth century, continued, but small producers were ill-equipped to improve their situation. The landless rural population in the south increased, leading to greater social pressure. Equally pressing, however, were problems created by the rental and sharing agreements held by small farmers who cultivated but did not own farms of their own. The first attempt to establish new rental regulations was made by the Maura government in 1907 but achieved little. Resentment among rental farmers was strongest in Galicia, where population increase and subdivision of rental units led to wretched conditions, sustaining a parasitic upper middle class and perhaps the worst system of caciquismo in Spain. Here the government finally intervened, and arrangements were made in the 1920s for compulsory redemption of foros (rental contracts) to enable peasants to buy land of their own.

One of the gravest weaknesses in agriculture was lack of rural credit for the small farmer. An effort by the Liberal Santiago Alba to establish a government agricultural bank was largely frustrated. The only significant new opportunities were those created by Catholic cooperatives and rural syndicates; otherwise farmers were largely at the mercy of the village usurer.

Government finance was stabilized at the beginning of the century by the Villaverde reforms of 1899-1900, but after the depression of 1908 fiscal imbalances once more became serious. Spain still lacked a central banking system. The Bank of Spain, founded in 1874, was a privately owned bank of national monetary emission. During its first quarter-century (1874-1898), its primary function had been simply to supply the state with funds. From 1898 to 1914, as the government cut back, it began to invest more heavily in private finance. During the World War the Bank of Spain served mainly to provide increased
currency for private banking institutions, promoting inflation. Smaller banks subscribed the national
debt--a profitable operation for them, since they could borrow the same funds at a lower rate from the
Bank of Spain. At about the same time (the war years), Spanish banks began to play a more direct and
creative role in providing capital for industrial development, especially in the Basque country. On the
other hand, the region with the largest middle class economy, Catalonia, did not develop strong banking
institutions. This was not merely because most Catalan businesses and accounts continued to be
comparatively small, but even more because of short-sighted policies. Catalan banks did not emphasize
the development of checking account deposits but concentrated on stock securities operations and also
on foreign exchange speculation, in which they became overextended and suffered major losses.

The social structure of Spain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a comparatively
normal one for a country still in the early phases of transition from an agrarian to an industrial
economy. Whereas in 1877, 72 percent of active Spanish males were employed in agriculture, a slow
but steady increase in employment in other sectors reduced the percentage of agricultural
employment to 58 percent in 1910. This was a somewhat slower rate of change than in Italy, but
compared favorably with the situation anywhere else outside the industrialized quarter of northwest
Europe. In 1910 only 11.5 percent of active Spanish males were employed in industry, half the
proportion that existed in Italy.

The population increase, from 18,000,000 in 1900 to more than 23,000,000 in 1930, was checked to
some degree by a high rate of emigration. For Spain, as for most of southern and eastern Europe, the
peak level of emigration occurred just before the World War. In the year 1912 net emigration mounted
to more than 134,000. During the 1920s the annual average was only a fraction of that figure.

Throughout these years commentators in western countries were wont to ascribe the modest rate of
Spanish development to the absence of a significant middle class. In fact, the relative size of the
Spanish middle classes was about equal to those of Italy and actually larger than in half the countries of
Europe. The problem, as in the nineteenth century, was not the existence or even the size of the middle
classes, but their characteristics, psychology, values, and ambitions. Spain had a comparatively large
noneconomic middle class: a high proportion of army officers (though not of soldiers), a rather large
number of people in the liberal professions, and a significant proportion of clergy. Typically
"bourgeois" or modernizing, entrepreneurial middle class elements were disproportionately
concentrated in Catalonia and the Basque country, partially cut off from the main channels of national
life. Industry and innovative or modernizing activity was thus scattered on the periphery. In a
somewhat more successful country, Italy, industry, wealth, and modernization tended to be
concentrated in a northwestern industrial triangle which played a reasonably united and often decisive
role in national affairs.

The Silver Age of Spanish Culture

Literature and the arts in Spain during the first third of the twentieth century achieved such quality that
the period has frequently been called the Silver Age of Spanish culture, second only to the Golden Age
of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. After 1900 the achievements of Spanish culture began
to attract serious attention from abroad for the first time in three hundred years. Its main
accomplishments were in esthetics, for despite a few distinguished exceptions, the sciences and other
disciplines enjoyed much less attention.

Most of the country's leading thinkers and writers who were con- cerned with the problems of
Spanish culture and values in the modern world have been lumped together as the Generation of '98,
the name referring to the new elements who came to maturity after the turn of the century. The men of
'98 were not a unified but a diverse group, embracing such figures as Unamuno, Ortega, Azorin, and
Ramiro de Maeztu. There was considerable pessimism in their analysis of modern Spain, but also a
kind of cultural nationalism and reevaluation of the heartland of Spain, of Castile itself. Yet there was
considerable uncertainty over the course which Spanish revitalization should take, with a basic division of opinion between Europeanizers and those, like Unamuno, who protested the "Japanization" of Spain.

Most of the main currents of modern esthetics were felt in Spain during these years, and as a result an increasing dissociation and dehumanization of sensibility. In general, however, Spanish art remained more traditional and humane than that of most European countries. The best Spanish painters--Picasso, Miró, Gris--emigrated to Paris, but the new generation of musical talent finally recaptured Spanish themes for Spanish composition, climaxed by the work of Manuel de Falla. Among the novelists only the personalist, quasi-anarchist Pío Baroja was major, but the best-known of all the Spanish writers have been the poets Federico García Lorca and Juan Ramón Jiménez. In Antoni Gaudí, Catalan culture produced perhaps the most original architect of the early twentieth century.

The dechristianization of the intelligentsia proceeded apace, and the crisis of cultural values eventually became as extreme in Spain as in most other western countries. Catholic thought made little advance during this period and was still largely turned in defensively upon itself. An even greater gulf opened between cultural tradition and the novelties of the age.

The principal new force in education continued to be the disciples and teachings of the Institución Libre. In 1908 a state-financed Committee for the Expansion of Learning was set up to encourage graduate study abroad. The Institución's ideals of broad training in the arts and sciences, including physical education and extensive personal experience, were realized in a few private schools, but it cannot be said that they had much impact on Spanish education as a whole. The university system was improving, but though free compulsory primary education had been a standing law since 1857, no facilities were available for a large minority of the country's children, in city slums or poor villages. Much of primary education and the greater part of the secondary school facilities were under the care of the church, supported by state subsidy, but neither in public nor clerical schools were most services up to the west European norm. In 1900 only 36.7 percent of the people were literate. This indicated adult literacy of [601] about 40 to 50 percent. The situation improved slowly but steadily during the early decades of the century, and by 1930 two-thirds of the adult population was nominally literate. This was not an impressive rate of growth; the proportion of the Spanish state budget devoted to education was one of the lowest in Europe.

The Working Class Movements

Socialist and Fourierist ideas entered Spain in isolated, individual instances as early as the 1840s, and the first labor associations were formed in the thirties and forties. The organized working class movement, however, began with the organization of the Spanish Federation of the First International in 1868-1870. The core of the Spanish Federation was a clandestine, Bakuninist-anarchist Alliance formed in 1870. The Federation was suppressed in subsequent years, though reorganized briefly in 1881 as the Federation of Workers of the Spanish Region. The Federationist movement was avowedly revolutionary from the start, eschewing economic reform and ordinary political action, conceiving of trade unionism as merely the organizational form of revolutionary action.

In the late nineteenth century only a small proportion of workers had been organized, and these mainly in the larger cities of the periphery. Their interests were primarily economic and not political, and the great mass of the workers were not attracted by revolutionary ideas.

Anarchist ideas flourished especially in small cells in Barcelona and a few other towns in the 1890s and found expression in "propaganda by the deed"--bomb-throwing terrorism--during the mid-1890s. It was only after 1900 that the formal idea of anarcho-syndicalism developed, derived largely from French theory but also from the practical example of the older Spanish Federation. The National Confederation of Labor (CNT) was officially organized in 1910 on the theoretical basis of revolutionary anarcho-syndicalism. The CNT expanded into a mass organization only in 1917-1918, and it remained
somewhat eclectic in its following. Completely anarcho-syndicalist ideas were espoused by only a minority within the movement. The rank and file were often much less militant, and only constant pressure and terrorism (from both revolutionists and their opponents) converted the major single arm of the working class movement somewhat ambiguously to anarcho-syndicalism. The early movements of the eighties and nineties had petered out, and the major strikes of 1903-1904 were also a failure. The success of the CNT was made possible only by the expanded industrialization of Catalonia during the First World War, swelling the labor force and giving it great bargaining leverage.

Before that, the strongest support for revolutionary syndicalism was found among landless peasants and smallholders in Andalusia, providing the only example of a mass peasant revolutionary movement on a semi-organized basis anywhere in the world. Peasant syndicalism took hold in regions where the upper classes had pioneered individualist political liberalism, but where economic and political changes had left the lower classes almost poorer than before. The provincial appeal of Federal Republicanism also helped create a receptive mood for peasant syndicalism. The evangelical fervor of the anarchist proselytizers stirred a society in which religious appeals and services had been weakened, while the nature of the anarchist message—unity, a general strike, and the revolutionary reparto (land-division)—were very attractive for illiterate peasants unprepared to participate in a more organized, disciplined sort of reform or revolutionary movement.

Revolutionary peasant syndicalism in Andalusia hit two peaks. The first came in 1903-1904 when a major strike wave was killed by bad weather conditions and widespread hunger. The second was the so-called trienio bolchevique of 1918-1920, involving mass strikes in 1918-1919. The second wave was encouraged by wartime prosperity (in which the poorer peasants did not share) and the excitement brought by the Russian Revolution. But peasant syndicalism was loosely organized and unable to sustain itself. The strikes won some wage increases but did not have revolutionary effects.

Marxist socialism was slower to take root in Spain and did not develop into a mass movement until after 1930. The Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) was organized in 1879, and a socialist trade union system (UGT) was begun nine years later. The early history of Spanish socialism is closely associated with the labors of its leader, a Galician typesetter, Pablo Iglesias. The movement which he organized followed the standard lines of late-nineteenth-century Marxism. It was small, thoroughly disciplined, and devoted to practical reforms rather than premature revolutionary efforts. Spanish Socialism encountered extreme difficulty in developing a following. The degree of education and self-discipline that it required did not come easily to Spanish workers. In 1899 the UGT headquarters were moved from Barcelona, leaving the future of the working class movement in Catalonia to anarcho-syndicalism. The anarcho-syndicalist movement surpassed Spanish Socialism in propaganda and education, and its con-federative structure was more congenial to Spanish localism and personalism than was the centralized, "regimented" Socialist party. Only after a larger scale of industry developed in regions outside Catalonia did the UGT slowly begin to develop a following in north-central Spain. The Socialist party at first operated in Marxist isolation but switched to electoral alliance with the republicans in 1910, considerably increasing the Socialist vote. The Socialists began to elect city councillors in the 1890s and won their first seat in parliament in 1910. From that time middle class intellectuals played a greater role in Socialist affairs and helped encourage the party in the reformist collaboration that marked most of its activity between 1917 and 1933.

The Catholic Revival

The expropriation of church lands, nominal restriction of Catholic orders, and concession of limited tolerance to Protestantism had not meant a de-Catholicization of official society in Spain but only a momentary declericalization. The Restoration era carried with it a strong overtone of official piety and the re-Catholicization of government functions.
Loss of local properties, however, had greatly handicapped the work of the Catholic Church in the rural areas and particularly in the southern provinces, where ecclesiastical establishments had always been weak. Moreover, facilities were not readily available to provide for many of the swelling working-class suburbs in the larger cities. The consequence of this situation was a steady de-Catholicization among urban workers and southern peasants.

On the other hand, the church, from the late nineteenth century onwards, endeavored to recoup by its orientation toward the middle and upper classes. Much of the primary education in the country was still operated by the church, and greater attention was given secondary education, particularly among the upper classes. Official piety became quite overt among the possessing classes, and was reinforced by certain internal changes, such as reform of the liturgy, calculated to make religious services more impressive and hold the attention and emotions. Charitable and devotional organizations, particularly for upper-class ladies, increased in number. The number of monks and friars in Spain also increased, particularly after the persecutions in France and Portugal. The most Catholic sector of the lower classes was the landholding northern peasantry, among whom cofradías, or lay religious guilds, remained common.

At the same time, a reaction set in against the increased influence of Catholicism among the upper classes and to some extent in the government. A new wave of middle class anticlericalism became a major issue in politics, finally culminating in the left Republican legislation of 1931. The continued hostility of much of official Catholicism to liberalism was greatly resented, as were the privileges granted to it by the state. The clerical issue became one of the major issues dividing liberal from conservative in the middle classes, and encouraged the former to look toward alliance with the revolutionary left to defeat Catholic interests.

Catholic social reform and Catholic trade unions among the lower classes were much less successful than Catholic influence among the upper classes. A series of Workers' Circles organized in the late 1890s were Catholic social societies more than they were trade unions. An organization of Catholic syndicates was formed after 1912, paralleled some years later by a second nonconfessional Catholic workers' syndical federation. These groups were faced with the implacable hostility of the revolutionary movements and were confined for the most part to northern Spain. Their following was only a fraction that of the leftist movements. Another officially Catholic group, however, the Basque regionalist Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos, founded in 1911, developed modest worker support in the Basque region.

The most important Catholic social organization was the peasants' confederation (CONCA), founded in 1916 and limited mostly to the northern half of the country. By 1922 it numbered nearly half a million families and represented a greater following than did the CNT. The greatest practical benefit of the CONCA was to provide cheaper credit for many of its members, as well as marketing and purchasing cooperatives.

Catholic Action was formed in Spain during the 1880s, after it had developed in Italy, but it was not mobilized on a broad scale for forty years, until the 1920s. It played no major political role in Spain before 1931. Judging from its membership statistics, the two most genuinely Catholic regions of the country, as far as middle class activists were concerned, were the Basque country and Valencia.

The Republicans

Republicanism made modest advances in the early twentieth century, following a virtual eclipse in the 1890s after the movement had bifurcated between Castelar's possibilism and the tradition of military conspiracy represented by Ruiz Zorrilla. In the late nineteenth century republicanism had dwindled into a congeries of provincial and personalist sects, grouped around local followings or a few key leaders. One of the "historic" Republican personalities, Nicolás Salmerón, took the lead in forming a short-lived
Republican Union in 1903. More important was Alejandro Lerroux's Radical Republican party that
developed in the wake of the Republican Union. Lerroux followed a course of vulgar
demagoguery, based mainly on anticlericalism, that rallied a considerable following in urban Catalonia,
and he began to reach out in an effort to create a national Republican party. Valencia, one of the most
prorepublican regions, was badly split between the factions of the novelist Blasco Ibáñez and a local
republican leader, Rodrigo Soriano.

The most constructive of all the republican groups was the Reformist Republican party, organized in
1912 by the Asturian Melquiades Alvarez. The Reformists adopted the banner of Fabian-style social
democracy, in which the most important goals were practical social and political reforms, educational
improvement, complete religious and cultural liberty, technical development, and a fully free,
independent, and responsible parliament. They were less concerned with the question of the regime per
se. Yet the Reformists, like the other Republican groups, never became a national party. Their main
support came from the Asturian middle classes.

Catalan Nationalism

The organization of Catalan nationalism as a political movement was given impetus by the defeat of
1898, which brought the loss of Catalonia's main export market and prompted a recurrence of industrial
crisis. Silvela's first reform government of 1899-1900 included the pro-Catalan General Polavieja as
well as one Catalan minister. Frustration of the Silvela government and of Polavieja as a representative
led to the formation of a political party, the Lliga Regionalista, that won the four Cortes seats for
Barcelona in the 1901 elections, helping to break the established turno in the Catalan capital. For the
next five years, however, no further progress was made, largely because of the influence of the
demagogic, anti-Catalanist Radical Republicans in Barcelona. Catalan nationalism was essentially
middle class in background, and the Lliga stood for a degree of corporate suffrage and the fostering of
regional culture and economic development. It was neither subversive nor separatist, but intended to
win Catalan autonomy from and within the established system.

Catalanism's first major breakthrough was made possible by reaction to the 1906 Law of Jurisdictions.
In opposition to this measure, the Lliga was joined by some Catalan Republicans and by Catalan
Carlists in a regional electoral alliance, Catalan Solidarity, that won forty-one of the forty-four Catalan
Cortes seats in the 1907 elections. The Lliga's astute political leader, Francesc Cambó, then worked
closely with the Maura government of 1907-1909 to try to legislate local government autonomy, and
hopefully, a broader regional autonomy bill for Catalonia. However, the left wing of the
Catalanists walked out on this tacit alliance in 1908 because the Maura government refused to revoke
the Law of Jurisdictions "immediately" and because of provisions for corporate suffrage in the local
autonomy bill. Throughout its history Catalanism has been plagued by successive left Catalanist groups
splintering apart and reforming.

Despite the failure of the Maura administration, the Lliga regained control of regional politics inside
Catalonia after 1911. It was perhaps the only modern, well-organized political party in Spain, and
extended its regional influence with the formation of the Catalan Man-comunitat in 1913. This
amounted to concentration of the existing limited administrative powers of the four provinces of
modern Catalonia in one unit, without devolving new measures of autonomy. Nevertheless, the
opportunity was well used by the Catalanists to improve education, roads, and local services and to
foster regional culture, giving Catalonia in the second and third decades of the twentieth century by far
the most intense cultural life of any region of Spain.

Basque Nationalism

The other important regional movement developed in the Basque provinces. The roots of Basque
nationalism lay in regional culture and sentiment and in reaction against the apparent shortcomings of
the modern Spanish state. Basque foralism had largely been abolished after the final Carlist war, but the
three Basque provinces and Navarre still retained an autonomous fiscal structure (the *concierto económico*) and a greater degree of provincial autonomy than other parts of Spain. Carlist sympathies and ultra-Catholic loyalty remained strong.

The founder of Basque nationalist ideology, Sabino de Arana y Goiri, came from an upper-middle-class Carlist family of industrial entrepreneurs. Arana y Goiri made the Basque language—which he had to learn virtually from scratch—the cornerstone of his movement, but Basque was a primitive, preliterate tongue that was slowly dying out in the Basque country itself and could not provide the cultural platform that the *renaixença* gave Catalanism. The Basque Nationalist party (PNV), founded in 1894, was based upon the concept of an almost absolute regional and racial differentiation between Basques and other Spaniards. Basque nationalism tended toward nearly complete separation, even to the extent of wanting to conduct separate foreign relations. As something of a post-Carlist phenomenon, it was ultra-Catholic and originally advocated a virtual theocracy in government-[607]ment authority. In social background it was essentially lower middle class and never obtained anything comparable to the degree of upper class backing enjoyed by Catalanism. Basque nationalism has continued to be a minority movement within the Basque country.

Like Catalanism, it gained its first political success following the 1898 disaster, electing Arana y Goiri to the provincial assembly of Vizcaya in that year. Yet the PNV remained so weak that it entered no candidates for the Cortes until strongly encouraged by the Lliga in 1918, when it sent seven deputies to Madrid, but by 1923 its parliamentary representation had once more been reduced to one deputy.

**The Crisis of 1917 and the Frustration of the Parliamentary System**

During the years before World War I the established parties had shown that they were unable to provide vigorous new leadership. This was due to a complex combination of their own disunity, factionalism, and status striving, the opposition of the most important middle class forces in the most active and modern region of country, and not least of all the elimination of the two strongest leaders--Maura by organized ostracism and Canalejas by murder. The minority ministry of Eduardo Dato was unable to introduce any of the social legislation on which he had hoped to base an invigorated reformist Conservative party. Its main concern was to avoid pressures that might push Spain into the World War. When Dato reopened parliament at the end of 1915, he resigned rather than face a petition for economic and military reforms.

The chief Liberal leader, Romanones, then formed a ministry to conduct elections early in 1916. These revealed the extent of apathy and alienation, as well as the difficulties in civic mobilization, of much of the population. In 35 percent of the voting districts of Spain--located in Galicia and the south, west, and center--only one official candidate stood for office, and under the Article 29 electoral reform of the last Maura government was automatically selected without contest. In other districts where anarchist-syndicalists were exerting considerable influence--the antithetical regions of Barcelona province and the extreme south--there was widespread abstention. Somewhat less than half the electorate actually voted. Though the Liberals got a safe majority in parliament, they had received no national mandate.

During 1915 Spain had become the most important neutral country in Europe and hence a chief source of goods. Orders poured in to Spanish producers from the western allies, especially France. Industry-[608] expanded rapidly in northern Spain, and for the first time the value of industrial production exceeded 50 percent of the total value of goods and services in Catalonia. Great profits were made. To the capable new finance minister, Santiago Alba (leader of the subsequent Liberal Left fraction of the old Liberal party), this seemed an excellent opportunity to expand state income and begin a broad program of economic stimulation. He put through the Cortes bills reforming aspects of the tax system, establishing an agricultural credit program, and providing subsidies and credit facilities for new industries. However, the Cortes refused to approve his proposals for a surtax on surplus wartime business profits and for modest fiscal pressures on large landowners that would have encouraged
moderate agrarian reform.

Meanwhile the industrial labor force swelled greatly. Prices shot upward, while wages fell farther and farther behind in the rate of increase. This brought the CNT and UGT together for the first time in their history, when a unity of action agreement was signed in December 1916 resulting in a twenty-four-hour general strike and threatening much more widespread stoppage in the future.

The middle classes were also restive. The first sector to revolt against the economic squeeze and the political deadlock were the peninsular garrison officers of the Spanish Army, whose meager purchasing power had been reduced to absurd depths by the inflation. During the winter and spring of 1917 infantry and cavalry officers set up a series of Military Juntas in most of the main peninsular garrisons, to protest low pay and favoritism in promotion. The Juntas were formed of junior and middle-rank officers in opposition to the generals, some of whom owed their positions to political influence. The Romanones government was meanwhile succeeded in April 1917 by a weaker ministry under the Democrat García Prieto. An attempt to dissolve the Juntas failed completely; the dissident officers imposed their privilege of sectarian organization and forced creation of a new government in June 1917 under the Conservative Dato. Though the Juntas spoke of reform and national regeneration, their concrete interests were higher pay and other professional perquisites. Nevertheless, their "barracks revolt" was greeted with great encouragement by most republicans, the Catalanists, and even some of the Socialists, who began to draw comparisons between the role that a rebel army might play in Spain and that of the dispirited and subverted Russian soldiery in the radicalization of the revolution that was taking place at the moment in Russia.

Since parliament remained closed and the representative system did not seem to be functioning, Cambó and the Catalan Lliga, together with some of the republicans, seized the opportunity to call a special "Parliamentary Assembly" of reformist deputies in Barcelona, center of the Junta movement. The plan was to use this assembly of a minority of Cortes members as the springboard for an alternate source of legitimacy. It was to call for elections to a new Cortes that would reform the Spanish constitution and limit the power of the crown and established groups. Yet neither Maura nor reformist Liberals from central Spain would have anything to do with this extra-constitutional assembly, which was immediately closed by police.

The initiative then passed to the revolutionary working class movements. The key role was played by the Socialists, but they were supported by Melquides Alvarez's Reformist Republican party, which had rallied to the regime in 1913 when D. Alfonso XIII seemed to encourage an "opening to the left" but now despaired of further reforms within the system. Yet, though the Socialists had a working agreement with the CNT that vaguely proposed a joint revolutionary general strike, they could not gain the organized assistance of anarcho-syndicalists. The general strike--essentially Socialist in backing--began somewhat prematurely on August 10, 1917, after one railroad company refused to rehire a hundred or so UGT members following a local strike. The first revolutionary general strike in Spanish history was effective only in Barcelona, the Asturian mining region, and a few other centers, and then only partially. Martial law was enforced by the army, still basically loyal to the regime--at least when faced with a challenge from the revolutionary left--and the strike was ultimately a complete failure.

At the end of October, after further pressure from the Juntas, the Dato government was forced to resign. It was replaced by a "government of concentration" under García Prieto. In an effort to broaden representation, this ministry contained two Catalanist members, but it soon began to break down under the weight of internal dissension, strikes by government employees, and general hostility from the organized political factions. In a new effort to gain a workable majority, elections were held at the beginning of 1918. After decades of protest against the lack of full electoral freedom, García Prieto saw to it that the government, in large measure, kept hands off. The result of electoral democracy was complete fractionalization. Abstention was at least 35 percent. Dato's Conservatives, who raised the
largest campaign fund, won ninety-eight seats. García Prieto's Democrats, the most popular Liberal group, won ninety-two. No other party or faction returned more than forty. The new Cortes was a political mosaic, as democracy produced a situation of immobility in some respects more frustrating than that of caciquismo. There was nothing uniquely Spanish about this situation. In Italy, where many of the same problems existed, the result of new democratic elections in 1919 [610] was rather similar, though Italy was at that time a more advanced nation.

The only solution was formation in March 1918 of a "National Government" of interparty union led by Antonio Maura, still the most prestigious single figure. It contained all the leading Conservative and Liberal leaders, including the Lliga's Cambó, who as minister of development proved to be the most active member. During an eight-month tenure he prepared a new public works program, the beginnings of major railway reform, a new mining law, new irrigation and hydroelectric projects, and a modest plan of farm credit. Meanwhile the National Government disintegrated from internal dissension. The reformist Liberal Santiago Alba, whose earlier fiscal and development plans had been blocked in 1916, resigned because his colleagues would not support his proposals for educational reform. After yet another resignation, which coincided with the end of the World War, Maura decided that the time had come to present the resignation of the entire ministry.

At that point the crown appointed a strictly minority Liberal government under Romanones, charged with the goal of passing a workable Catalan autonomy statute so as to strengthen the Spanish system by reincorporating the most active middle class forces. At the close of 1918 Romanones appointed a special extraparliamentary commission to prepare a draft. Since nineteen of its thirty-three members had already expressed their public support for some form of Catalan autonomy, a favorable proposal seemed assured. Then the leftist parties--Republicans, Socialists, and Reformists under Alvarez--intervened with left Catalanist leaders to urge them to reject any form of autonomy prepared by the constitutional monarchy, on the grounds that a proposal of this government would tend to strengthen the Spanish system rather than weaken it. The left Catalanists pressured the Lliga to join them in walking out of the Cortes in January 1919 to dramatize their rejection of any autonomy statute not prepared exclusively by Catalans. Thus autonomy under the constitutional monarchy, the original goal of the Catalanist movement, was in essence rejected by the Catalanists themselves. Soon afterward the postwar social conflict reached fever pitch, leading the government to close parliament and impose martial law in Barcelona.

What the country desperately needed was a restructuring of the two-party system that would establish a viable, cohesive liberal progressive party on the one hand and a functional, unified conservative party on the other, to achieve reform while maintaining stability. The crown gave the first chance to a minority Conservative ministry under Maura, and it held elections in June 1919 (the third in three years) to try to build a Conservative majority. Though the government did not [611] observe the degree of noninterference followed by its predecessor in 1918, the results of the elections were much the same. After the Maura ministry was narrowly defeated on a parliamentary technicality, another minority government was formed under the independent Conservative reformist Joaquín Sánchez de Toca. It instituted needed social reforms but could survive for only a few months. Yet another transitory Conservative ministry, this time under Manuel Allendesa-lazar, lasted long enough to pass the first regular budget bill in several years, after which Dato formed his third government in May 1920. In elections at the end of the year, Dato's Conservatives won 185 seats, and with the help of either the Maurist or Ciervist Conservatives (23 seats each) were able to form a working majority.

The Social Crisis of 1919-1923

With much of the public apathetic or having lost confidence in political change, the last four years of the parliamentary system were dominated by two issues--the social struggle with the revolutionary movements, mainly the anarchists, and the disastrous military effort to subdue the native kabyles of the
Moroccan Protectorate. As indicated above, the World War helped to produce a social crisis almost as great in Spain as in some of the belligerent countries. A large and rapid growth of the urban working class that pulled in many thousands of illiterate and semiliterate peasants, together with the greatly increased bargaining power of organized labor brought by wartime prosperity, swelled the CNT to 700,000 members by 1919. The multiple cleavages and tensions within Spanish life, the clash of religious and political ideologies, the atmosphere of publicized violence during the war years, and finally, the revolutionary upheavals of eastern and central Europe between 1917 and 1919 all contributed to rapid expansion of the influence of the revolutionary elements within the CNT. By contrast, after 1917 the majority of the much smaller Socialist movement adopted a moderate, reformist attitude.

The CNT's offensive began at Barcelona in the spring of 1919 after a layoff of workers at a power plant known colloquially as the Canadiense. The walkout mushroomed into a virtual city-wide general strike that achieved the biggest victory Spanish labor had ever seen. It won wage advances and recognition of the union shop in Barcelona, and helped prompt the government to legislation establishing an eight-hour working day. This merely whetted the ambition of CNT leaders, who attempted another general strike to win release of a dozen imprisoned comrades. That brought a crackdown against the CNT, followed by a Catalan employers' lockout. CNT syndicates formed squads of gunmen to murder employers, foremen, policemen, and most of all, dissident workers. Employers' security agents and the police replied, and a vicious circle of violence spiraled upward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strikes</th>
<th>Strikers</th>
<th>Days Lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>35,897</td>
<td>1,408,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>22,154</td>
<td>364,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>36,306</td>
<td>1,056,109</td>
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<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>84,316</td>
<td>2,258,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>49,267</td>
<td>1,017,889</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30,591</td>
<td>382,885</td>
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<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>96,882</td>
<td>2,415,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>71,440</td>
<td>1,784,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>109,168</td>
<td>1,819,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>178,496</td>
<td>4,001,278</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>244,684</td>
<td>7,261,762</td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>233</td>
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<td>429</td>
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<td>1923</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>120,568</td>
<td>3,027,026</td>
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</table>

Source: Spanish Ministry of Labor.

The last Dato government, which came to power in May 1920 when the labor struggle in Barcelona and elsewhere was well advanced, tried to institute a major reform policy. A ministry of labor was created
inside the Spanish government and new rent and insurance regulations were established. Most trade unionists under arrest were set free, and the CNT was permitted to resume normal operations. But just as electoral democracy did not bring agreement on reform, so economic adjustments and renewed syndical freedom did not bring labor peace. Employers, particularly in Catalonia, had taken a hard line; by the summer of 1920 the largest strike wave in Spanish history had extended into Andalusia, the UGT was trying to negotiate another joint-action agreement with the CNT, and a small, incendiary Spanish Communist party had been set up. In Barcelona violence escalated rapidly; an anti-anarchist "Free Syndicate" was supported by employers, and finally the local garrison commander, Martínez de Anido, ousted the regular civil governor and seized control himself to restore order by counter-terror. His conciliation policy having failed, Dato accepted the alternative of repression. In revenge, the prime minister was murdered by an anarchist firing from a motorcycle sidecar in March 1921.

By 1922 the CNT was in decline. Some of its syndicates lay in a state of complete disarray, many of the best leaders were arrested or [613] dead, and there were sharp divisions between anarchist and syndicalist (revolutionary and reformist) wings of the movement. No longer supported by the impoverished syndicates, the squads of gunmen robbed banks and other facilities to finance their activities. They maintained a comparatively high level of politico-social disorder in the largest cities, but were in no position to attempt a revolutionary assault on the regime.

The Moroccan Dilemma

In 1921 the Protectorate in northern Morocco blew up in the face of the Spanish government. The mountainous 5 percent of Morocco that formed the Spanish sphere was a largely barren region, difficult to traverse, lacking roads or communications, and at first impossible to govern. The warriors of the kabyles in the Riff and Djebala were superb irregular fighters; they were probably the most difficult foes faced by western forces anywhere in the Afro-Asian world during the 1920s. As long as the War lasted, the Spanish government had confined itself to occupying a few key centers and bribing native leaders to respect the nominal authority of the Spanish-appointed caliph. A serious program of conquest was begun in 1919. At first the fighting was primarily in the western district of Djebala, with encouraging successes and few casualties. In 1921 a court favorite and veteran officer, General Fernández Silvestre, commander of the eastern Riff district, attempted to push his forces through the virtually uncharted Riff to the center of the Protectorate. His 18,000 troops were poorly trained and equipped and badly led; they were stationed for the most part out of contact with each other in a steadily lengthening chain of makeshift, sandbagged encampments.

At that point the most remarkable figure in the modern history of northern Morocco, Abd el-Krim, emerged. The son of a local tribal leader, Abd el-Krim rallied the disparate kabyles into a semi-unified force that destroyed the Spanish advance unit at Anual in the central Rif and rolled back the entire line of positions all the way to the coastal center of Melilla. Within a week or so more than 9,000 Spanish troops were killed or lost as prisoners. Anual became a disaster second only to 1898.

An enormous outcry went up at home. After all the pretensions, demands, and interference of the army in recent years, it seemed that the Spanish military scarcely existed as a fighting force. The temporary Conservative ministry that had been organized following Dato's assassination five months earlier resigned and was replaced by a new "government of concentration" under Maura, who in his old age was [614] serving as "fireman of the monarchy." A broad investigation was undertaken by a special army board, the Picasso commission, and the nuclei of the Junta movement in the peninsular garrisons were officially, though not in fact, dissolved. The Maura government planned to follow a policy of vengeance (desquite) for the humiliation of Anual, but decided against any program of conquering and occupying the entire Protectorate. Instead, it proposed a limited offensive to secure the coastline and establish a kind of military hegemony over most of the Spanish zone. Before this could be done, however, the government broke up in March 1922 over social and juridical policy, the Liberal ministers
resigning in protest over the continuation of martial law in Catalonia.

The political situation was thus seriously complicated, and again the Spanish government was caught between two fires. Without an effective policy in Morocco the future of the Protectorate, to say nothing of the Spanish Army's self-conceived national mission and its very loyalty to the government, was in doubt. Such a policy could not be prosecuted against a background of domestic turmoil. Yet though social peace under constitutional guarantees had been difficult to achieve, the Liberals insisted that all special means of repression be dropped. Spanish government needed reorganized, functioning political groups to resume the roles of Liberal and Conservative parties. Since 1919 there had slowly been taking form a loosely allied neo-Liberal bloc composed of Alba's Liberal Left, García Prieto's Liberal Democrats, the Romanones Liberals, and the Reformists of Melquiades Alvarez. Should it assume power, there was a real danger that in the prevailing disorder and national dissatisfaction a Liberal government would push the balance too far left to retain stability. Conservative opinion was restive over the social issue and opinion in important branches of the army highly agitated over national "betrayal" by the politicians. The crown felt that a reorganized, reformist Conservative bloc stood a better chance of preserving unity and stability while trying to resolve the Moroccan mess. Such a bloc could also face social and economic reforms along the lines of the earlier programs of Dato and Cambó. Don Alfonso offered power to Maura and Cambó to govern temporarily without parliament and hold new elections; Cambó was willing to cooperate, but Maura said that such an opportunity came too late for him. He was sixty-seven and his hour had passed.

Maura's successor, José Sánchez Guerra, the new leader of the main group of Conservatives, was courageous and forthright but a political mediocrity. His ministry, which lasted from March to December 1922, was the seventh Conservative government in less than

[615] four years and lacked a clear parliamentary majority. In July, when the Picasso commission returned its report on the responsibilities for Anual, Sánchez Guerra made the grievous error of throwing the whole issue into the Cortes for further parliamentary investigation, turning the issue into a political football. The ensuing discord and vituperation soon brought his government down, and no one was more to blame than himself. The only alternative remaining was to call to power a Liberal coalition ministry under García Prieto, at the close of 1922.

This was a government of notables from all Liberal factions. It proposed a general program of reform involving total equality of religious practice; reform of the Senate and reduction of its privileges; reform of electoral procedures, establishing proportionate representation; obligatory Cortes sessions for four months each year; new public works; expansion of credit; an irrigation program; labor reforms; and the beginning of a land reform. The coalition, however, was not a unified party, and the government was not united internally. Its dominant figure was the new foreign minister, Alba, who had to face the nation's number-one issue, the Moroccan problem. The nominal prime minister, García Prieto, was a weaker figure than several of his key ministers; his government underwent a series of three internal crises and reorganizations within less than nine months.

The García Prieto ministry followed the policy of its predecessor, the Sánchez Guerra government, in restoring complete freedom to syndical groups and their leaders. Police activity in Barcelona and elsewhere had been greatly reduced and brought under tighter control. Yet the ending of repression did not discourage violence; it gave the anarchists full opportunity. The rate of political violence shot upward drastically in 1923, while the Moroccan stalemate, which occupied the main attention of government, persisted.

In this situation, new elections were held in April 1923 in the face of a deepening apathy of the electorate. Disillusionment with politics was now extremely widespread. Among much of the population that genuinely desired change there was either a feeling that the parliamentary system was
hopelessly divided and deadlocked or else a feeling of bitter resentment. In nearly three-eighths of the electoral districts the balloting was uncontested; altogether, less than 42 percent of the electorate voted. The Liberal coalition won a workable majority (223 seats) but there was some doubt as to whether it had really received clear-cut national endorsement.

Taking into account the increase in the number of districts in which a single candidate was not challenged but elected by Article 29, the percentage of real participation in elections had steadily declined during the past five years (see table 27). Average abstention in elections for municipal councils was running at more than 50 percent, and for elections to the provincial chambers it was higher than 70 percent. On the other hand, official participation figures for districts in which elections were actually contested showed little decline, averaging about 65 percent for the past decade (see table 28).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from *Anuario Estadístico de España*, 1922-1923, in Sevilla Andrés, p. 405.

The economic situation by and large remained comparatively good. Real wages for Spanish workers had increased 29 percent between 1914 and 1920, and though no longer increasing at that rate, were by no means declining. The García Prieto government prepared a series of social and economic reform measures during the spring and summer of 1923, yet few were actually passed into law.

The relative paralysis of government was a result of the Moroccan problem. Alba appointed a civilian high commissioner to administer the Protectorate and hoped to settle the conflict by negotiation. He also tried to obtain support from France in resolving the revolt, but the French government refused to cooperate with the Spanish, whom they deemed inept and lacking in prestige. The Liberal ministry rejected any attempt at outright conquest. Alba was willing to grant internal autonomy to Abd el-Krim and other Moroccan leaders, and planned to reduce the zone of military operations so as to concentrate Spanish resources. This brought continued frustration, since Abd el-Krim now insisted on complete victory and independence. To army leaders, the Liberal policy seemed to be a strictly "no win" policy; on that basis the government could neither resolve the conflict nor extricate Spain from Morocco.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time the government continued to use the disaster of 1921 as a political issue. A special extraparliamentary commission was scheduled to report on the question of "responsibilities," both military and political, in September 1923. Urban terrorism meanwhile increased. The small new Spanish Communist party vied with the anarcho-syndicalists, staging a petty insurrection in Bilbao during August and encouraging a minor mutiny among troop replacements bound for Morocco. The concurrence of these events heightened the sense of political exasperation.

The Primo de Rivera Pronunciamiento (1923)

During 1922 and 1923 the apprehension of the most active leaders of the Spanish army mounted. They feared the army was about to be made a political scapegoat, and that all recent sacrifices would be wasted and national honor besmirched by a humiliating "abandonment" of Morocco. Army officers were bitter against the politicians for failing to provide financial and political support needed for victory. At the same time the commanders were fully aware that much of the public had lost confidence in the parliamentary system. The politically alienated in 1923 constituted over half the country--radicalized workers, landless peasants, disillusioned middle-class people, poor peasant renters and sharecroppers in the north, and much of the cultural elite in the cities. For a year or more there had been talk of some sort of temporary dictatorship to straighten out affairs, yet no group had the power or will to take charge. Only two elements were prepared to break into the system, but the revolutionaries, despite their widespread use of violence, were politically impotent, since all other elements of society, including the armed forces and the most influential institutions, would rally against them. The army was in a stronger position.

Throughout the summer of 1923 a group of generals in Madrid plotted the establishment of a temporary military dictatorship to provide forthright leadership and solve the Moroccan problem. When informed of their activities, the king apparently did not discourage them. Their major problem was lack of a leader to serve as temporary dictator, since none of the plotters had attained the reputation required. Such a figure finally presented himself at the beginning of September 1923 in the person of General Miguel Primo de Rivera, captain general of Catalonia. Primo was a bluff, hearty, talkative commander known for his outspokenness and maverick role in politics. He had twice spoken publicly against too impetuous a course in Morocco, at some risk to his career. In Barcelona he had shown sympathy for the Catalans and had become a popular figure among the middle classes as a symbol of both order and reform, however vaguely conceived. Primo had no clearcut political program, but he held a crucial command, the rank of lieutenant general, and showed himself ready for resolute action.

The Primo de Rivera revolt that began in Barcelona on the weekend of September 12-13 was a typical pronunciamiento in the nineteenth-century tradition, the last such exercise in Spanish history. Primo simply "pronounced" publicly his intention to take over the government. The cabinet demonstrated its customary paralysis, demanding Prime's resignation but failing to take more effective action. Only two of the nine captaincies-general of the Spanish home army stood resolutely behind Primo, but only one supported the government; the rest waited to see what would happen. The king refused to exercise any personal initiative--since he was always being criticized for that--and the government resigned. There was then little alternative to receiving Primo de Rivera in Madrid as head of government, with temporary powers to dissolve parliament and rule by decree. The new military government was received with frank enthusiasm by much of the public; even certain liberal intellectuals announced their satisfaction.

The Primo de Rivera Regime

Establishment of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship was to a large extent the consummation of the antiparliamentary trend that had begun with certain of the patriotic regenerationists and Costa's call for
an "iron surgeon," stimulated by the resurgence of the army as a political force since 1917. Primo de Rivera was a garrulous, warmhearted, patriotic, instinctive, and anti-intellectual man of great ambition for himself and his country. He was no fascist; in his first statements he invoked examples of Prim and Costa rather than Mussolini. The new regime was frank; it was known as and referred to publicly as "the Dictatorship" for the next six and one-half years. Yet D. Miguel at first denied that he was a dictator, insisting that he was merely a reformer governing with decree powers.

The dictatorship had no distinct ideology or political theory. Its original notion was that it had received temporary decree powers from the crown to resolve severe national problems, after which the normal political process would be resumed. During its first period (1923-1925), the new government took the form of a straightforward military directory, composed of eight brigadiers and one admiral. It was greeted with loud applause by much if not all the public, including reformist intellectuals such as Ortega y Gasset who believed that only a drastic solution could cut through the problem of political and constitutional change.

Under terms of martial law, peace and security were soon restored to the cities and industrial areas. Once the hand of authority was imposed and the opportunity for political maneuver and legal manipulation was at an end, disorder vanished. The dictatorship had, however, few ideas about the long-desired constitutional reform. For local government, it appointed a series of military delegates to oversee administrative affairs, even though the qualifications of such officials were often dubious. In 1924 a new local government measure was prepared, offering considerable municipal autonomy with locally elected councils. But the regime never put the new system into operation.

The overriding issue that had brought in the dictatorship was the Moroccan morass. Primo had earlier suggested abandoning north Morocco or trading it to Britain in return for Gibraltar. He had never been an ideal chief for the military movement and had been accepted by army conspirators only for want of alternative leaders among the senior command. During 1923-1924 he tried to arrange a compromise with Abd el-Krim, leaving the Berber chief in real control of most of the Protectorate as long as nominal relations were maintained with the Spanish authorities. But by 1924 Krim believed that he could establish absolute independence for the "Emirate of the Riff" and had extended his offensive to the western half of the Protectorate as well. Finding the Spanish positions there difficult to defend, the Spanish dictator took the resolute decision to shorten his lines, withdrawing at heavy cost all Spanish forces in the west to the "Primo de Rivera" line just outside the capital of Tetuán in the northwestern peninsula of the Protectorate. The wisdom of this decision is not entirely clear, since it cost more casualties than the disaster of 1921. Nevertheless, braving a potential revolt among the africanista veterans of the Spanish forces, Primo carried through this consolidation and began a major reorganization of the combat forces. The great paradox of Primo's Moroccan policy during the first year of his dictatorship was that it was essentially the same program pursued by Alba under the constitutional government. Yet Alba had been driven into exile and was being tried in absentia on trumped up charges.

Abd el-Krim's downfall was brought about by expansion of the Moroccan struggle into a two-front war. The French authorities became increasingly apprehensive about the revolt in the Spanish zone and began to fortify their northern frontier area. Abd el-Krim's rebels were partially dependent on supplies from the northern part of the French zone. The Rif leader decided to try to safeguard his rear and expand his movement by launching a major assault against the French border in 1924. The Berber warriors proved their mettle as effectively against the French as against the Spanish. They bowled over the northern French outposts and at one point were only thirty miles from Fez. Large-scale reinforcements had to be hurried in from France, and for the first time the French government was willing to adopt a program of joint action with the Spanish authorities.
A broad pincers movement was planned for 1925. In September, a reorganized Spanish amphibious force landed in the Bay of Alhucemas at the coastal base of the Riff, catching the heartland of the rebel movement from the rear. Facing a French offensive from the south and with his sources of supply almost completely cut off, Abd el-Krim was increasingly hard pressed and began to lose followers. In 1926 he surrendered to the French, and by the end of that year most of the Spanish zone had been pacified, a work finally completed by smaller campaigns in 1927-1928. The victory could be credited to a change in fortune, but also to persistence and to improved combat capabilities of a partially reorganized military. For the first time since the 1870s, the Spanish Army had a combat-proven military elite, the africanista veterans of Morocco, who ten years later played a crucial role in the Civil War.

The dictatorship enjoyed the advantages of the economic prosperity of the 1920s, which encouraged domestic stability and the political acquiescence of most of the population. By 1925, with victory in sight in Morocco, Primo de Rivera was at the height of his achievement, but was no nearer than ever to achieving constitutional reform, for want of explicit and firm ideas. The dictatorship still lived in the twilight of the age of Spanish liberalism and could not consciously affirm or develop a precise theory of authoritarianism or corporatism. The temporary solution was to form a more conventional government in December 1925, with over half the posts held by civilian appointees.

The regime did not abolish the status quo in church-state relations, but it leaned considerably more toward the church. The small Protestant groups suffered greater harassment, and Catholic activities received stronger official backing. Thus the regime acquired a tinge of clericalism.

The dictatorship never developed an official state party, but it did generate an official political front. The Unión Patriótica, first formed by middle class supporters of the regime in Valladolid during 1924, was later extended into a national organization in 1926. It had no specific doctrine and was little more than the name implied. When the regime established an appointive consultative assembly in Madrid in 1927, the UP supplied most of the members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>1923</th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>1925</th>
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<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1933</th>
<th>1934</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>102.5</td>
<td>117.9</td>
<td>121.1</td>
<td>133.7</td>
<td>132.8</td>
<td>135.6</td>
<td>141.9</td>
<td>144.0</td>
<td>146.1</td>
<td>132.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The principal notion behind Primo's second government (1926-1930) was a sort of technocratic regenerationism. A separate budget was prepared to allow for government borrowing and deficit spending on public works. Though in its later years the dictatorship added considerably to the national debt, it was under Primo de Rivera that the nucleus of the modern Spanish highway system was built. A central state hydropower policy was drawn up for the first time, the biggest achievement of which was the Ebro hydropower confederation (part of which was dismantled by the Republic). There was a considerable increase in rural electrification, and new irrigation projects were undertaken. For the first time in decades significant progress was made in reorganizing and reequipping the railroads, and steps were taken toward a national coordination of the rail network. Municipal governments were assisted in raising money for urban development, so that nearly all the larger Spanish cities increased their facilities and improved services. State banks were established to promote housing and industrial expansion. A state oil monopoly (CAMPSA) was established and operated on profitable terms. A
modest beginning was made in land reform, particularly with a 1926 law that set feasible terms by which Galician peasants could redeem their foros. The dictatorship even undertook a reforestation campaign.

Assisted to some extent by state encouragement and protection and even more by the generally favorable economic climate of the period, nearly all industries increased their production, as indicated in table 29. The regime never managed to create a genuinely corporative system, but it did eventually set up a series of corporate committees to regulate and supervise major aspects of the economy. The labor minister, Eduardo Aunós, began in 1926 to establish a nationwide network of comités paritarios (arbitration committees) to negotiate working agreements and conditions, thus finally fulfilling a project long encouraged by the parliamentary system. The CNT had been suppressed, but the Socialist UGT was favored by the regime for its moderation and discipline and participated in elections for labor representatives to the committees, becoming the principal single spokesman for Spanish labor in the process. The result was not however any major new improvements for labor, whose principal gains had been achieved during the "time of troubles" from 1919 to 1923. Under Primo de Rivera, the Spanish economy enjoyed relatively full employment, prices declined just a trifle, working conditions improved slightly, and the work week was reduced a bit, but wages also declined somewhat, as indicated in table 30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Index of Real Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>129.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>106.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>103.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Velarde Fuertes, p. 157. Figures in E. Aunós, La política social de la Dictadura (Madrid, 1944), largely coincide. Aunós notes that there were significant wage increases for women in general and also for the largely Socialist-represented workers of Vizcaya, and that the worst decline was suffered by farm laborers in Jaén province.

One of the most progressive aspects of the regime's economic policy was its tax program. The tax reform carried out in 1928 by the capable José Calvo Sotelo, finance minister of Primo's second government, improved tax collection and administration, considerably increased overall levies—a reform long overdue—and equally or more important, established the most progressive rates on personal income ever set before or after in Spanish history. The increase in the index of tax pressure is indicated in table 31.

### Fall of the Dictatorship

After formation of the 1926 government, the Dictator gave up the notion of returning to the old legality and spoke vaguely of preparing a new constitution. In 1929 a handpicked assembly prepared the draft of a corporate constitution under which part of parliament would be chosen by indirect, organic elections. Yet Primo de Rivera could not find his way toward the inauguration of a new system. His health was declining (by that point he suffered severely from diabetes), and he was weary and uncertain. His own collaborators were sharply divided and there was mounting opposition among politically conscious elements in Spain as a whole.
Table 31. Index of Tax Pressure, 1922-1930
(1913 = 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tax Pressure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>104.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>108.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>108.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>119.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>125.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


By 1929 the dictatorship had alienated every important interest group in Spain, save perhaps the neutral middle classes. The upper classes and business interests were not supporters of the regime because of its reformist and interventionist proposals. Aunós, the Primo labor minister, was denounced as a "white Lenin." The Socialists accepted Primo on sufferance only. Upper class Catalanists of the Lliga had at first acclaimed the Dictatorship because it would repress the left, only to see it repress regionalism as well and dissolve the Mancomunitat. The old political classes were all enemies for obvious reasons. Even the church had begun to draw off, after it became clear that the dictatorship was failing to institutionalize itself. Perhaps the strongest opposition of all came from Spanish intellectuals, subject to partial censorship and moderate suppression and infuriated by the regime's clericalism and lack of ideological order. The university students, many of them organized in a leftist student syndicate (FUE), were among the strongest opponents. By 1928 they were beginning mass strikes and organizations, originally in opposition to equal rights to Catholic schools. Finally, much of the army had turned against the regime. The military had never supported Primo fully. There had always been resentment against compromising the army as an instrument of dictatorial political administration. The artillery corps came out in revolt in 1926 after Primo intervened to break its tradition of iron seniority promotion, and the corps was reorganized. There were several attempted revolts between 1926 and 1929, organized by disgruntled officers, a few opposition politicians, and clandestine elements of the CNT. Moreover, economic pressures increased in 1929 with the depreciation of the national currency that was brought on by persistently adverse payment balances and a bad harvest in Spain. The only direct supporters of the regime were to be found in the heterogeneous ranks of the weakly organized UP.

Don Alfonso had become restive after six years of *primorriverismo*. The Dictator had virtually absorbed the prerogatives of the crown, for there was no parliament and no parliamentary government. If Primo should ever succeed in institutionalizing a more authoritarian system, the royal prerogative might be made superfluous; should Primo continue to grow weaker, he would drag the monarchy down in his eventual failure. Some of Primo's closest collaborators urged local elections or a constitutional plebiscite, but the Dictator could not see his way to a clear course of action. A more extensive conspiracy was begun against him in sectors of the army, and in a public gesture he canvassed the attitudes of military leaders at the end of January 1930. When it became clear that army chiefs were reluctant to continue their support, the crown found it fairly easy to "dismiss" the Dictator, whose weak health, disillusionment, and lack of backing left little alternative.

The Primo de Rivera dictatorship never escaped the shadow of historic Spanish liberalism. It was probably the most gentle and liberal "dictatorship" of twentieth-century Europe, unstained by a single political execution. The Dictator himself lacked a ruthless will to power; his instincts were paternalistic and semiliberal. At first he looked upon his government as a supplement, rather than a drastic alternative, to the liberal system, and many of the ambitions and practices of his fascist contemporaries
in other lands were simply alien to his nature. His intentions were of the highest, his regime was able to resolve a national nightmare—Morocco—and it began major projects of economic development and reform. For six and a half years it brought peace, order, and prosperity to Spain. Yet it destroyed the historic system of representative government, and once the national polity left that road, it never found it again.

**Collapse of the Monarchy**

Don Alfonso hoped to save the monarchy by getting rid of the dictatorship, but the tiger of authoritarian rule, once mounted, was not easily dismounted. Nearly all the old pre-1923 politicians had been alienated by the dictatorship, and the crown lacked able counselors or collaborators. The two remaining leaders of stature, Cambó and Alba, were both indisposed—Cambó by throat cancer, Alba by his general repugnance for politics under Alfonso XIII, after the experience of 1923.

Through a fatal process of elimination the head of the new government of 1930 was an elderly general, Dámaso Berenguer, former high commissioner of Spanish Morocco in 1921, a sometime opponent of Primo de Rivera, a gentleman and a bit of a liberal, and most important of all, one of the very few figures on whom the crown could rely. But Berenguer was not a political leader; he lacked talent, experience, and goals, and his health was almost as poor as that of Primo. What remained of the old party system had disappeared, and Spain was politically more invertebrate than at any time since the 1870s. There was no consensus even among conservative, monarchist elements about what course should be followed, and so Berenguer let precious months slip by in uncertainty. His government eased up on censorship and police activity, winning for itself the nickname of the dictablanda. The CNT began to reorganize, strikes increased, and republican conspirators moved freely. Finally, in January 1931, a year after the resignation of Primo de Rivera, the government announced that it would hold regular parliamentary elections. Melquiades Alvarez's "constitutional" group declared their boycott, demanding a constituent assembly, and most other political spokesmen seconded them, leaving the Berenguer government little alternative but to resign. Alba, in Paris, had persistently refused requests from the crown to form a representative Liberal bloc that might take power. The best successor for the Berenguer ministry that D. Alfonso could find was a hodge-podge cabinet of monarchist notables, led by an obscure admiral, Aznar. The latter was a complete political incompetent whose only qualification was his having held the post of minister of navy in the last constitutional government of 1923. The Aznar government was one in name only; it had neither leadership, unity, nor policy, but was a feeble holding action that almost no one respected.

During 1930 republicanism began to gain its greatest vogue in Spanish history. The new republicanism was extremely vague, and its backing was as much negative as positive; it stood for opposition to the monarchist regime more clearly than for any specific program of its own. The middle classes began to rally to it, and even some of the upper classes resigned themselves to republicanism as the lesser evil, the best alternative to a monarchist system that had recently attempted unpleasant reforms and if perpetuated might provoke radical lower class reaction. What was not appreciated, however, was that at the core of the new republicanism was a spirit of sectarian radicalism, generated among part of the intelligentsia and lower middle classes during the late 1920s in opposition to the dictatorship. This new republican radicalism had developed in a political vacuum, in a mood of emotion and hatred; it was doctrinaire and sectarian, rejecting the compromise tactics of historic parliamentarianism, with which it had little or no acquaintance.

Leaders of the principal republican cliques got together in August 1930 to sign the so-called Pact of San Sebastián, which pledged them to establish a constitutional republic and won the support of the left Catalanists by promising to prepare a statute of regional autonomy. Yet the majority of the people were by no means republican, and so the customary relations were cultivated with dissident elements among the military. The minor military revolts that resulted in December 1930 were a fiasco, but two officers
who led them were executed by military courts, providing the republican movement with martyrs.

The chairman of the republican committee, Niceto Alcalá Zamora, was a former monarchist politician whose moderation and Catholicism reassured some of the more conservative elements that might otherwise have been frightened by the growth of republicanism. A group of leading intellectuals, including Ortega y Gasset, rallied to republicanism in February 1931, giving it increased prestige, and the trial of arrested republican leaders in March--dominated by republican propaganda and resulting in only token sentences--was a clear moral victory for the conspirators. When the feeble Aznar government finally initiated the return to representative processes by holding direct municipal elections throughout Spain on April 12, 1931, a majority of voters supported monarchist candidates, but the larger, more liberal cities voted overwhelmingly for republican municipal councillors. For forty years there had tended to be tacit agreement that opinion in these cities was the political bellwether of Spain. Even most of the monarchists gave up hope, and the commanders of the army made it clear that they had little stomach to take up arms against their fellow countrymen in defense of the monarchy. On April 14 D. Alfonso concluded that any attempt to retain power would either be futile, or at best, hopelessly divide Spaniards in a difficult struggle. He left the country rather than risk civil war.

The monarchy had lost moral support through the dictadura and the sterile, hesitant perpetuation of the dictablanda. It then failed in and almost failed to contest the propaganda battle of 1930-1931. The monarchy's only representative support had stemmed from the pre-1923 parties, especially the Conservatives. The old Conservative and Liberal factions had depended on the electoral system to mobilize their constituency, and so had atrophied under the dictatorships. Had elections been held promptly in 1930, it would have been much easier to restore some degree of continuity and stability. The remnants of the former Conservatives had themselves lost confidence in D. Alfonso, while the former Liberals were disillusioned, embittered, and not a little confused. Insofar as there was an underlying political consensus in Spanish society, it was a liberal one, even among the moderately conservative. The experience of the 1920s had discredited authoritarianism, and when the sudden republican movement gave token of moderation and reliability, the will to resist a neoliberal transition evaporated. Even so, the quick crystallization of a vague liberal republican sentiment in the municipal elections surprised the republican leaders, who were still more surprised by the precipitous collapse of the monarchy that followed within less than forty-eight hours. Though almost no one opposed it, almost no one was really prepared for the advent of the new regime on April 14, 1931.

Conclusion: The Breakdown of Constitutional Monarchy in Spain

The constitutional monarchist system of 1875-1923 was the most durable representative, parliamentary government in Spanish history. When it was originally overturned in 1923, comparatively few realized how difficult it would be to restore stable, representative institutions. The numerous deficiencies of the restored monarchy have been widely publicized, but with the passage of time its achievements are slowly being better appreciated. It provided a rather precocious system of parliamentary representation, increasingly impartial constitutional justice, general religious and cultural freedom, not unimportant social reforms, and a period of improved living standards, as well as a certain degree of local and regional autonomy.

The breakdown of the system is commonly blamed either on outrageous social and economic conditions or on the nefarious conduct of the king. In fact, social and economic conditions improved pari passu with the breakdown of the system, and closer examination reveals that the discretionary powers of the crown were more frequently exercised in a constructive than a destructive manner. The breakdown of the system was above all else, as Raymond Carr has observed, a political failure. In that process a number of key points and factors merit emphasis:

1. The provocations of Catalan nationalism, resulting in the military intervention of 1905 and the passing of the Law of Jurisdictions. On that occasion the crown capitulated to the right, and in so doing
permitted an unbalancing of the Spanish constitutional system, with destructive consequences.

2. Formation of the Left Bloc in 1908-1909, the resulting Maura NO! campaign, and the antiparliamentary dismissal of the Maura government. On this occasion the crown capitulated to the left in almost exactly the same way that it had capitulated to the right four years earlier. Don Alfonso's action was fully constitutional but anti-parliamentary. It terminated the most productive reform government that twentieth-century Spain had seen; after 1909 only one more really effective parliamentary government was ever constituted under the regime.

3. Failure to achieve significant political and administrative decentralization, in part because of the premature termination of the Maura long government.

4. The traumatic consequences of the murder of Canalejas.

5. Breakup of the Liberal party over the issue of the most limited sort of autonomy for Catalonia in 1913.

6. The essentially antipolitical position of Antonio Maura in the years following the anti-Maura veto, demanding in effect a kind of unconstitutional vengeance against his persecutors, and the resulting split of the Conservative party. In a sense, it might be said that Maura was willing to save Spain but not to give it political leadership.

7. The fractionalization of parliament as a result of the foregoing and other divisions and rivalries. There was no effective parliamentary majority from 1914 on.

8. The failure of fiscal reform, as, for example, underlined by the opposition to the Alba program in 1916.

9. The persistence of military pressures and interference in politics after 1917.

10. Inability of the more liberal forces to achieve effective alliance for constitutional reform, as demonstrated particularly by the failure of 1917.

11. The suicidal totorresisme (all-or-nothingism) of the left Catalanists, as demonstrated in 1908 and 1918-1919.

12. The rise of anarchist terrorism after 1917.

13. The intransigence of business interests in labor disputes, especially in Catalonia.

14. The stubbornness of the Conservative factions in resisting a compromise reunification after the murder of Dato in 1921.

15. The Moroccan problem, which virtually paralyzed political life after 1921.

16. The failure of the fifth (and final) Maura government of 1921-1922, brought down by the Liberals over the issue of civil guarantees in Barcelona, and the subsequent frustration of any forceful effort to resolve the Moroccan problem.

17. The tardiness and relative ineffectuality of the Liberal realignment, first proposed in 1918, then finally given its major opportunity in 1922-1923.

18. The final, neosubversive wave of anarchist and Communist violence during the spring and summer of 1923.

19. The political ineffectuality of Primo de Rivera, who could not resolve the dilemma that he had created.

20. The total absence of leadership in 1930-1931, heightened by the tragic illness of Cambó and the
refusal of Alba to assume any responsibility.

The frustrations of parliamentary government were reflected in the shortening of the average life of Spanish cabinets, which had been twenty-two months between 1875 and 1902, fell to ten months between 1902 and 1917, and then only six months between 1917 and 1923. It should be kept in mind that the crisis of Spanish parliamentary government occurred not because the system was growing more corrupt and unrepresentative, but on the contrary, as it became less corrupt and more representative.

Bibliography for Chapter 24


The main literature on the early history of the working class movement has been given in the bibliography to chapter 21. Albert Balcells has written two important monographs on social struggles in Catalonia, *El sindicalisme a Barcelona, 1916-1923* (Barcelona, 1966), and *El problema agrari a Catalunya, 1890-1936* (Barcelona, 1968). See also Joan Lacomba, *Crisi i revolució al país Valencià* (Valencia, 1968).


There are several useful books on Spain in Morocco, beginning with the general works by Tomás García Figueras, *La acción africana de España en torno al 98 (1860-1912)*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1966), and *España y su protectorado en Marruecos (1912-1956)* (Madrid, 1957). On diplomatic

Notes for Chapter 24


2. Juan Linz has pointed out that in Spain from 1874 to 1923 there were sixty-two different ministries but only twenty prime ministers. In Italy from 1876 to 1922 there were forty-four ministries but twenty-one prime ministers.