Madrid bus workers end strike
From Our Correspondent
Madrid, Nov 8
Bus workers went back to work here today, after their week-long strike which seriously disrupted Madrid's transport system.

Workers' sources claimed only 35 per cent of strikers had returned to work, but the company quoted a figure of 90 per cent. There was also confusion about the reasons for the return to work, particularly as on Monday workers agreed not to return until their arrested colleagues were released.

Three workers belonging to the "unitary platform", the workers' negotiating team, are in Carabancos prison charged with sedition, and another four, including two of the same offence, are on bail.

Since were running normally throughout the day and troops who have been driving them for the past week were withdrawn. Rallies, however, were purging certain areas, particularly near the main bus depot at Furacela, to prevent any possible attempts by pickets to sabotage a return to work.

There was only one report of an incident at a bus depot. It is believed that some of the workers' conditions will now be met. The evening newspaper "Informaciones" reported that more than 50 per cent of illegal strikes, especially the Communist-dominated workers' associations, might be given their jobs back.

Thirteen members of the "platform" were arrested at the same time as the first day of the strike.

The start and management were meeting this afternoon to decide whether to demand an increase of about 80 per cent.

If the return to work is a success, this will be a fillip for the Government's labour relations. The authorities refused to give in and make any offer for the end of the strike.

According to a source close to the Government, ministers who were present at some of the demands did not want to give in to such a demand, open to criticism of softness from right and left. The Government needs the right's support to counter the demands that have two-thirds majority in the Cortes for constitutional reforms.

Mass at Madrid rally forbidden
From Harry de Boeuf
Madrid, Nov 3
The entrenched right wing, known as The Bunker, prepared new ammunitions for use against the Government and the Church today after the Archbishop of Madrid had refused to allow a requiem mass for General Franco at a huge right-wing rally in the capital next week.

Cardinal Enrique y Tarazona held a vigil on the Church's 83rd birthday, but a requiem service for the dead day was not possible.

The veterans of the winning side, led by Señor José Antonio Girón, plan to commemorate the first anniversary of the dictator's death and the fortieth anniversary of the execution of the founder of the Falange, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, on November 26 with the rally in the Oriente Plaza, where Franco was often heard to speak.

In an attempt to take the wind out of their sails, Señor Adolfo Suarez, the Prime Minister, has arranged for a requiem mass to be held, but the Church's "patriotic" ceremony might be deformed in such an occasion.

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Television remains shackled by restrictions of Franco era

From William Chislett

The Spanish press has changed radically since General Franco died, allowing virtual freedom of expression, but television is still straddled between the old and the new.

Television coverage of the weekend bus strike in Madrid showed clearly that little has changed when it comes to allowing anti-Government views. Coverage was given only to the bus company's point of view, the Government's stand, and an appeal by the mayor for a return to work.

Leaders of the illegal trade unions which make up the bus workers' "unitary platform" (four of whom are in Gibralfaro jail), said after the strike that one of the reasons why the strike failed was biased television coverage. They could not get their view across.

On Thursday, the day the strike ended, El Pigeon published a letter saying: "Spanish television is a public service without any respect for the citizen. The only way to end the existing monologue is to restore the right of reply to citizens and convert it into a means of communication for all the social voices."

Television celebrated its twentieth anniversary at the end of October. Senor Josep Mells, an MP, wrote in El Pais that it was "industrially obsolete, economically extravagant, intellectually reactionary, culturally useless, politically narrow, managerially undemocratic and capricious."

"We have a television which is totally adjusted to all the defects of the regime," he said. "Nothing can be done to improve it unless all the institutions are democratized."

"Television continues to be a monologue," people as one of Spain's best known journalists told me. "Spain is the most informed country about what goes on abroad, but we know nothing about our own country. Coverage of foreign events may even be worse than that of the BBC. Television coverage look a little paltry at times."

The television here belongs to the Government and not to those who work for it, in particular television reporters. When the private television change when the Government's policies change."

Senor Rafael Anson, director-general of television, is a friend of Senor Suarez, the Prime Minister, and brother of Senor Luis Maria Anson, director of La Vanguardia and recently appointed head of the semi-official news agency Elf.

The television head is said to be closely linked with Opus Dei, the influential Roman Catholic organization. The heads of national and international news are also reported reliable to be Opus members.

Senor Jesus Mora, deputy director of information services, was formerly chief reporter on El Ataud, the newspaper of General Franco's civil war veterans, and the first director of the extreme right-wing magazine Furioso.

There also continues to exist in television a nucleus of Franco-clan which continues to hold key posts, although not necessarily the highest ones. "This is the bunker of television, the old clan which continues to dominate," one television man said.

Opposition politicians are beginning to appear on the screen, however, and are usually without sound. This was the case when the Popular Alliance, headed by Senor Suarez, gave a commentary on television as being manipulated by interested sectors and not, as it should be, reflecting the continuing reality of the country. "We are professionals and cannot accept this distortion: we want equality for all and objectivity," one said.

From William Chislett

Cortes to debate reform Bill next week

From Our Correspondent

The Cortes (Parliament) will debate the long-awaited constitutional reforms over the next week under a poisoned atmosphere. The main reason for this, it was learnt in Madrid.

The Government's Bill provides for a House of Deputies and a Senate, freely elected on the basis of proportional representation, to be appointed by the King. The committee in charge of the Bill has fixed a week to examine the many amendments and to submit the Bill virtually unchanged.

The debate begins on Tuesday. If the Bill is not approved by the following Friday then the debate will continue the following week.

It is expected that the Cortes will give the Government the necessary two-thirds majority for the reforms. If they do not agree to the reform then King Juan Carlos will dissolve the Cortes and submit the original version to the people in a national referendum.

The Bill is expected to be attached to the Popular Alliance, headed by Senor Manuel Fraga-Iribarren, who opposes the reform. But it is unlikely to be able to get the necessary two-thirds representation.

Widespread arrests: Mass arrest of labour leaders at Bilbao: The last 24 hours in Spain saw the first time since the end of the Civil War that leaders of companies, unions, and other unions have been arrested.

Four workers were arrested in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, for painting strike slogans on walls and fences. Strikes are expected to be梓mproving for the same reason. There were many arrests in Madrid.

Agence France Presse.
400 arrests on Spain’s strike day

From Our Correspondent

Police have arrested an estimated 400 people throughout Spain in connection with the general strike called by the illegal trade unions today.

Officials, the number of arrests was put at only 20,000 out of a working population of eight million by Senator Manuel Ortí Bordes, the Under Secretary at the Interior Ministry, during a press conference this morning. However, according to newspaper reports and labour sources, the number was greater and estimated to be between 500,000 and a million.

The one-day general strike called by the Socialist General Union of Workers (UGT), the Communist-led Workers’ Confederation, and the illegal Syndicalist Workers Union was in protest at the Government’s measures announced last month.

These included giving employers the right to lay off surplus staff.

The strike was expected to have repercussions throughout Spain and was organized in Madrid and other cities with stoppages for several hours, no company premises and they were probably not taken into account in the official figures. Nevertheless, putting the figure at one million, the highest, the strike was a notable failure for the trade unions trying to muster strength. The strike was approved by the majority of the opposition parties.

Senator Ortí Bordes told journalists that he had recommended to civil governors that they fine those arrested for forming pickets as strongly as possible for their "anti-democratic and uncivil behaviour".

He acknowledged that 120,000 workers had been arrested as pickets. According to informed sources, 75,000 people were arrested for picking at the UGT, 45,000 at the CGT, and 20,000 at the UGT.

Police have arrested five labour lawyers into custody in connection with the strike and several others across the country. In Madrid alone, 81 people were held.

The short shrift given to the workers by the official authorities, who have been treated with contempt.

In the Basque city of Vitoria, where last spring several people were killed in clashes between police and strikers, six men have been imprisoned pending trial on charges of political charges.

According to informed sources the police have taken 250,000 pesetas (over £2,200) and several others arrested.

The strike is called to save Spain, and that he would contest the elections.

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Spain suspends suspects’ rights after killing of three policemen

From Harry Debelius

Madrid, Jan 28

A day after violence in which three policemen were killed by terrorists in Madrid, the Spanish Government tonight ordered the arrest of all suspected members of extremist organizations of both right and left.

At an emergency meeting the Cabinet decided to increase police powers still further and to suspend for 30 days the legal guarantees of unlawful search and imprisonment without charge. A degree law announcing tonight suspends Articles 15 and 16 of the Bill of Rights.

Soler Andreas Reguera, the Minister of Information and Tourism, said in a television broadcast that the suspensions applied only to people suspected of terrorist activity. They were therefore “exceptional measures” but did not constitute a state of emergency. He did not point out that since the police decide who is a suspect, the measures in fact do away with constitutional guarantees for anyone whom the police choose to investigate.

The “exceptional measures” are further than the steps taken Wednesday, when it was announced that the dreaded anti-terrorist law would be enforced.

That law allows police to hold prisoners up to 10 days without trial and to carry on searches provided they inform judicial authorities afterwards.

But under tonight’s decree prisoners may be held indefinitily and there is no need to advise the courts of anyมาจากs carried out. The decree will remain in effect until the end of February, for it is valid for 90 days from the date of its publication in the official state bulletin, probably next Monday.

Soler Adeles Soder, the Prime Minister, is expected to address the nation tomorrow after Spain’s worst week of political violence since the civil war. The Cabinet will meet again next Monday.

At an emergency meeting last Wednesday, when it was marked down by premeditated incidents, was blown up, I will keep to chosen path despite terrorism.

Out with the reds! The Spanish Government in the capital, in which three policemen were killed and three others gravely wounded.

Yesterday morning, policemen, members of the Civil Guard and other members of the armed forces—many of them officers—shouted insults at Lieutenant-General Manuel Gutierrez Mellado, the deputy Prime Minister, and Senator Rodolfo Martin Villa, the Interior Minister, at funeral services here for the three murdered policemen. Other officers in uniform and Senator Pablo Pizarro, leader of New Force, were among the mourners.

Obvious abuses, General Gutierrez Mellado shouted, went through the crowd, backing up a signal for silence, while “shouting” the reds, “Out with the reds!”

After questioning in Santander, the Prime Minister was allowed to leave. But he added: “In spite of all the difficulties, and with your help, you can be absolutely sure that we are going to play on the path that you would have wished, no, one would ruin this.”

Yesterday evening a bomb exploded in a bar in the suburbs of Bilbao, destroying a van. Similar blasts were heard in San Sebastian and Pamplona.

In a place, the police said that a customer found the device in the building and gave the alarm so that the building could be evacuated and the bomb could be evacuated before the bomb went off. The man was questioned by right-wingers.

Mr. McFarlane, a former lawyer in the United States, was hit by a bomb blast in a Bilbao suburb. The Second World War was heard in the area, but not before he had been shot by another blast in the car. The body of the attacker, a fascist Resistance Group member, was not found. The group was said to be controlled by a fascist Resistance Group leader.

The police continued to ask for two more days to control the situation. The group was said to be controlled by a fascist Resistance Group leader.

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A year after Franco, bullets and confusion still reign

As the heavy granite slab was eased into place at the Valley of the Fallen Civil War monument outside Madrid a year ago, so is the legacy of General Franco and symbolically ending his 36-year regime. In those grey years, there were many misguided predictions that the country would be plunged into another civil war.

Now with the first year post-Franco Spain over and Thursday's approval by the dictator's last Cortes (Parliament) of the Government's reforms to establish a democratically elected Parliament for the first time in over 40 years, there is visible of the dictatorship although most of the same laws and all the institutions exist. As these have been notable advances—mainly with the amnesty releasing hundreds of political prisoners and allowing exiles to return freely—the civil war wounds are not yet healed. They are being kept fresh by extremists at both ends of Spain's civil political spectrum. For the extreme right every aspect of the regime continues to be a "Red" and for the extreme left every regime supporter a "Fascist". For those issuing the last battles have yet to be fought. Fortunately the majority, the "silent (post civil war) generation" is leading to the future.

It has been the year when politicians, on both sides have hurt some differences. Professor Josep Buix Gines, former Education Minister and now leading Christian Democrat leader, expressed the new air of reconciliation of the silent generation when he said at a homage to the veteran socialist Professor Enrique Tierno Galvan that anyone who did not understand why he was there "understand nothing about what has happened in this country".

Political violence has regretfully marked the road to democracy. To date 40 people have died from bullets fired by left and right-wing extremists as well as those shot by police in demonstrations—double the number in Portugal since the April 1974 revolution. Amid this confusion the armed forces, formerly the guardians of the regime, have kept quiet. They now find themselves in the paradoxical position of sitting back and watching the dismantling of the regime which they were largely responsible for creating. The armed forces can now be said to be almost politically neutral for the first time in 40 years—to the obvious anger of right-wing generals like Carlos Iniesta, former head of the armed forces, who last March rashly predicted that the regime had begun to disintegrate in the last years.

While peace relations, strained under Franco, are now normalised, those shot by police in demonstrations—double the number in Portugal since the April 1974 revolution. Amid this confusion the armed forces, formerly the guardians of the regime, have kept quiet. They now find themselves in the paradoxical position of sitting back and watching the dismantling of the regime which they were largely responsible for creating. The armed forces can now be said to be almost politically neutral for the first time in 40 years—to the obvious anger of right-wing generals like Carlos Iniesta, former head of the armed forces, who last March rashly predicted that the regime had begun to disintegrate in the last years.

Both the clamour for political autonomy for Catalonia and the Basque country has increased. The King revoked General Franco's Decree Law of 1937 punishing the Basques for not supporting his "crusade". This is unlikely to quell their demands altogether, although it was recognition that Spain is more than Madrid.

With elections less than six months away electoral alliances are beginning to be formed, starting with the Popular Alliance of Sr Manuel Fraga, former Foreign Minister, classified by some as neo-Franco and the Popular Party under Sr Jose Maria Aznar, the former Foreign Minister. Both say they represent the centre. But the left is still fragmented and the ruling the Communist Party taking part remains a problem.

The "long dark night of the dictatorship" is over, there are uncertain times ahead. A report by the worldwide economic situation which threatens to jeopardize the surging degree of political stability which exists in Spain today. However, disputes are apparent on street walls reflecting the degree of polarisation. A peace of graffiti near my home reads: "Under Franco we lived better" beneath it someone has written "Yes, some of us."
Spanish opposition leader warns Government against backsliding

From Richard Wigg
Madrid, Nov 22
Professor Jaime Ruis-Gimenez, the Spanish Christian Democratic leader, today warned the Government of Sénor Suarez that failure to observe the Spanish people's wishes in next year's general election would put at risk a solution to the country's essential social and economic problems.

"The Spanish people are grateful for the recent steps taken towards liberty and democracy, but if they are defrauded in the election the reaction could be very bad, especially among the working classes," he told The Times. "This country could go into a phase of growing irritation and rebellion."

Sénor Ruis-Gimenez is one of the leading moderates of the democratic opposition who had prior contacts with the ministers in the Franco regime.

"If there is not a truly equal opportunity for the Spanish people, then the referendum will be a farce," he said. "It is a question of whether there is really a solution to the present situation which is impossible in the old regime, he said.

"The wise men" could be eminent jurists and experts on electoral law of known democratic sympathies. They would cooperate with the Ministers of the Interior, Finance and Information to try to negotiate a formula with the opposition parties before the referendum, to supervise the electoral process and to prevent fraud.

Asked what the opposition, which is threatening to boycott the referendum, has to offer the Government, Professor Ruis-Gimenez replied: "I believe the Government has an interest in Europe to prove that in this referendum all political parties are taking part democratically. Otherwise we would have to say the referendum is nothing but a nasty medicine which we have to take in order to keep the country quiet."

What the opposition was seeking, he added, was nothing more than what existed in any European democracy and which would be voted by any electorate.

"If the Government cannot comply with these things for four of the Alliance Populaire (the grouping formed as the opposition to the Franco administration) that means the.Speed is over and not the Franco Government but one is to negotiate the essential terms of democratic freedom and happening a "historical mistake."

In that event, the Christian Democrat leader added, the opposition would denounce the Government for "fiddling" with the nominally democratic electoral law to give advantages to these parties closest to the Franco regime.

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Spanish Government calls for big vote turnout

From Harry Debeloff
Madrid, Nov 26
Almost all the opposition challenged the Spanish Government this weekend to make the referendum on amnesty and pardon proposals for political prisoners effectively binding by fulfilling seven conditions.

A compromise disclosed last week by a five-member mini-committee, which did not specifically refuse the previous opposition threat to boycott the referendum on December 15, but it did call for public and collective negotiation to ensure the Government and the democratic opposition without delay.

The opposition, existing as the means of the following conditions, must be considered as a basic agreement before the referendum:

1. Recognition of a political amnesty and the democratic opposition, without delay.
2. Recognition of all political parties and trade union organizations.
3. Recognition, protection and guarantee of political and trade union freedoms.
4. Uplift of the current political restrictions on political, public and trade union activities by the public administration; freedom to publish; equal opportunities to use mass communications media awarded by the state.
5. Negotiation and democratic control of the procedure regulations governing the referendum, elections, and other actions; and recognition of the need to incorporate the regions and ethnic groups into the political structure.

The conditions added:
- The opposition recognize the current conditions on the establishment of democratically elected local governments.
- The Government's plan for the fullest participation of the Spanish people in the referendum on December 15.

Last night, a Zaragoza court dismissed the charges of adultery against a medical student.

Civil war book appears in Spain 15 years late

From Our Correspondent
Madrid, Nov 30
Almost a quarter of a century after it was first published in English and Spanish, Professor Hugh Thomas's 'Spanish Civil War' was launched here last night. The book first appeared in 1954 and has since been overshadowed by the Franco regime. The 1954 edition of the book was printed in a limited edition in Paris, distributed in secret. A new edition of the book, which is now being published in Spain, has been available in Spain for a few days.

The book contains 100,000 words and 100 illustrations. It is the first biography of the Spanish Civil War, and has been described as a basic reference work on the subject. The book is available in Spanish and English editions, at a price of 19.50 pesetas. It is the first biography of the Spanish Civil War to be published in Spain for a quarter of a century.

He added that the book was written to be a triumph against the Franco regime, and that it would be a triumph against most right-wing organizations.

A previous request to hold an agreement was turned down, presumably because of fears that it would stiffen right-wing efforts to block passage in the Cortes (Parliament) of proposals for a democratic constitution and national election law.

Commenting on opposition calls for negotiations, a commentator in the Madrid newspaper 'El Mundo' said that it would be illegal for the Government to negotiate with parties which were not legally recognized. The Government should demand that parties asking for recognition must comply with the requirements for official registration.

In fact, the main political force for the country, except for the conservatives, is illegal as in most countries because the leaders of all parties left of center, and of some parties in the center, refuse to comply with the registration law as they consider it too restrictive.

If the Government were to adopt the position of the ACN in this case, it might be able to be used to frame the representatives' strength at the polls.