

**MOTORS OF CHANGE? ELITE  
ACTORS AND THE SPANISH  
TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY  
(1975 – 1981)**

by

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## **Abstract**

**This thesis examines the methodology prevalent in the analysis of democratic transitions, focusing upon the case study of Spain. Although current literature provides a detailed description of actions taken by elite actors during transition periods and the resultant outcomes, it fails to adequately connect these two factors. This thesis seeks to address the gap in the current literature and to underline the necessity for an explanatory methodology to take into account an amalgamation of approaches.**

**The case of Spain is drawn upon to highlight the importance of the connection between the role of elite actors and the constraints set in place by the system in which they operate. I argue that an awareness of the existing parameters, both institutional and societal, is critical for an assessment of possible action to be undertaken. The methodology of comparative politics provides the ability to ascertain where there exists a failing in current theoretical approaches and to address this problem through increased analysis. An increasingly comprehensive appreciation of the actions of individuals and the underlying forces that drive these actions deepens our understanding of transition processes as a whole. I would argue that this thesis has implications for future research and indeed, relevance in the actual practice of politics. An awareness of the connection between the individual and the overriding political system is paramount for our understanding of democratic transitions and for future investigation of such processes. In this way, the thesis underlines that the connection between the micro and macro interpretations of transitions is fundamental; not only to guiding systematic analysis, but also to ensuring that research does not remain in the confines of the theoretical but is relevant in the real world.**

## **Acknowledgements**

As a Masters student at the University of Nottingham I undertook a dissertation focused upon Spain's transition to democracy. I had spent the best part of the previous ten years of my life living in Spain and was naturally interested in the country and its politics, and in particular, the character of King Juan Carlos. Little did I know at that time that the desire to attempt to explain, from an admittedly linear and historical perspective, the role of Juan Carlos within Spain's transition would become a fully fledged political science thesis. For my own personal transition throughout this progression, I have many people to thank.

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I was fortunate enough to spend my formative years in Madrid and I would like to thank my friends and family there for their time and interest in my project. The insight provided by conversations with them enabled me to provide my theoretical analysis with a human face. They are living proof of the transition in Spain and for providing me with a connection to this, I am most grateful.

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**“An important lesson which I for one have learned from the Spanish democratic transition, in which I have decisively taken part, is that historical determinism does not exist. In living and making this period of history, I have received the most important ratification of an essential idea: that the future, far from being decided, is always the realm of liberty, open and uncertain, although foreseeable by the analyses of the structural conditions and the operating forces of the society in which we live, the most essential of which is the free will of those men who shape history.” (Adolfo Suárez Prime Minister in Spain 1976-1981)**

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## **Introduction**

**When all the dust has been swept away...**

“What is Spain? Spain is a swirl of dust on the path of history after a great nation has galloped past.”<sup>1</sup>

“When all the dust has been swept away, therein will you see the shape of things”<sup>2</sup>

The driving force behind this thesis has been the desire to explain better the role and relative power of individuals within democratic transitions. There exists a wealth of literature detailing the events and trajectory of the Spanish transition to democracy and yet no real attempt has been made to analyse the role of elite actors within the process itself.

The role and influence of individuals is a topic of great interest to the field of political science and merits further investigation.<sup>3</sup> The necessity to understand on a more fundamental level, the capabilities and constraints associated with individual involvement in democratic transitions is intricately connected to a comprehensive awareness of the form of transitions as a process. Focusing my thesis on the Spanish transition provided the ideal forum in which to debate and deconstruct the actions taken and the decisions made by those involved in creating political change. The initial impetus of this thesis was solely aimed at highlighting the importance of individuals over the more traditionally accepted structural understanding of transitions. This methodology led to a historically-linear interpretation of the Spanish transition and did little to further the field of political science. What became apparent was the need to incorporate various theoretical approaches in order to construct an intrinsically coherent structure within which to examine the period in question. It was not sufficient simply to elucidate Spain's transition to democracy from a micro-individualistic perception, but

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<sup>1</sup> (José Ortega y Gasset)

<sup>2</sup> Quote given by author

<sup>3</sup> “There is also widespread agreement that political elites play a central role in democratization. In particular, whether there is a transition from dictatorship to democracy seems to depend heavily on the interests, values, and actions of political leaders, whether seconded, downwardly mobile, or at least potentially, upwardly mobile.” (Bunce 2000, 707).

rather attempt to situate decisions made, and actions taken by individuals, within the wider constraints of the structural framework that encompasses political activity. To this end, various approaches were considered and some discarded in the search for greater clarity, those that remained granted the greatest degree of understanding for the data available.

### **Case Study: Spain**

The choice of Spain was a relatively obvious one, in addition to my own personal interest in the country, the example set by the Spanish case is one that has been studied extensively and emulated by countries around the world. During the first half of the twentieth century Spain experienced political upheaval, civil war, WW2 and dictatorship at the hands of Francisco Franco. One could argue therefore that Spain was not only familiar with periods of change, but had also suffered sufficiently to demand a more positive political situation.<sup>4</sup> What makes the Spanish case remarkable is the speed and apparent ease with which a successful transition was executed. This is not to say that the entire process was completed without difficulty and free from violence; far from it, but the timeframe outlined demonstrates the phenomenal ability displayed by those involved to engineering change, and to certain extent speaks to the nature of the parameters under which decisions were made and action was possible.<sup>5</sup>

While this thesis deals with Spain as a case study, and does so for the reasons outlined above, the intrinsic nature of the analysis allows it to be applied to democratic

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<sup>4</sup> "For many Spaniards, democratization meant awakening from a nightmare of overwrought worldviews and dogmatic enthusiasm, and the collective memory of this debacle made the country receptive to a political strategy that, while not hostile to civic engagement, was often indifferent to it." (McDonough et. al. 1998, 2).

<sup>5</sup> "All evaluations, however, see Spanish leaders as consciously striving to direct events so as to minimize the potential for conflict, to craft a transition that would not stir up the demons in historical memory." (McDonough et. al. 1998, 10).



transitions as a general political process and not simply constrained to the example in question. This thesis does not purport to have created nor established a paradigm with which to fully comprehend democratic transitions, but an attempt has been made to produce a theoretical approach capable of addressing questions previously unanswered. Chief among the questions that informed this thesis are: What was the actual role of individuals within Spain's democratic transition? What drove them to act in the manner in which they did? How aware were they of the external factors that controlled and shaped their decisions? Were they aware of their ability to manipulate the system as well as be manipulated in turn? Can individuals truly affect change in the face of overwhelming structural and traditional formulated shackles? These are all questions that lay at the very heart of our understanding of democratic transitions and they are all questions that have yet to be answered satisfactorily.

The manner in which this thesis was designed and has been presented was in order to facilitate greater understanding of both the case study itself and of the mechanism employed for analysis of said data. In any attempt to deal with a subject as vast and detailed as a democratic transition, one must naturally be selective in the material one investigates and subsequently presents to the reader. Not all areas can be covered, not all data can be included and not all theoretical approaches applied. With this in mind, I set about constructing the thesis based upon parameters that would best allow me to address the questions posed above. In order for the thesis to be grounded within the appropriate context, I included a chapter detailing the historical aspects of the period in question. This was required as it provides the necessary background to grasp fully the implications of the data discussed in subsequent chapters. I have included a chapter outlining the methodology employed in an attempt to prevent repetition of definition as the thesis progressed. For the actual analysis undertaken, I have chosen



four events throughout the transition period to examine. The selected events mark the significant beginning and the end of the transition period. While alternative events are of potentially equal merit for inclusion and consideration in a work of this nature, the four in question were selected due to their undeniable importance to the process and the character of their respective structures. The four events are varied in nature, thus requiring varied sets of analytical tools. No single tool accurately explains all four events; no single theoretical approach provides a comprehensive deconstruction of the underlying motivations present.

### **Theoretical Approaches**

The task of constructing an applicable methodology consumed a great deal of time to formulate. I examined existing literature and prevalent theoretical approaches that had been applied to both the Spanish case and to other democratic transitions. Through a process of trial and error, I was able to eliminate those approaches that failed to make a substantive contribution to this thesis and I was subsequently left with a core of approaches that best suited the material for consideration. The approaches which I settled on are outlined below, and the relative merits of those chosen are detailed and discussed. The purpose of the theoretical chapter is intended to provide the reader with a general overview of the methods employed in this thesis, not to detail minutely the approaches from inception to modern-day.

While there is a certain amount of detail provided regarding each approach that has been chosen and the reasons for their selection, I restrict myself to that level of information that proves useful, as opposed to an in depth analysis of the theoretical approaches themselves. The approaches chosen were selected for their relevant

connection to the data and the part they play in the wider context of the thesis is highlighted accordingly. The main focus, when selecting applicable theoretical approaches, was that of ensuring the data could be handled adequately and comprehensively. With the obvious concentration, outlined above, upon the actions of individuals and how they relate to the structures that guide and constrain them, it was evident that the theoretical approaches that would prove most applicable would be those that dealt with a complete analysis of the motivations of single actors.

Rational Choice will form the basis of my thesis from a micro perspective as it enables one to determine, not only why actions were taken, but also what actions would be taken in a given set of circumstances. This provides us with a degree of predictive ability and allows the thesis in question to be of use when applied to alternative case studies. Accurate examination of the reasons behind the actions of individuals is at the very heart of this thesis as an attempt is made to outline why certain decisions were taken and others disregarded. Rationality plays a vital role in the process of understanding political processes but also, paradoxically, serves to prevent complete understanding of the underlying reasons behind the decisions, if this is the only methodology employed. The issue of rational behaviour is one that this thesis will focus on throughout but not without sufficient consideration to those factors which are perhaps not as easily mapped or analysed, namely institutional and structural constraints. In order to situate the actions of individuals within the wider context of political structure, I will utilise elements of the Institutional approach. This will enable me better to explain the actions in line with traditional understanding of transition processes. The Institutional approach will provide the wider context within which can be placed a more fundamental analysis of the actions of individuals. The merit of this thesis will be determined by how successfully various theoretical approaches are



connected and to what extent the exercise furthers the understanding of democratic transitions.

## **Spain's Path to Democracy**

The historical chapter of this thesis is designed to provide the reader with sufficient background information to understand the actual analysis presented in the main body. Rather than organize the chapters as amalgamations of historical and analytical data, it was deemed necessary to separate these two factors and in so doing, greatly simplify the process and increase the ease with which the thesis could be read. Despite the relative speed with which the transition in Spain was exacted there is still a great deal of information that is relevant and critically so, for a fundamental understanding of the process at large. For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen the nomination of Juan Carlos in 1975 as the starting date and have ended my thesis with an analysis of the attempted coup d'etat by the military against the State in 1981. Although these two events are markers for a period of tremendous activity and change, there are of course factors preceding the nomination of Juan Carlos that played their respective roles in creating parameters and establishing traditions and accepted forms of action. The historical chapter provides the reader with the wider context of Spanish history and delves into detail not provided in the chapters that focus on the individual events chosen. There exists a plethora of information regarding the historical and factual side of the transition<sup>6</sup> and as a result, I do not intend to make a substantive contribution in this respect, save to provide the reader with the information required to

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<sup>6</sup> (Heywood 1995), (Powell, 2001), (Preston, 2004). These three works, among many others, give an in depth and detailed account of the events that transpired in Spain prior to, during and after the transition to democracy and much of the information contained within the Historical Chapter of this thesis is derived from these sources among others.

understand the subsequent analysis. The aim of this thesis is not to rewrite Spanish history, nor even to provide additional information from an historical perspective but rather to deconstruct well documented decisions and actions in an effort to deepen our understanding of the process as a whole.

The information contained within the historical account will attempt to illustrate the complexity of Spain as well as the underpinning pillars of traditional society that helped to shape and structure the political arena in which the transition took place. Were this thesis simply concerned with explaining the transition from a linear perspective, there would perhaps be no need to include information relating to past events but as the aim is to increase understanding from both a micro and a macro perspective, previous events and existing structures are crucial for any understanding of events that follow. The necessity to ground the decisions taken during the six year period in question rests upon the intimate connection between the past and the present.<sup>7</sup> Shared heritage and cultural awareness play a decisive role in the decision making process of any particular country; lessons learned from previous regimes and experience gained through trial and bloodshed produce certain responses in given situations. It is imperative to take into account the historical and institutional structure of a country when attempting to explain the reasons behind change as momentous as a democratic transition. The importance of the past cannot be overlooked or underestimated in any analysis of political events as to do so is to ignore that which originally gave birth to the structural constraints.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "Taking it a step further, I can confirm that the man of today is living through past history, in the manner in which he lives now, like a prison from which he must escape." (Aranguren 1974, 20). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>8</sup> "We need a historically based analysis to tell us what they (actors) are trying to maximise and why they emphasize certain goals over others." (Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 9).



## **First Event Chapter: The Nomination of Juan Carlos**

The first of the four event chapters presented in this thesis details the nomination of Juan Carlos by Franco in 1975 and is to mark the start of the period I have selected for analysis. The decision by Franco did of course not take place in a vacuum and to a certain extent, this will be dealt with in the chapter itself, but much of the information building to this decision is detailed in the historical chapter. Given the importance this thesis will place upon the role of individuals, it seemed only fitting to begin the process with an examination of a decision taken that centred on the interaction of two single actors: Franco constituting the existing power base, and Juan Carlos representing the future one. The chapter will examine the selection method used by Franco and demonstrate the true distribution of power that existed at the time. This distribution was to set the parameters within which decisions could be made and actions taken. The role of Juan Carlos will be examined in an attempt to illustrate the manner in which those actors, subordinate within the game are able to act. The relationship between Franco and Juan Carlos was highly important and the expectations placed upon Juan Carlos by the Caudillo even more so.

The nomination of Juan Carlos has been chosen as it represents, in many ways, the true essence of the Spanish transition to democracy. Franco's choice of Juan Carlos marked the end of the old regime and ushered in the beginning of the new. Events in Spain changed dramatically from this point on but from the outset, the event itself did not guarantee this. The chapter will look at the manner in which Juan Carlos conducted himself during the process and ask questions as to the underlying motivations of Franco. The way in which individuals react to each other, alternatively collaborating and competing will also be highlighted in this chapter.

## **Second Event Chapter: The Nomination of Adolfo Suárez**

The second event chapter will deal with the first aggressive decision taken by Juan Carlos in the transition process, namely the removal of Arias Navarro and his subsequent replacement with Adolfo Suárez. This event is a decisive one within the transition as it represents concrete proof that action was being taken by Juan Carlos and those close to him, such as Torcuato Fernández-Miranda, to orchestrate change. This chapter will examine the manner in which the change was made, the discussions that took place and the actions taken. I have selected this event for inclusion in the thesis as I believe it to demonstrate the true beginning of the democratic reform process. The nomination of Juan Carlos by Franco was an event, as will be demonstrated in the chapter dealing with it, very much out of the sphere of control of those later intimately involved in the process. The successful nomination of Adolfo Suárez was a pro-active decision and one that served to provide the impetus for any subsequent change that took place. The key actors, that played decisive roles in this event, will be examined in the chapter and the interaction and dialogue that existed between them will be illustrated. Evidence will show that actions were not taken unilaterally, and indeed, all angles were considered in an attempt to produce a course of action that would be successfully completed.

## **Third Event Chapter: The Reform of the Cortes**

The third event chapter deals with what was perhaps the greatest victory on the part of the reformists, namely the reform of the Cortes. The events outlined in the previous two events chapters deal, to a large extent, with actions taken by individuals



against other individuals; the reform of the Cortes was a mammoth undertaking by comparison. The Cortes, or Parliament, constituted the existing political authority and had been established and consolidated during Franco's regime. The traditional role of the Cortes had been to 'rubber-stamp' decisions made by Franco and to provide political, and to a certain extent legal, justification for these decisions. As a result, the majority of the members of the Cortes were stalwart supporters of Franco and Francoism and continued to represent a very real obstacle to any notions of reform that may have existed well after the death of the Caudillo.

It is possible to view the role of the Cortes as similar to the role of Arias Navarro; both represented the old regime, both were well established in their respective positions and both saw the emergence of Juan Carlos as nothing more than a nuisance. The Cortes was to constitute a somewhat greater challenge than Arias Navarro however. The Cortes had the ability to hinder reform via their legally established and institutionally protected role. The strategy used by actors such as Juan Carlos, Adolfo Suárez and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda is one that merits closer analysis and for this reason I have included this event chapter in the thesis. The task at hand was to transform the existing parliamentary system in such a way as to provide Spain with both a working and accountable political authority and a peaceful transition to democracy. The result of the reform of the Cortes hardly credits belief. The task of reforming an established political system from within without repercussions was achieved in a timely manner and with no apparent difficulties. The reform of the Cortes, and more importantly, a fundamental understanding of the manner in which it was achieved is crucial for any interpretation of the Spanish transition to democracy. The chapter dealing with this event will attempt to outline the methods used by the actors and the parameters within which the decisions were made possible.

## **Fourth Event Chapter: Attempted Military Coup**

The fourth and final event chapter deals with the attempted coup d'état that took place on the 23 February 1981 (23-F). This event was selected for inclusion in this thesis as it not only represents the first real defence of democracy by the reformists but also the de facto end to the transition process. The aftermath of the attempted coup, the manner in which the conspirators were dealt with and the subsequent national elections in Spain were steps on the road to democratic consolidation and are consequently, less connected to the actual process of transition. The attempted coup is an event shrouded in mystery for the most part. Little is known of the real involvement of the conspirators, indeed, not all of the conspirators are even actually known, and yet it is an event that must be included in any analysis of the Spanish transition.

The previous two events chapters deal with decisions of a pro-active nature by the elite actors involved in orchestrating change; what marks this chapter as different in this respect is that the event in question was the action of others and the elite actors in question were forced to react to events as opposed to initiating them. This provides an ideal opportunity to examine the role of individuals from a different perspective and allows for a greater understanding of the capabilities and constraints, which exist within transition processes, to be achieved. It is not until we have examined the manner in which individuals act, not only when they are in control but also when that control is wrested from them, that we can obtain an accurate picture of the way in which existing parameters and rational analysis will form the basis for decision making.

It is not necessary that the attempted coup be explained in minute detail, it is sufficient that the event itself is used as the backdrop against which the actors were placed. The chapter will outline the actions taken by those involved, that we know of,



to demonstrate the manner in which communication played an integral role in the construction of the game, and examine the nature of decision making on the part of the elite actors. 23-F, as it is commonly known, is the culmination of the Spanish transition process and represents the ideal opportunity to analyse the lessons learnt and experience gained by the actors in the build up to this event. The chapter will outline the parameters under which those involved in the coup felt compelled to act and highlight the nature of the opposition and defence mounted by the reformists in turn.

## Overview

The fundamental aim of this thesis is to deepen our understanding of the position taken by individuals, and the role they play within democratic transitions<sup>9</sup>. The choice of Spain as a case study will naturally provide insights into the actions taken during the period between 1975 and 1981, and enable an even greater appreciation of the phenomenal task undertaken during this period. This thesis does not set out to create an all-encompassing paradigm that will provide all answers to all questions, rather it attempts to take the field of political science one step closer to comprehending the intrinsic values, beliefs, constraints, actions and motivations placed upon and adopted by individual actors faced with the enormity of addressing issues such as dictatorship, democracy and the best way to achieve this with an absence of bloodshed.

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<sup>9</sup> "In Spain it was a question of reformist elements associated with the incumbent dictatorship, initiating processes of political change from within the established regime." (Huntingdon 1991/2, 591).

## **Chapter 1**

# **Twentieth Century Development: Spain's Path to Democracy**

The history of Spain is one that has been exhaustively documented and therefore, I do not intend to repeat that which has been so eloquently written before me. The aim of this chapter is to provide a contextual backing to the analytical framework and thus provide the reader with the necessary overview to fully appreciate the methodology used. The specific period under analysis in this thesis dates from 1975 to 1981 and attempts to highlight those events that the author sees as key. There will be four events examined in total and it is therefore obvious that additional events could have been included and used to elaborate further on the structure and direction of this thesis but for the sake of space have been omitted. The purpose of this chapter is to explain and outline the exact reason why the four events detailed in subsequent chapters were chosen, and as a result, why others were not.

While it is in fact possible to examine one of countless existing books for an accurate historical account of the period in question, in order to provide the reader with an in-depth understanding of the transition process in Spain, it is necessary for me to elaborate and provide the relevant contextual detail to support the choice of my examples. To such an end, this chapter will not simply provide a linear account of the transition period but will seek to explain the motivation behind decisions made and the justification for the events chosen.

Francisco Franco assumed control of Spain in the aftermath of the Spanish civil war and held power from 1939 until his death in 1975.<sup>10</sup> This period marks the longest reigning European dictatorship to date and as such, his system of government was well entrenched by the time of his death. Spain had lived through a civil war, the Second

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<sup>10</sup> "Despite the gradual institutionalization of the franquist regime, Franco's personal power remained virtually unlimited up until his death. In addition to his title as generalissimo of the armed forces and leader of the only legitimate political party, between 1938 and 1973 Franco was both head of state and head of government. Even in 1973, when Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco assumed the presidency (head of government), Franco continued to exercise supreme political power." (Share 1986, 19).



World War, through economic hardship and an atmosphere of distrust and fear.<sup>11</sup> To say that the country was ripe for change is perhaps somewhat misleading. Granted, there existed elements within the country anxious for progress but there remained a substantial body of support for the existing Francoist structure.

Spain had undergone periods of economic turbulence, from high levels of unemployment to substantial periods of growth. The reality of living in a global community began to have an effect upon the progress of Spain too. The United Nations (UN) sponsored blockade was lifted in 1950 and with this began a period of economic development that while not entirely successful did produce results.<sup>12</sup> The emergence of the European Economic Community (EEC), also in 1950, created new possibilities and the prospect of membership became an attractive concept and one that would bring with it increased economic prosperity. It would take Spain until 1986 to become a member but the existence of the EEC crystallised the vision of a new and democratic Europe.<sup>13</sup>

The decade 1960 to 1970 saw unprecedented rates of economic growth in Spain, coupled as it was with the emergence of a successfully burgeoning tourist market. The Gross National Product (GNP) in 1971 was 85.4% greater than it had been in 1963. Real per Capita income grew at an average rate of 6.4% compared with 2.8% between 1940-1960. In the 1965, the per capita income reached \$650 and this sparked a social revolution. Between 1964 and 1972, the hourly wage increased 287.9% while the

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<sup>11</sup> "Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Spanish politics was characterized by elite disunity, deep social and political conflicts and endemic regime instability. Moreover, rather than evolving through incremental reforms that become embedded in institutions and in the political culture, political changes often took the form of drastic swing of the pendulum from one extreme to the other." (Gunther 1992, 43).

<sup>12</sup> "In the early 1950s an attempt was made to ease trade restrictions and stimulate private enterprise, but although it eventually succeeded in boosting industry it opened up a trade gap that rapidly absorbed the country's foreign reserves." (Hooper, J. 1995, 15).

<sup>13</sup> "During the period 1975-94 the political economy of Spain became more closely integrated into the world economy. In particular, membership of the EC altered the pattern of external relations and redefined the position of Spain in the world from a protected national economy to an economy embedded in one of the world's core trading regions and within the corporate space of multinational companies." (Salmon, 1995. 67)

overall cost of living increased by 69.9%.<sup>14</sup> It may well seem from the above figures that Spain was stable from an economical standpoint. This was not the case however and there were negative aspects to counter the progress that was being experienced. The rapid economic growth served to increase inequality between regions within Spain and this was to further add to the underlying sense of a divided country. The 1970s saw a rise in mass opposition and unrest and this was to have an effect upon the overall productivity of the country. In 1966, 1.5 million hours were lost due to strike action; this number had risen to 8.7 million in 1970 and to a tremendous 14.5 million hours by 1975.<sup>15</sup> The economic revolution was not being felt by all and this consequently created a sense of dissatisfaction with the existing regime and fermented a desire for change. Economic development had been halted during the Francoist regime due to the implementation of various outdated models.<sup>16</sup> This was to prove a legacy that would hinder progress well into the post-Franco era.<sup>17</sup>

One would assume that given the level of unrest and inequality within Spain, the percentage of the population prepared to take an active role in the process of change would be relatively high; indeed there exists a theoretical basis for this assumption.

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<sup>14</sup> These figures are taken from (Gunther, R. 24), (Lieberman, S. 1982, 212-214), (Share, D. 1986, 29).

<sup>15</sup> These figures are taken from (Share, D. 1986, 36), (Maravall, J. M. 1984, 271).

<sup>16</sup> "Spain, after all, did grow extremely rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s and did become democratic after the death of Franco in the mid-1970s. Could this have happened without the industrialization, urbanization, and development of the middle class that were central to Spanish economic growth? Quite probably not. Lopez Rodo was at least partially right when he had earlier predicted that Spain would become democratic when its per capita income reached \$2000 per head." (Huntington 1984/5, 200).

<sup>17</sup> "Spain's spectacular economic growth began only after the franquist regime abandoned its autarchic policies in the late 1950s. Despite the fact that the international ostracism of Spain had come to an end by 1953, Franco stubbornly pursued autarchic policies until 1959, when he was forced to abandon this political economic model. In part restrictions had strangled economic activity; agrarian production lagged behind demand, fuelling inflation; and Spain's balance of payments was running a serious deficit". (Share, D. 1986, 29).



One of the most well-substantiated hypotheses in the social sciences is that socioeconomic change creates protoparticipatory orientation within populations; as societies modernize, their populations tend to become more politically active, or at least, to expect and demand more active roles in the political system. (Gunther et al. 1988, 28).

This was not entirely the case however as a survey taken in 1969 shows that only 4% of the youth polled were very interested in politics, 48% were partially interested and the remaining 48% were not at all interested.<sup>18</sup> This level of apathy cannot simply be attributed to a general lack of interest on the part of the youth, and as such, does not contradict the above assertion by Gunther, but can in fact be related to the preceding political situation in Spain under Franco. Many Spaniards had been conditioned to remaining outside the active political arena and this attitude was to persist.<sup>19</sup>

The state of political repression under Franco was to have both a positive and negative effect upon the transition period. As has been mentioned above, the lack of political freedom had created a certain status quo amongst sections of the population that was to prevent full participation from taking place; however, the alternative side of this was a backlash against the old regime and a drive towards developing the society from within. The Church was one such sector of society involved in this manner. It must be stressed at this juncture that the Church did not represent a single entity at this point in Spain's history as there was very much a partition within the Church between the younger members and the established clerical aristocracy.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Survey outlined in (Alba 1978, 231).

<sup>19</sup> "The armed police in the cities and the Civil Guard in the smaller towns and the countryside were well-armed, well resourced and virtually unrestrained. Moreover, they had to deal with a population which had learnt the hard way that public political protest was an unaffordable luxury that day-to-day survival lay in political apathy." (Preston 1995, 165).

<sup>20</sup> "The church experienced a still deeper division among its ranks. The young clergy, which was concerned with social issues, helped the workers' commissions, and in Catalonia and in the Basque Country, participated in the nationalist demonstrations. Even the hierarchy began to oppose the regime and enforce the Vatican II decisions." (Alba, 1978, 227).

While it is perhaps not possible to claim a single attitude from within the Church, it is evident that the Church had begun to distance itself from Franco towards the end of his regime.<sup>21</sup> Whether this was motivated by an internal shift from Francoist policy making, or as a result of a survival tactic in preparation for the life after the dictator, the Church played a role to a certain extent in the transition. 1971 saw the emergence of a progressive element within the Spanish Church with the election of Cardinal Enrique y Tarancón as President of the Spanish Episcopal Conference. September 1971 was a landmark date as it constituted the first ever assembly of Spanish Priests and Bishops but the conclusion of the event was to have a greater impact than the event itself. The one hundred democratically elected members voted in favour of civil rights and opposed church participation in the Francoist regime. This was to mark an open defiance of Franco by the Church and a revolutionary act at that. The Church had steadfastly stood as one of the foundations of a strong society under Franco, along with the Armed Forces and the institution of the family. This act was not the only manner in which the clergy participated in the transition however. When meetings of clandestine trade unions were banned by the regime, progressive clergymen offered their churches for this very purpose.<sup>22</sup>

By the time of Franco's death in 1975, Spain was a country in need of direction and guidance and yet it was not immediately clear from whence this would come.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>21</sup> "Meanwhile, the Church, which had initially been a mainstay of the Franco regime, began gradually withdrawing its support in a process of post-Conciliate *aggiornamento*. Eventually, both reactionary and opposition factions (and even some more extremist viewpoints) coexisted with the Church. This led to the disappearance of the former anti-clerical cleavage and made it possible to include in the Constitution a declaration that Spain is a lay state while still maintaining special cooperative relationships with all religions, but particularly with the Catholic Church." (Liebert and Cotta 1990, 123).

<sup>22</sup> (Gunther et al. 1998, 28), (Preston. 1995, 169).

<sup>23</sup> "The importance of certain nonelite factors must not go unnoticed. The higher level of socioeconomic modernization that Spain had reached by the 1970s, with substantial literacy and affluence and reduced class tensions certainly differed from the situation of the 1930s. In the 1970s, a widespread desire to 'join Europe' reinforced democratizing tendencies, made neighbouring democracies models to emulate, and, in some instances, led to infrastructural support for newly emerging political parties and trade unions. Moreover, Vatican Council II had transformed the behaviour and popular image of the Catholic church which, in combination with the marked secularization of Spanish society, made the religious cleavage



economy of the country was far from secure, despite having enjoyed a substantial period of growth, the population at large was divided between those anxious for change, and those apathetic to the political reality of the world, the founding strata of Franco's society were at odds to their previously unshakeable stability, and the man chosen by Franco as his successor was a relative unknown. There exists a degree of belief that Spain was taking its place in a wave of democratic development sweeping Europe at this time<sup>24</sup> and that the transition was to become a reality due to an inexorable sway in this direction<sup>25</sup> and yet this must have been somewhat problematic to credit at the time. The situation facing Juan Carlos upon his nomination was not an enviable one.<sup>26</sup>

1975 was a year of tremendous change in Spain; it saw the death of Francisco Franco, the decline of the old regime and the emergence of the new in the person of Juan Carlos. Spain passed from a dictatorship to a Constitutional Monarchy and began the process of reform and internal change that was to constitute the transition period. Juan Carlos' succession of Franco was far from a foregone conclusion and was a decision that had caused much debate within Spain and much friction amongst the key players in the process.

I have chosen the nomination of Juan Carlos as the first of the four events under analysis in this thesis as it is one that comprehensively marks the beginning of the process of transition. While there were many factors that led to this decision being taken, without the power shift in Spain the final result would have been substantially

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somewhat less divisive than four decades earlier. Finally, the passage of time and the gradual disappearance of generations directly responsible for the civil war and the early, repressive years of the Franquist regime helped Spaniards forgive, or at least coexist with former enemies." (Gunther 1992, 43).

<sup>24</sup> This notion of democratic development was coined by Samuel Huntington in his seminal work: *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late Twentieth Century* (1991)

<sup>25</sup> "It has also been argued that the Spanish transition to democracy was part of a Southern European wave of democratization, initiated by the Greek and Portuguese events of 1974. Moreover, it is common to encounter assertions that authoritarian rule in democratic Western Europe was an anomaly whose end was bound to come." (Share 1986, 47).

<sup>26</sup> "The Prince was formally committed to take over a form of backward-looking centralist, authoritarian state which was already on a collision course with Spain's modern society and economy." (Preston 1986, 2).



different. Juan Carlos came to represent different things for different people<sup>27</sup>; Franco saw in him the continuation of the regime he had worked so hard to create, many francoist ministers saw him as the embodiment of the legitimacy the regime needed<sup>28</sup>, the external community saw the potential for change should he assume power and there were those who saw him as an empty vessel who would become a puppet for the entrenched francoist power base.<sup>29</sup>

The change in the leadership in Spain was to become a crucial issue in the development of the transition and at the same time contained elements that could potentially reflect negatively on Juan Carlos. The situation was a complex one as the ties that bound Juan Carlos to Franco and the old regime were of both a positive and negative nature. Juan Carlos needed the support of the existing Francoists and yet, too close an association with the Bunker would have created doubt and unrest amongst those who favoured democratic reform. The task that faced Juan Carlos upon his succession was a delicate one indeed fraught with potential pitfalls and this was to set the tone for the transition itself. It became necessary to maintain the support of those on the right while appeasing those on the left. This would have been no easy task for a skilled political operative but for Juan Carlos, a relative unknown on the political stage at this time, the task must have seemed daunting in the extreme.

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<sup>27</sup> "The position of Juan Carlos – Franco's successor as head of state – was also an object of conflict. Several political parties, most importantly the two large parties of the left, the Socialist PSOE and the Communist PCE, were by tradition opposed to all forms of monarchy, and many of their leaders believed, as stated by a Socialist deputy in 1978, that 'in Spain, liberty and democracy have come to have only one name: Republic'." (Gunther 1992, 43).

<sup>28</sup> "By the early 1960s a number of prominent *franquistas*, including Carrero Blanco and López Rodó, had come to the conclusion that Franco's successor should be Juan Carlos. There was an array of possible candidates, including the Carlist family of Borbón-Parma, and the Borbón-Dampierre nephews of Don Juan. But strong arguments could be made against all of them: the Borbón-Parma family was French, while Don Jaime, the elder brother of Don Juan and father of Alfonso and Gonzalo de Borbón-Dampierre, had long since renounced his rights. López Rodó and his associates knew that monarchist support in Spain was not strong, and that it would be even weaker if the main Borbón line was discarded in favour of some lesser branch. Thus, if Franco had excluded Don Juan, his son became the only plausible candidate." (Gilmour 1985, 135).

<sup>29</sup> "The people had not taken the prince seriously while Franco was still alive: he was used to inaugurate highways and open veterinarians' conventions....Spaniards became aware of the impossible role that was his to play." (Alba 1978, 290).

Juan Carlos had not received a great deal of formal training from Franco. He had been introduced to the life that would be his upon the death of the Caudillo but had not been given a true sense of the power and responsibility until it was ultimately thrust upon him and as a result he was, at least on paper, ill-prepared for the job. Juan Carlos had experienced brief spells of control only to see them taken away again by an insecure and controlling dictator.<sup>30</sup> The manner in which Juan Carlos reacted to this event spoke volumes about his character and was to be an indication of the patience and fortitude that would stand him in good stead in later years. While it is true that Juan Carlos had received his education under the auspices of Franco and in a sense, had been groomed for the life he would eventually lead, there is little evidence to show that Franco was entirely convinced of his decision until the very end. Actions such as the establishment of the Laws of Succession guaranteed that ultimate control lay with Franco and that the final decision was very much subject to the whims of the dictator.<sup>31</sup>

It had been agreed by Don Juan and Franco that the education and training of the young prince would be the purview of the Caudillo.<sup>32</sup> This was seen by Don Juan as the only manner to ensure that a Borbón inherited the throne and it is not a great stretch to see the ulterior motives behind the decision of the father. Don Juan believed, in as far as we can use this term, that his son needed the connection to Franco in order to gain the throne. This accounts for the education of his son by the man who had exiled him and

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<sup>30</sup> "He kept silent in 1974 when Franco became ill, handed power over to the prince, then recovered and took it back as chief of state. But the people also noticed his serenity and detachment as he lived through those difficult years." (Alba 1978, 290).

<sup>31</sup> "The first Fundamental Law to be submitted to a referendum was the Law of Succession for the Head of State (1947). This law represented the first serious attempt to give a comprehensive definition to the franquist regime, making Spain a 'Catholic, social and representative' kingdom. In addition, Article 2 made Francisco Franco regent for life and the law gave him the right to name his successor at an unspecified future date. A Council of the Realm was established to advise the caudillo and to draw up a list of three candidates from which Franco could select the future heads of government." (Share 1986, 21).

<sup>32</sup> "Franco and Don Juan held two further interviews, in 1954 and 1960, in a private house in Extremadura. Although the two men disliked and distrusted each other, they needed to remain in touch. Franco wanted the Prince to be educated in Spain, and the two men agreed that he should attend the Zaragoza military academy as well as receive naval and air force training before studying at Madrid University." (Gilmour 1985, 135).



prevented him from ruling his country. Franco needed a successor, somebody he could groom in his own image and educate in the ways of the regime. Juan Carlos had the lineage and the ability to create what Franco had been unable to; a *franquista* monarchy. Juan Carlos was aware, even at this stage that the only way to gain access to the throne was through Franco.<sup>33</sup> There existed the assumption that should Juan Carlos be nominated by Franco, he would accept and then defer in favour of his father. This was not to be the case however as the animosity that existed between Franco and Don Juan was substantial<sup>34</sup> and it became increasingly evident that Juan Carlos was the only one who would be selected to continue in the Caudillo's place. Juan Carlos was very much trapped between his desire to honour his father and the ultimate necessity to ensure his position as Franco's successor.

Juan Carlos received the initial nomination in 1969 but was forced to wait until Franco finally succumbed to illness and died in 1975 before taking over power. While it is true that he was endowed with the title of King, this meant little<sup>35</sup> given the history of the monarchy in Spain and perhaps the most important legacy of Franco would be that of Commander in Chief.<sup>36</sup> Juan Carlos was not permitted a great deal of leeway while Franco was alive and it was evident that should he deviate from the designated path, he would be removed from the position of successor. This ensured that the actions

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<sup>33</sup> "This is out of my hands – the Prince told him during a conversation with his father before being aware of Franco's decision – it is out of my hands. And if, as I believe, he does invite me to accept, what would you do? Is there another possible solution other than that which Franco decides? Are you capable of bringing back the Monarchy?" (Cernuda et al. 1981, 169). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>34</sup> "In the Caudillo's eyes, Don Juan was a liberal anglophile, badly advised and under the influence of freemasons. Franco decided, perhaps as early as 1943, that he would not be succeeded by such a man. He did not tell Don Juan of his intentions, however, and continued to send advice to the exiled pretender." (Gilmour 1985, 134).

<sup>35</sup> "When Spain began its democratic transition in 1975, the majority of observers, above all those doing so from abroad, did not believe the Monarchy had anything of real substance to contribute." (Powell 1991, 21). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>36</sup> "In order to understand the situation, one must remember that the institutions the king inherited were like a straightjacket tailored by Franco. These institutions were established by the 1966 reforms of the Fundamental Laws. The center of the system was occupied by the caudillo, chief of state, head of government, leader of the National Movement, and generalissimo of the combined air, land, and sea armed forces. Of all these titles, the king had only inherited that of chief of state." (Alba 1978, 254).



of the young prince were in accordance with the wishes of the dictator but it does not automatically follow that this corresponded to his own.<sup>37</sup> When we examine the events that came later, it is safe to say that Juan Carlos had plans for the future that did not feature in the grand scheme of the Caudillo. When Juan Carlos was nominated in 1969, it was at the hand of Franco, and when he assumed the throne in 1975, he owed his entire support base to this relationship.<sup>38</sup>

The nomination of Juan Carlos is a key event in the transition as it marks the end of the old regime and the start of the new. Franco nominated Juan Carlos as his successor in order to maintain the existing status quo; Juan Carlos accepted the nomination in order to obtain the throne and avail himself of the myriad of opportunities that would follow. Don Juan had pushed for the nomination in order to secure the throne for his bloodline; the Bunker believed Juan Carlos would become a puppet ripe for abuse while others still thought he embodied the future of Spain.<sup>39</sup> One such event, when viewed from all angles seems scarcely credible and yet it was to affect and ultimately shape the transition in Spain and sow the seeds of a consolidated and functioning democracy that would eventually join Europe.

The legacy of Franco extended beyond the conditioning of a population; the very structure of the government had been established in order to perpetuate the regime after the death of the Caudillo. To this end, Juan Carlos inherited an intrinsically Francoist

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<sup>37</sup> "Juan Carlos, who had decided to be a francoist until the death...of Franco, but not one minute longer, possibly because it is not advisable to continuously waste time, and even less so when your destiny is telling you that the time that has finally arrived is yours." (Castellano 2001, 118). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>38</sup> "At his death, the military, few of them who genuinely considered themselves monarchists, transferred their loyalty and obedience to Don Juan Carlos because they saw in him the person whom Franco had nominated as his successor to the title of King." (Powell 1991, 19). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>39</sup> "On the morning of 22 November 1975, Prince Juan Carlos was sworn in as King of Spain. He promised Franco's puppet Parliament to be loyal to the dead man and to uphold the principles and laws of his State. Then in a brief and prudent speech, he said that a new era in the history of Spain was about to begin, and expressed his determination to work for a future in which there would be 'an effective consensus concerning national concord'. In terms whose ambiguity was surely deliberate, he went on: 'I hope to be capable of acting as moderator, as guardian of the constitutional system and promoter of justice. Let nobody fear that his cause will be forgotten, let nobody expect advantages or privileges. Together we will be able to achieve all if we give to all their legitimate opportunity.'" (Gibson 1992, 49).

Bunker, led by a staunch supporter of the regime, Carlos Arias Navarro.<sup>40</sup> Arias Navarro was firmly in favour of a continuance of the existing regime and this was to represent a significant obstacle for the transition<sup>41</sup> and yet, at the same time, it served to highlight both the fortitude and the resolve of the new regime.

I have chosen the removal of Arias Navarro and his replacement with Adolfo Suárez as the second event for analysis as I believe it to mark a crucial point in the transition process. The nomination of Juan Carlos was clearly a hugely relevant event but without the installation of Suárez, the transition would have been of a very different nature. The removal of a man chosen by Franco demonstrated the power of the new monarch and illustrated his capability to act in the face of opposition. The choice of Suárez himself was an interesting one and in hindsight, successful too. Juan Carlos' decision to remove Arias Navarro was not one simply based upon a conflict of personalities<sup>42</sup> or a perceived lack of respect, but rather out of a genuine desire to reform. We cannot deny that there was animosity between the two men and that this contributed greatly to the events that transpired but we must allow that other factors were also involved. It is arguable that had the decision for removal been based solely upon the whim of Juan Carlos, its chances of success would have been close to nil, representing as it would have, the fancies of a dictator. The fact that the decision was a rational one is a further example of the system being used against itself and marks the shape of the transition.

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<sup>40</sup> "What I want is to continue Francoism. And as long as I am here or still in political life, I'll never be anything but a strict perpetuator of Francoism in all its aspects and I will fight against the enemies of Spain who have begun to dare to raise their heads." (Areilza, J.M de. 1977), 84.

<sup>41</sup> "I still firmly preserve in the objectives outlined in my 12 February speech. We are called, we come together, to continue and persist with the gigantic achievement of Francisco Franco." Speech given by Arias Navarro at his first cabinet meeting. (Preston 2004, 334), (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 121), (Osorio 1980, 54-5).

<sup>42</sup> "The relations between the two men were strained and were not helped by comments to the effect that 'Juan Carlos was an inexperienced young man who should be kept safely away from the serious day-to-day business of government.' This was a reported quote by Arias Navarro given to a senior US diplomat." (Preston 2004, 337), (Eaton 1981, 38).



The removal of Arias Navarro marks a shift in the power balance within Spain and as such is an event that requires closer scrutiny. Arias Navarro was a man who believed himself untouchable. Franco had appointed him to the post of prime minister for a period of five years<sup>43</sup> and for Juan Carlos to have him removed without due provocation would constitute a breach of the Constitution. This does not mean that Arias Navarro felt himself without competition though, and this was to be a significant factor in the actions taken by Juan Carlos and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda. There existed a feeling of disrespect for Juan Carlos and his fellow reformers<sup>44</sup> and a sense that he was very much subject to the existing order. Juan Carlos was relatively young and inexperienced at the time of Franco's death in 1975 and it was assumed by the Bunker that he would conform to the rules as laid out before him. The removal of Arias Navarro demonstrated Juan Carlos' ability for independent decision making and hinted at the shape of things to come.<sup>45</sup> It is difficult to assert that a master plan existed at this, or at any point in the transition process but this event, and the subsequent success it gave rise to, surely marks the start of a new era in Spanish politics. The change did not happen immediately and was to take careful strategic planning by Juan Carlos and his mentor Fernández-Miranda, even at the cost of the appearance of progress.

Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda wanted grand scale change to take place in Spain but this was a difficult task to achieve in one fell swoop. Much of what was happening within the government was taking place behind closed doors in the Cortes and was therefore hidden from public view. Juan Carlos took a close interest in the proceedings of the Cortes but it became increasingly clear that he would need an 'inside

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<sup>43</sup> "His view was that Franco had appointed him and the King remained subject to the Caudillo's will." (Preston 2004, 331). "It's as if he believes that he is absolutely safe, that he is Prime Minister for five years and that all I can do is keep him on." (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 176-80), (Preston 2004, 346).

<sup>44</sup> This notion was fuelled by comments such as "He's going to hear me now. This snout-nosed kid needs putting in his place." This quote by Arias Navarro is reported by Preston. (Preston 2004, 316).

<sup>45</sup> "Juan Carlos exercised his power and prerogatives to the full in moving Spain toward democracy, not least in the surprise selection of Suárez as prime minister." (Huntington 1991/2, 599).



man'<sup>46</sup>. This was to take precedence over replacing Arias Navarro and while it earned Juan Carlos criticism for being indecisive and weak, it was to benefit Spain in the long run. Despite the inherent difficulty is assuming the existence of a 'master plan' for the transition, it becomes increasingly evident through the examination of subsequent events, that there did indeed exist a design and a distinct methodological approach to the change that transpired. When the removal of Arias Navarro did come about, it was the culmination of a carefully played game by Juan Carlos. Several steps were taken along the way and this in itself demonstrates the political acumen of the young monarch.

Arias Navarro announced his new cabinet on December 10 1975, and despite limited moderation, it remained largely comprised of hardliners. Rodolfo Martín Villa, a young and energetic Falangist had been appointed Minister for the *Sindicatos* at the behest of Juan Carlos as he had been impressed by Villa's contacts with the Catalan left and saw him as a useful ally. Perhaps much more significant than this appointment was that of three ministers who would prove invaluable to Juan Carlos:<sup>47</sup> José María de Areilza became Foreign Minister; Manuel Fraga became Minister of the Interior and Antonio Garrigues y Díaz Cañabate became Minister of Justice. These three men possessed sufficient force of will, backed by support gained through service, to make them effective in the political arena. While these three appointments did not constitute a force capable of overriding Arias Navarro, nor did they represent the end of the struggle for Juan Carlos, they did however provide the young monarch with a degree of support within the government and proved his ability to successfully initiate change.

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<sup>46</sup> "He quickly ensured that he would have a mole in the cabinet by skilfully persuading Arias to accept his new protégé, Adolfo Suárez, in the key post of Secretary-General of the *Movimiento*. Arias believed he was obliged by Franco's wishes to maintain José Solís in the post but Fernández-Miranda sidestepped the problem by suggesting that he gave Solís the Ministry of Labour." (Preston 2004, 333), (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 119-21), (Morán 1987, 15-20), (Eaton 1981, 32-3).

<sup>47</sup> For further information on these appointments. (Preston 2004, 332), (Powell 2001, 146), (Osorio 1980, 46-7).

Having made the decision to remove Arias Navarro, there was still a certain protocol to follow. Juan Carlos could not be seen to overrule the Constitution and to continue with a precedent set by Franco of nepotism. Juan Carlos had increased his support in the army, he had placed Fernández-Miranda in charge of the Cortes and he had increased his level of support within parliament itself through the appointment of well placed ministers, so the decision to remove Arias Navarro was not one taken on the spur of the moment, nor was it entered into without the assurance of support. By the time that Juan Carlos removed Arias Navarro from office, it is safe to say that he was in control of the situation and acted from a position of certainty and strength.

By this time, Juan Carlos's desire to remove Arias as his prime minister was clear, as were the contributing factors behind this realization. A candidate was required who would both enjoy support from within the system, would be accepted by the army, open to dialogue with the opposition and of a mind with the ideals or reform already held by both Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda. This was no easy task and in retrospect, verged on the impossible. There is evidence that Juan Carlos had already considered Adolfo Suárez as a possible replacement for some time<sup>48</sup> and that he had been grooming him for the role with appointments such as Secretary-General of the *Movimiento*. This may be true or it may not but it is possible to see why Suárez was chosen. He had an excellent pedigree<sup>49</sup>, was liked by the army<sup>50</sup>, was only six years

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<sup>48</sup> "Areilza believed that the choice of Suárez as Arias Navarro's replacement had been planned since Easter and perhaps even since Henry Kissinger's visit to Madrid in January. Indeed it may well have been earlier." (Preston 2004, 352), (Areilza: Diary entry for 14 and 15 July 1976 1983, 23-6).

<sup>49</sup> "Carrero had a very high opinion of Adolfo Suárez, General Director of Radio and Television, and attempted to arrange it so that he would be nominated as either National Provincial Delegate or Vice Secretary General of the Movement when these positions became vacant." (López-Rodó 1977, 408). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>50</sup> "During his period in television, he began to build a reputation as a man who enjoyed a special relationship with the Army. He began by establishing a close friendship with Colonel Andrés Casinello Pérez, second-in-command of Carrero Blanco's intelligence service, the SIPG, and ingratiated himself with senior generals by making television time available to them and by sending flowers to their wives." (Preston 2004, 304).



older than Juan Carlos and was sufficiently respected by the Bunker<sup>51</sup> as to prevent undue criticism at the outset.

Suárez did not rise to the position of prime minister simply on the coat tails of others, rather his involvement in several events during the period leading up to Arias Navarro's removal, demonstrated his capabilities and drive. One such occasion saw him defending the new law of political associations when it was presented to Cortes on 9 June 1976. Suárez defended the law with such style, stressing that political pluralism was a necessary reflection of the realities of Spanish society, that he greatly impressed Juan Carlos and after the speech, the Cortes passed the new law of political associations by 338 votes to 91 with 25 abstentions. Suárez had used the opportunity given to him to prove his eloquence and ability in the political arena. This situation would have served to convince politicians of his relevance to the events of the time but his public persona was greatly enhanced by his involvement in the Vitoria strikes of March 1976. Suárez counseled a more discreet solution<sup>52</sup> to the problem than had been proposed by the Captain-General of the Burgos Military Region and as a result, further bloodshed was avoided. Suárez's involvement in Vitoria further strengthened Juan Carlos' opinion and belief in his potential<sup>53</sup> and served to demonstrate to the watching world that he was a serious candidate for prime minister.

The removal of Arias Navarro had to been seen as legitimate and without the expertise and adroitness of Fernández-Miranda,<sup>54</sup> would never have been achieved.<sup>55</sup> In

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<sup>51</sup> "Suárez joined the Opus Dei and made friends with important regime figures during the period of the early 1960s when Herrero was Vice-Secretary of the *Movimiento* under Solís." (Preston 2004, 303).

<sup>52</sup> For additional reference: (Areilza 1977, 104), (Osorio 1980, 86), (Preston 2004, 344), (Morán 1979, 30-3).

<sup>53</sup> "For his part, the King was visibly impressed with the attention to detail and talent demonstrated by Adolfo Suárez, eventual Government Minister, and would repeat this opinion in private audiences thereafter." (Morán 1979, 32). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>54</sup> "Later, Torcuato came to see me and said: 'Majesty, tell me the name of the man who should replace Arias Navarro and I promise they will vote for him.'" (Vilallonga 1993, 118). (Translated from original by author).



the end, it was resolved via a very simple method; Juan Carlos met with Arias Navarro and the prime minister's resignation was submitted. There are contrasting reports on whether Arias Navarro willingly tendered his resignation or whether Juan Carlos formally requested it, but the path was left open to Juan Carlos to select a new prime minister as of 1 July. Arias Navarro had effectively been backed into a corner. Opinion against him had been mounting; he was falling from favour with the army and, coupled with his lack of respect for Juan Carlos, it was becoming apparent that his monarch was less than content with his position in political life. The time had come for action to be taken, Juan Carlos had waited long enough, all the pieces were in place and failure to act would have created further tension and unrest within Spain. It should not be seen that Juan Carlos was solely acting in reaction to external events; the decision to remove Arias Navarro had been taken for some time prior to 1 July but to rush events in a period of potential turmoil, would have harmed rather than aided the transition process. When it came time for Juan Carlos to act, he was ready and at peace with his decision.<sup>56</sup> Given the youth of Juan Carlos, and his relative inexperience at this time, it was a prudent decision to delay action until he was certain of its success.

The manner in which Juan Carlos would choose a successor to Arias Navarro was represented by a list called the *terna*. This list would consist of three candidates, compiled by the Cortes from which Juan Carlos would make his final selection. The list consisted of Gregorio López Bravo, a Franco technocrat, Federico Silva Muñoz, a conservative Christian democrat, and Adolfo Suárez. The Press heavily favoured the

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<sup>55</sup> "From this post (that of President of the Cortes), the monarch's old tutor dedicated himself to preparing the Cortes for reform and the Consejo del Reino for the nomination of a new head of government." (Powell 2001, 146). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>56</sup> "On the morning of 1 July, Areilza met the King whom he found relaxed and refreshed, 'as if a weight had been lifted from his shoulders'. Juan Carlos said, 'This can't go on without a risk of losing everything. The job of King is sometimes uncomfortable. I had to take a difficult decision but I've taken it. I will put it into effect suddenly and surprise everyone. You've been warned, so keep quiet and wait. It will be before anyone thinks. There's no choice.'" (Preston 2004, 351), (Areilza diary entries for 1-3 July '76, 1977, 214-7), (Fraga 1987, 52-3), (Osorio 1980, 126-7), (Tusell 2002, 138), (Sverlo 2000, 144).

first two candidates and Suárez was seen as a waste of a nomination. The balance of the first two men, a Francoist and a Christian Democrat was an intelligent move; it appeased both sides and lent hope to them that their candidate would be selected. This was not to be the case however as Fernández-Miranda had used political acumen and shrewd tactics, to ensure the final piece of the puzzle was slotted into place. A combination of timing, expertise and the additional pressure of outside factors enabled Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda to politically ambush Arias Navarro and remove him from office both effectively, and more importantly, legally.

The nomination of Suárez was not universally accepted, nor was it even fully comprehended at the outset. Despite his connections within the Bunker, Suárez was a relative unknown figure in political life at this point.<sup>57</sup> The inclusion of Suárez on the *terna* had been surprise enough, when he received the nomination itself, it came as a shock to many.<sup>58</sup> The actions and commitment of Suárez would silence many of his critics as time went by but the initial response to his nomination was that of indignation and disbelief. There were those who believed he would construct a government of hard-line Francoists<sup>59</sup> and in so doing, drag Spain back into the era of Franco. It is a measure of the control and influence of Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda that the removal of Arias Navarro and the installation of Suárez were possible. Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda had seemingly managed the impossible; they had manipulated the system

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<sup>57</sup> "Adolfo Suárez, a young and relatively unknown product of the Movimiento nacional (uncharitably described by the second-ranking Socialist leader, Alfonso Guerra, as 'a creature who crawled from the sewers of fascism'), who had previously served under Franco as director general of the state-run television network and, in the first post-Franco government, as minister of the Movimiento." (Gunther 1992, 48).

<sup>58</sup> "The news of the King's nomination of Adolfo Suárez as President of the Government was an authentic surprise for all political observers, without exception...nobody, literally nobody had suspected that the name of a minister such as Suárez would be present in the list. And when it was known, nobody, absolutely nobody thought that he was there for any other reason than a less than deserving companion to the other two political figures that had been proposed to the King to take charge of the Government of Spain." (Prego 2000, 27-8). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>59</sup> "The general opinion is that Adolfo Suárez would either form a Government of neo-fascists from his ilk or not be able to form one at all." (Osorio 1980, 130). (Translated from original by author).



against itself, used the arrogance of an out-of-touch Francoist prime minister to engineer his downfall and begun the process of reforming the Cortes from within in an incredibly short period of time.

The acceptance of Franco's nomination and the removal of Arias Navarro were decisions that greatly benefited the transition process and as such, they were a demonstration of the capabilities of the leading actors in forcing change. This approach would not be possible in the reform of the Cortes. It could not be seen to have been forced from above, there could be no element of impropriety involved and this in turn, made the situation much more complex. Juan Carlos was successfully installed as King of Spain, Adolfo Suárez had been awarded the position of prime minister and it would appear that the situation in Spain was a favourable one for an attempted transition to democracy. Despite the relative power and authority possessed by the primary actors, they did not enjoy an uncontested position<sup>60</sup> and were forced to tread carefully at times<sup>61</sup>. This reality would influence the way in which decisions were approached, and ultimately dealt with. There were many constraints that faced the primary actors at this time and many of them bore remnants of Francoism. While it is true that Juan Carlos inherited power from Franco, the laws and regulations that had been put in place during the Caudillo's reign would also shackle him; chief among these was the *Leyes Fundamentales*. Franco had put these in place in order to provide a safeguard for his regime and to tie Juan Carlos to the principles of Francoism, after he had died.<sup>62</sup>

It fell to the often-overlooked figure of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda to convince Juan Carlos that reform of the political system would not constitute a betrayal of his

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<sup>60</sup> "Juan Carlos did not inherit the supreme juridical field that Franco had enjoyed, or his political power, fruit of a 'charismatic legitimacy' that a large section of the political class refused him." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 20). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>61</sup> "The political stage at the time of Franco's death and symbolized by the Presidency of Arias forced the King to act with caution, and not to attempt to exercise power he did not have, or to seek it." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 21). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>62</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the *Leyes Fundamentales* see Preston (2004), Powell (2001), Hernández Gil (1982).



oath to Franco and to Spain.<sup>63</sup> Given the position of Juan Carlos, it was imperative that his actions were beyond reproach. The climate of the time called for a legitimacy to be awarded to the newly democratic regime<sup>64</sup> and every effort was made to make this a reality.<sup>65</sup> In light of the fact that Juan Carlos had recently removed Arias Navarro as prime minister and replaced him with Adolfo Suárez, further unilateral action of this sort would run counter to the democratic aims of the regime.<sup>66</sup> The constraints placed upon him coupled with the inherent complexity of constitutional law would have prevented him from taking action other than a unilateral one, if he acted alone. Despite Juan Carlos' drive and personal ambition, he was not alone in this process. As has been alluded to above, Fernández-Miranda was instrumental in advising the young King and when we analyse the situation more closely, it becomes apparent that it was Fernández-Miranda who ultimately convinced Juan Carlos as to the validity of this course of action.

In a conversation that took place between Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda on 18 July 1969, before Juan Carlos would accept the nomination from Franco, we are able to see the entire dilemma played out. Juan Carlos was worried about his responsibilities to his oath<sup>67</sup> and Fernández-Miranda went to great lengths to assure him that reform of the *Leyes Fundamentales* would not constitute a breach of ethics; on the

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<sup>63</sup> "If he accepted the charge, it was because he followed the teachings of his professor Torcuato Fernández-Miranda that the Fundamental Laws, all of the Fundamental Laws including the basic principles, were open to reform providing respect was shown to the manner in which they had been established." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 17). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>64</sup> "The Monarchy had to present from the start a new image. Things could not continue as before." (Quote by Juan Carlos found in the manuscripts of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and taken from (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 92). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>65</sup> "A television programme was recorded in the Prado del Rey with six journalists. We attempted to remove pomposity, triumphalism and stress that had been the main ministerial ingredients of the past." 14/1/76 (Areilza 1977, 52). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>66</sup> "Beneath his guarded and disciplined appearance, Don Juan Carlos had an energy and tenacity to achieve his objectives that permitted both advisors and collaborators to be involved but would not tolerate patronage or guardianship." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 97). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>67</sup> "Juan Carlos was preoccupied with the manner in which he could make more flexible, to the point where democracy could be introduced, that which he had sworn to uphold in July 1969; namely the *Leyes Fundamentales*." (Tusell 1995, 546).

contrary, it represented a constitutionally protected avenue of action. Once Juan Carlos became convinced that true reform would be possible within Spain and that it would be possible to use the system against itself in order to achieve this, new avenues opened for the transition process. It would also become apparent that Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda were not alone in their understanding of the situation and what was needed to induce change. The table below outlines public opinion in Spain in 1975 surrounding the issue of political reform.

“The Government of Arias never constituted the ‘King’s Government’, it was Franco’s Government with a few individuals aligned to the Crown and to the desire to democratize. The new Government needed to be clearly the King’s, created to function accordingly.” (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 192). (Translated from original by author). True reform could not exist without a dramatic overhaul of the existing system. In 1975, Juan Carlos did not enjoy a position of complete power, nor had the removal of Arias really tested the waters in this respect. Given the climate in Spain at the time, the presence of the Army and the grudging recognition that was awarded to the King, it would have been a dangerous move indeed to attempt what could only be interpreted as a coup d’etat and forcibly remove an appointed body from office.

**TABLE 1.1:**

Attitudes on the Desirability of Democracy in the Aftermath of Franco's Death, May and December 1975 (percent)

Attitude	Percent
December 1975 (national survey)	
Would like the king to:	
Grant more freedom of speech	72
Grant universal suffrage	70
Grant more regional autonomy	61
Grant amnesty	61
Grant more political freedom	58
Follow more democratic policies than previously existed	58
May 1975 (sample of seven large cities)	
The system should evolve toward a democracy of the Western kind	74
This evolution is not possible without reforming the Fundamental Laws	60

*Sources:* Data for December come from a survey carried out by Consulta and published by *Cambio 16* (1 December 1975); those for May come from a survey by Metra 6 and were published by *Informaciones* (31 May 1975). Table reproduced from Rafael López-Pintor, "Transition toward Democracy in Spain: Opinion Mood and Elite Behavior", *Working Papers*, no.80 (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center, 1981).



The pressure to change is a difficult variable to quantify and yet it must have played a role in the process. The clashes between the police and the youth of Spain were becoming more frequent with increasingly worse results. On 15 August 1976, the Guardia Civil killed a 19-year-old named Jaime Verdejo in Cadiz for spraying graffiti on a wall. The graffiti read, "*Pan, Trabajo, Libertad.*" (Bread, Work, Freedom).<sup>68</sup> The increase in civil unrest and the pressure from the international<sup>69</sup> arena played a role in the actions of the primary actors in Spain and would go a long way to influencing the ultimate course of action. The option involving a reform of the Cortes from within did not herald such a potentially volatile outcome. The process may have seemed a lengthy and difficult one<sup>70</sup> from the outset but it was legal, constitutionally recognised and represented a safe avenue to explore at this juncture.<sup>71</sup>

Human agency was the significant factor in engineering change of this nature, as opposed to institutional developments. Although it is indeed true that the institutions themselves were manipulated in order to manifest the change, this was a result of human interaction and ingenuity. Juan Carlos' esteem for his former tutor, Fernández-Miranda, has already been mentioned above, but this esteem would turn to dependence as the process for reform began in earnest. Fernández-Miranda had turned down the role of prime minister and finally, this decision would begin to pay dividends.

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<sup>68</sup> This account is told in (Velazquez, J.L. & Memba, J. 1995), (Preston 2004), (Powell 2001).

<sup>69</sup> "After his first conversation with the North American Ambassador, the minister of Foreign Affairs, Areilza, concluded that the United States 'desires the democratization of our system but, true to their pragmatism, without too much hard work, too many demands, and too many worries.'" (Powell 2001, 150). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>70</sup> "All Franco's powers were theoretically subject to limitation by the Cortes and the *Consejo del Reino* but, in practice, both bodies acted as rubber stamps. They could not be expected to behave like that if faced with a reforming King. The task thus facing Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda – that of winning over the *Procuradores* to their project and of asserting the authority of the Cortes over the government – was awesome in its enormity." (Preston 2004, 329), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 125-8), (Prego 1995, 365-9).

<sup>71</sup> "The Monarchy is the only means of political and social transition that would grant us an institutionalized democracy in public life in the shortest time, with the least risk and the least amount of violence." (Areilza 1977, 112). (Translated from original by author).

Fernández-Miranda was able to use his legal acumen and political position to generate the required reform.<sup>72</sup>

The planning and preparation put into place during the period leading up to the introduction of the reform bill was just as important as the debate over the bill itself. The issue of legality was crucial and there was a very definite procedure that needed to be adhered to.<sup>73</sup> Fernández-Miranda had been responsible for ensuring that the Cortes and the *Consejo del Reino* were in a position to greater benefit the transition when the time came. Noted amongst the actions taken at this time were the opening of the legal avenues for the constitution of parliamentary groups and the modification of the *Reglamento de las Cortes* (Ruling of the Cortes) that enabled the introduction of the *Procedimiento de Urgencia* (Urgency Procedure). This procedure had a dual objective; to destroy the power of the commissions, in particular, the orthodox *Comisión de Leyes Fundamentales* (Commission of Fundamental Laws) and secondly, make possible full control by the Presidency for the time when the reform bill would be introduced.<sup>74</sup>

Fernández-Miranda was not the sole actor in this process despite the tremendous degree of responsibility he assumed to guarantee its successful outcome. Juan Carlos played a less public role in the procedure and therefore the practical aspect of ensuring success fell to the two men who, between them, held the crucially important positions of political power, namely Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez.<sup>75</sup> The task

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<sup>72</sup> "The key to all of Juan Carlos's plans lay in the appointment of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda as President of the Cortes and of the *Consejo del Reino*. His intelligence, his knowledge of Francoist constitutional law and his acquaintance with the entire Francoist political elite made him the perfect guide to the labyrinth through which Juan Carlos had to advance." (Preston 2004, 333).

<sup>73</sup> "In Spain, for instance, the monarchy was re-established and Suárez adhered to the provisions of the Franco constitution in abolishing that constitution: no Francoist could claim that there were procedural irregularities." (Huntingdon 1991/2, 599).

<sup>74</sup> For a full account of this see (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 22), (Hernández-Gil 1982), (Maravall 1984).

<sup>75</sup> "In an impressive display of political skill (and in close collaboration with the king and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda, president of the Cortes and of the Council of the Realm), Suárez persuaded the corporatist Cortes to commit institutional suicide by approving the Law for Political Reform in October 1976, which established procedures for future political reforms to be undertaken by a new, democratically elected Cortes." (Gunther 1992, 48).



before these two men was immense in scope. Having chosen to follow this option, they were presented with the unenviable task of convincing the Cortes to self-destruct.<sup>76</sup> Given the inherent difficulties involved in this process, it was imperative that all pieces were correctly set up. Despite Fernández-Miranda's influential role in the creation of the *Ley para la Reforma Política* (Reform Bill) it stood a greater chance if his subsequent involvement were not so open.<sup>77</sup> Fernández-Miranda had played a visible role in the removal of Arias Navarro and it was deemed prudent that his involvement in the process of reform be much less overt.

Adolfo Suárez may have been more suited for the task than was Fernández-Miranda but this did not mean that the task was an easy one. External factors also played an important role at this time. Not only had the Caudillo bequeathed a Francoist government to Juan Carlos but also the Army was still a force to be reckoned with. It is indeed true that Juan Carlos had become Chief of State upon his succession to the throne but this did not guarantee the support of the armed forces in all matters, especially those that could be interpreted as an attack on the sovereignty of the state. The primary actors, namely Fernández-Miranda and Suárez in this case, foresaw the dangers of acting without consideration and felt it prudent to ensure that their path to reform was as clear and unobstructed as possible. Suárez, with the approval of the King<sup>78</sup>, met with twenty-nine high-ranking military officers on 8 September 1976 to discuss the matter. The main purpose of the meeting was for Suárez to convince the army that the reform bill would only be passed if voted for by the required two-thirds

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<sup>76</sup> "Many were persuaded by arguments to the effect that the process did not stray from Francoist legality, permitted a decorous end to the dictatorship and was the King's will." (Preston 2004, 372).

<sup>77</sup> Fernández-Miranda approached, amongst others, the sourly suspicious Gonzalo Fernández de la Mora, and told him that, 'The King has made the decision and we are proceeding to a full-scale party system'." (Preston 2004, 372).

<sup>78</sup> "Adolfo Suárez consulted with his close collaborator and vice-president, General Manuel Gutiérrez-Mellado, concerning the phrasing of key constitutional articles, with the intention of avoiding language that might provoke an otherwise avoidable negative reaction by the military." (Gunther 1992, 61).



majority of the Cortes, the bulk of whom were staunch Francoists.<sup>79</sup> This was absolutely essential to the survival of the reform process and represents an astute awareness and management of political affairs on the part of the primary actors.<sup>80</sup> An additional factor that is worth highlighting is the action that took place following the meeting between Suárez and the military representatives. Two days afterwards, Suárez appeared on television announcing the imminence of political reform. Having assured the army that matters would not move forward without the backing of the Cortes, a television address ensured that public opinion would be on the side of reform and would therefore cause additional pressure to be placed upon the voting members of Cortes.<sup>81</sup>

Having manipulated the situation to the best of their abilities, through control and preparation of the significant institutions, the only task that remained before the primary actors, was that of convincing an institutionalised government to commit what amounted to political suicide.<sup>82</sup> Adolfo Suárez was in possession of various tactics in his task to ensure that the reform bill would pass when presented to Cortes. Some of these weapons occupied a somewhat ethically grey area but were effective nonetheless. In many ways, Suárez manipulated the members of the Cortes to best suit the needs of the reform process. It does not take too much imagination to comprehend the enormity of the task facing him and the knowledge that he was forced to resort to varying tactics to achieve the objective comes as no surprise. The nature of the reform bill was less the

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<sup>79</sup> "Every member of the cabinet had been given the task of sounding out a particular group of Procuradores. Suárez spoke to the most hard-line members of the Movimiento." (Preston 2004, 372).

<sup>80</sup> "Suárez's strategy unfolded within the institutions and in accord with the rules of the authoritarian regime, and he went to great efforts to secure support for the monarchy from traditional republican political groups from the earliest stages of the transition." (Gunther 1992, 75).

<sup>81</sup> "During the public presentation of the project in a televised speech, that would make him famous, Suárez adopted the position of an impartial statesman acting in the name of the King and whose primary objective was to guarantee the smooth transition from a system of legitimate delegation of authority to one of open participation and responsibility." (Powell 2001, 166). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>82</sup> "According to the President, 'many of them truly see themselves as representatives of their respective provinces', in light of which they were enthusiastic about presenting themselves for consideration in future elections, this in turn led more than one of them to think that they would need the future support of the government. Suárez recognised that while he was not engaging in 'buying votes', he was certainly relying heavily upon his knowledge of people." (Powell 2001, 168). (Translated from original by author).

issue than what it meant for the members of the Cortes as a piece of legislation. The objections were focused on the ramifications of the bill, not the bill itself.

The entire process was fraught with obstacles and challenges throughout and at times, would have seemed insurmountable.<sup>83</sup> Suárez and Fernández-Miranda spent much time behind the scenes to increase the likelihood of success and established a close working relationship that would enable the pooling of their respective skills. The bill was submitted before the *Comisión Mixta Gobierno-Conséjo Nacional* (National Government-Advisory Mixed Commission) for their consideration. Minor adjustments were made to the text by such men as Miguel Herrero<sup>84</sup>, acting secretary general of the Ministry of Justice, but the bulk of the text remained untouched and true to the spirit in which it was conceived. This is further evidence of using the system against itself; it is much easier to convince someone of an idea, if they believe they have played a role in its conception.

The approval, grudging or otherwise, of the bill was not sufficient to ensure it was passed by the required two thirds majority and so other tactics were also employed, including the manner in which it was presented and phrased.<sup>85</sup> We have evidence of Suárez using a carrot and stick approach. Positions were offered in the future government<sup>86</sup> and this was combined with the possibility of withholding stipends that

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<sup>83</sup> "The project for the Reform Law was not received with enthusiasm by the opposition either, despite it being recognised that the government 'had exerted the greatest effort of which it was objectively capable, within the authoritarian institutions of the regime.'" (Powell 1991, 195). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>84</sup> "After discarding the attractive temptation to resign- writes Herrero-, I dedicated myself to improving the plan to reform, including the changing of its name and preparing for its negotiation and consequences." (Herrero y Rodríguez de Miñón 1993, 86). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>85</sup> "The project was an honest reflection of the reformist philosophy of Fernández-Miranda...in other words; it dealt with a law to permit reform, not a reform law." (Powell 2001, 165). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>86</sup> "Reformers in government negotiated with the primary opposition groups and arrived at explicit or tacit agreements with them. In Spain, for example, the Communist party recognized that it was too weak to follow a 'radical *rupturista* policy' and instead went along with a '*ruptura pactada*' even though the pact was 'purely tacit.' In October 1977 Suárez won the agreement of the Communist and Socialist parties to the *Pactos de la Moncloa* comprising a mixture of fairly severe economic austerity measures and some social reforms. Secret negotiations with Santiago Carrillo, the primary Communist leader, 'played on the



were paid to ministers from the banks. The combination of reward and punishment provided a powerful cocktail and achieved the desired result. Decisions of this magnitude could not be left to chance, the angles had to be researched and covered in advance of the attack to ensure success. When gentle persuasion, bribery or blackmail failed to achieve the desired result, somewhat more drastic options were employed.<sup>87</sup> When it became evident that there were elements within the parliament who would remain loyal to their Francoist tendencies and would vote against the bill, they were simply removed from the equation. This may well seem somewhat unconventional at best and downright unethical at worst, but there is a feeling of justification about it in the literature, a sense that the reform would be achieved by any means necessary.<sup>88</sup> Spain was on a path to democracy and the foundations had been meticulously planned and executed by the primary actors. The removal of dissident elements should be viewed as an additional political manoeuvre and not a betrayal of the democratic principals that the transition was attempting to instill. The crucial factor remains that control was never relinquished by the primary actors.

The introduction of the bill was a closely monitored affair, from inception, to its presentation to the Cortes, to its successful conclusion. Fernández-Miranda's role was much less public than he deserved but the necessity to award ownership of the bill to Suárez, the face of democracy in Spain, overrode personal considerations. All efforts were made to guarantee the successful passage of the bill through Cortes on 16 November, including the eliciting of support from individuals closely associated with

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PCE (Partido Comunista de España) leader's anxiety to be near the levers of power and secured his backing for an austerity package." (Huntington 1991/2, 600).

<sup>87</sup> "Powell also claims that 'negotiations' of a very different kind also took place': "Some procuradores were threatened with scandals of an economic and sexual nature in order to guarantee their support for the government." (Powell 1991, 200).

<sup>88</sup> "With the exception of sleeping with them, we did everything we could." Testimony from Suárez to <Seminario sobre la transición política española>, Fundación José Ortega y Gasset, Toledo, mayo de 1984. Victoria Prego, *Así se hizo la Transición*, p.556. Testimony by Martín Villa to the author. (Translated from original by author).

the old regime, chief of which was Miguel Primo de Rivera<sup>89</sup>. While the involvement of Miguel Primo de Rivera did not placate all involved, it did go some way to ensuring the bill was at least considered in kind. The conclusion of the process was naturally the vote before the Cortes and the required ratification of the bill.<sup>90</sup> In essence, the issue of the reform bill was the pivotal one of the transition as without its acceptance by the Cortes, all the preparation and subsequent plans for future democratic development would have been destroyed.

The voting style was changed in order to create the appearance of a free and democratic practice. This may well have been the stated justification but it also had an additional consequence, it would become immediately obvious who had voted both in favour of, and against the reform bill. This may not seem all that relevant but in light of the violence and civil unrest in the country at the time and coupled with the assassination of Carrero Blanco, an event that had shattered the illusion of Francoist invulnerability<sup>91</sup>, it was an important factor indeed.<sup>92</sup> Coercion of individuals had fallen short of a successful outcome but the pressure of external factors and the potential repercussions from an unsatisfactory decision were to play a decisive role.

The vote itself took place on 18 November 1976 after 19 hours and 37 minutes of debate.<sup>93</sup> While there appears to be some discrepancy between the actual recorded

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<sup>89</sup> "Miguel Primo de Rivera, a close friend of the King, was nominated by Fernández-Miranda due to the weight his name carried and for his will to reform, defended the necessity to move from 'a personal regime to one of participation, without ruptures or violence', which involved 'creating a new constitution based upon the legality of the prevailing constitution'." (Powell 2001, 168), (Preston 2004), (Moran 1979). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>90</sup> "The object of the Law, although not exclusively, was to create a new procedure for constitutional reform that would be immediately applicable." (Hernández-Gil 1982, 128). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>91</sup> Information on the assassination of Carrero Blanco and the repercussions for Spain can be found in (Preston 2004), (Preston 1986), (Morán 1979), (Vilallonga 1993), (Powell 2001).

<sup>92</sup> "The assassination of the prime minister, Luis Carrero Blanco, in the final years of the Franquist regime, made it clear that demands for restructuring the Spanish state would have to be addressed." (Gunther 1992, 47).

<sup>93</sup> Figures courtesy of (Soto 1998), (Morán 1979).



result with it varying from 438 in favour, 2 against and 57 abstentions<sup>94</sup> to 425 in favour, 59 against and 13 abstentions<sup>95</sup> a clear two thirds majority was not only reached but surpassed with resounding consequences.<sup>96</sup> The truly interesting element of this process is, not so much that Suárez and Fernández-Miranda were able to initiate reform but that the vote was finally passed.<sup>97</sup> There was no precedent for this and yet it was a resounding success in the face of overwhelming odds. The decision did not go uncontested however and the government was to experience a substantial backlash to the aims at reform as is summed up by the following quote. "With a disgraceful administrative decision – he raged – you have reversed forty years of Spanish history, you have destroyed the calm in Spain, you have provoked the Army, you have created an uncertain future for our children."<sup>98</sup> The reaction was to take the somewhat predictable format associated with countries of traditionally authoritarian rule, namely that of military action.

The transition up to this point had experienced some turbulence, increased levels of violence with Spain, coupled with an economic downturn and stagnation of the Centre Democratic Union (UCD) had led to an undercurrent of unrest within the country and a shift in the power structure. The UCD, under the leadership of Adolfo

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<sup>94</sup> (Prego 2000, 46)

<sup>95</sup> (Powell 2001, 171 and Morán 1979, 314)

<sup>96</sup> "In rapid succession other crucial reforms were enacted: Hundreds of political prisoners were granted pardons in July 1976 and March 1977; the Movimiento was disbanded and political parties were legalized; the vertical labour syndicates were abolished and replaced by independent trade unions; an electoral law that set the rules for electoral competition was passed that was regarded as acceptable by both left-wing and right-wing political parties; despite fierce opposition from certain sectors of the military, the PCE was admitted as a legitimate contender in the new political arena; and democratic elections were scheduled for June 1977." (Gunther 1992, 48).

<sup>97</sup> "Successful democratic consolidation in Spain was primarily the product of a profound transformation of Spain's political elites from disunity into consensual unity. For the most part, this transformation involved the processes of an elite settlement. All significant nationwide political parties were induced to acknowledge the legitimacy of the regime's institutions and respect for its behavioural norms through extensive rounds of negotiation from the second half of 1976 through the end of 1978, culminating in the overwhelming endorsement of the new constitution in the December 1978 referendum." (Gunther 1992, 40).

<sup>98</sup> (Calvo Sotelo, L. 1990, 19). This is taken from a conversation between Fraga and Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo on April 9<sup>th</sup> 1977 and was Fraga's response to the legalization of the PCE by the Spanish Government. (Translated from original by author).

Suárez, had guided Spain through a difficult and sensitive period in the transition but it was becoming increasingly apparent that the burden of leadership was taking its toll on the prime minister and cracks were beginning to show. These cracks will be examined below in more detail and it will become evident that a vacuum of sorts was created in the power structure and that this provided the opportunity for various groups to assert their influence.

Juan Carlos and Adolfo Suárez had managed to effect change largely due to a sense of control and dominance that they were able to exert on various factions of Spanish political life. Political wrangling and strength of personal character had enabled the election of Suárez, while institutional reform from within had played a vital role in rendering the Cortes an instrument of democratic reform rather than an antiquated Francoist dinosaur. Control was maintained and change made possible as long as those involved believed in the supremacy and authority of the government, and by extension, Suárez. As soon as the weaknesses were exposed and the curtain pulled back, the aura of invincibility was exposed.<sup>99</sup> From the perspective of Juan Carlos and those involved in the democratic reform process, it was imperative that the semblance of authority was maintained in order to successfully govern during what was becoming an increasingly more turbulent time for Spain. The country was newly democratised, lacked a comprehensive democratic political sphere, faced threats from regions demanding autonomy and was under siege by the ever-increasing spread of terrorism.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> "The impression prevalent during the autumn of 1980 to the winter of 1981 was that democracy would collapse and that a substantial part of it would disintegrate due to the inability of those publicly responsible – paid and subsidised by contributions- to sustain the institutions of the system and ensure they functioned correctly." (Vilar 1986, 89). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>100</sup> For a more comprehensive list of problems facing Spain at this time see Preston (2004, 444).



There was no single contributing factor<sup>101</sup> that led to the coup taking place in 1981, rather a collection of events and circumstances that came to a head on 23 February.

The reduction in Suárez's authority resulted from the inability to adapt to the changes of the system he had helped to create. In essence, he had become too distanced from the process itself, too representative of it while failing to remain as connected as in the past. This in turn led to a general weakening of the system as Adolfo Suárez had become the recognizable face of democratic transition and any weakness he exhibited, was naturally associated to the government and the process of reform itself. Given the fragility of the system, this was an unacceptable reality for Juan Carlos to accept. Evidence suggests that notions of a military conspiracy existed from 1980 and that the establishment were aware of this threat.<sup>102</sup> If this is indeed true then it is logical to assume that the establishment was taking the necessary steps to avoid such an eventuality.

The summer of 1979 saw increased levels of terrorism in Spain and a more profound feeling of unrest than had been experienced thus far. Public opinion was changing, as was the nature of democratic governance itself. The honeymoon period of transition was over and the real process of consolidation had begun, and with it surfaced all the problems and weaknesses that had been overlooked, or simply not dealt with, in the desire to establish democracy in Spain.<sup>103</sup> The face of political debate was changing as a result of popular sway. The UCD began to lose some of the control it had achieved when it won 167 seats in the election of 1 March 1979. On the final day of

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<sup>101</sup> "There was no one cause, no one force, no single dynamic that unleashed irrationality...of that there can be no doubt." (Vilar 1986, 90). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>102</sup> "Whatever the intelligence services may have been doing in the shadows, talk of the 'Turkish temptation' and the 'Ankara syndrome' became commonplace in the media and the corridors of parliament. Coming on top of the rumours about General Armada's *Operación De Gaulle*, both Manuel Fraga and Felipe Gonzalez were sufficiently worried to tell the King of their readiness to join in a caretaker coalition government if the situation became sufficiently serious." (Preston 2004, 450).

<sup>103</sup> "Most commentators are agreed that after the 1979 election the period of consensus politics ended and a more confrontational phase began." (Gilmour 1999, 181).

campaigning, Suárez had declared that the UCD offered the Christian humanist alternative to Marxist socialist materialism. In so doing, the UCD began to move towards the right and provided the necessary room to manoeuvre for the Socialist Party. Between 1979 and 1982, the Socialists (PSOE) and their leader, Felipe González, gained support after eliminating their outdated Marxist association. An alternative to the UCD was beginning to demonstrate its potential and relevance to the political process.<sup>104</sup>

The inability of Suárez to respond to the challenge presented by political parties such as PSOE and his failure to safeguard his position of authority led to his downfall. Suárez's period in office had been plagued by terrorism, street crime, inflation and unemployment and in addition, attacks from the Socialists led to the disintegration of the UCD coalition. 'Internal divisions, the impression of incapacity and inactivity, together with a number of tactical errors contributed to a series of damaging reverses for UCD in regional elections in Andalusia, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia. By the spring of 1980, the prime minister faced a major credibility problem.'<sup>105</sup> While problems such as terrorism and street crime face many prime ministers, the manner in which Suárez saw fit to respond did nothing to support his claim to power.<sup>106</sup> The major problem that faced Suárez and as a result, Juan Carlos, was a popular feeling of *desgobierno*, a complete lack of guidance and governance. Suárez was criticised for his notable absence from cabinet meetings and his reluctance to face parliament and yet his actions when he was present came under equal criticism as can be seen by his response

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<sup>104</sup> "The UCD was truly the party of the transition. Once the Constitution of 1978 had come into force and the first Cortes had been elected in 1979, the centripetal force that had kept the pieces of the UCD together had dissolved." (Ramón Arango 1985, 167).

<sup>105</sup> (Preston 2004, 440), (Martín Villa 1984, 90), (*El País*, 18 February, 2, 3, 22 March 1980).

<sup>106</sup> "In part he seemed to be trying to defuse the situation by treating ETA as if it were no more than a minor irritant and by ignoring the fact that the extreme right was virtually on a military footing. To most observers, however, it appeared as if his government had lost its sense of direction." (Preston 2004, 441).



to the spate of killings by ETA between 23 October and 3 November 1980.<sup>107</sup> It appeared that neither his presence nor his absence elicited a positive response.

The growing discontentment with Suárez, the increased levels of violence and the inner turmoil of the political spectrum created an atmosphere of potential danger for the establishment. The rise of the left was to create additional problems for the establishment. Given the nature of the previous regime and the continued existence and influence of the Francoist Bunker, the left wing had been suppressed and denied legitimacy from the outset of the transition process.<sup>108</sup> There had been little dialogue between the Communist Party (PCE) and the monarch and yet this would change<sup>109</sup>, and with this change would come resentment and repercussions. The legalization of the PCE and the ever-increasing popularity of the socialist leader, Felipe González, may well have been interpreted by the Bunker as a direct affront to their Francoist understanding of societal structure. Bearing this in mind, the establishment needed to devote time and energy to both suppressing the military threat and to once more giving direction and authority to the government.

The manner in which the establishment sought to control the game was a two-pronged effort. Juan Carlos used his influence with the military; a factor that was to be incredibly relevant and will be examined in greater detail below, and the issue of the prime minister was to come to the front. On 6 January 1981 the King delivered his New Year message to the Armed Forces at the *Pascua Militar* reception in the Palacio de

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<sup>107</sup> "On 23 October 1980...48 children and three adults were killed in an accidental propane gas explosion at the village school of Ortuella in Vizcaya. On the same day, ETA-M assassinated three Basque members of UCD. Whatever his real feelings, Suárez responded with what seemed like callous indifference. He made no parliamentary statement about either the disaster or the terrorist attacks. Nor did he visit the stricken village and he stayed away from the funerals of his party colleagues." (Preston 2004, 448). (*El País*, 24, 25, 26 October 1980), (*Cambio* 16, 3 November 1980).

<sup>108</sup> "Officially at least, the position of the government in relation to the PCE was identical to that of its predecessor, in that it was considered as a party incapable of becoming legalized." (Powell 2001, 163). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>109</sup> "Don Juan Carlos was fully aware that the consolidation of the Monarchy required acceptance by the left, and especially by the party that had become internationally associated as the legitimate representative of Spanish socialism." (Powell 1991, 153). (Translated from original by author).

Oriente. Juan Carlos made it very clear that he would approve no 'conspiratorial activity'. A clear message was given to the military that their involvement in the political forum would not be supported nor condoned by the King.

"Happiness is total commitment to duty, with enthusiasm and dedication and no inclination to get involved in political activities other than that elevated endeavour which interest us all, the grand endeavour of the greatness of Spain and the permanent vigilance of its security.... If you stay united, committed to your profession, respectful of the constitutional norms on which our rule of law is based, with faith and confidence in your superiors and your Commander-in-Chief, and inspired always by hope and optimism, together we will overcome the difficulties inherent in any period of transition."<sup>110</sup>

The language used in the speech quoted above gives the impression of authority and common purpose and was designed to harness the support of the armed forces. Juan Carlos had made similar speeches previously and therefore, his thoughts on this matter were well documented.

Juan Carlos met with Suárez on 4 January and while the exact nature of their discussion is not known, Preston (2004) believes they would have discussed the rumours surrounding a planned military coup and the ways in which it could be pre-empted by forming a coalition government. The notion of a coalition government was not a new one and it was to form the basis for the strategy of the opposition to the establishment and will be examined in greater detail below. Speculation at the time assumed Juan Carlos had spoken to Suárez about the benefits that could be reaped from the resignation of the prime minister. While this has not been confirmed, it stands to reason that a logical analysis of the time would dictate this as a prudent course of action. Later incidents lead us to believe that the subsequent resignation of Suárez was a

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<sup>110</sup> Extract taken from Royal Message delivered on January 6<sup>th</sup> 1981. (Preston 2004, 453), (Vilar 1986, 98-9), (Urbano 1982, 52-5), (Morales & Celada 1981, 125-6), (*El País*, 7 January 1981).



voluntary act and not one that resulted from external pressure.<sup>111</sup> The official announcement of the resignation of Suárez was to come in a television broadcast on 29 January and was to send waves of speculation through Spanish society. The ultra-right took his resignation as a victory believing the King and the Army generals had forced him into the decision<sup>112</sup> while other opinion viewed his resignation as a response to the threat of military intervention. This latter opinion was given credence by a single line in Suárez's resignation broadcast. "I do not want to be responsible for the democratic regime of coexistence being once more a parenthesis in the history of Spain." Whatever the true reason behind the resignation Suárez, it had been an element of inevitability for some time and was to mark the start of a new period in the Spanish transition.

At the UCD party conference in Malaga on 29 January Suárez announced his resignation to his party and "urged them to remain a centrist party as to do otherwise would betray the voters' confidence in the party."<sup>113</sup> After some debate, the conservative-centrist candidate Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo was nominated to succeed Suárez as prime minister, Juan Carlos approved his nomination and a vote was scheduled for 10 February in order for his nomination to be ratified by the Cortes. The establishment had played their hand well, a clear message had been sent to the military, Suárez had resigned and opened the path for a new prime minister and there was an air of expectancy about the situation. Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo remarked, in relation to Adolfo Suárez, in his nomination acceptance speech that "with his retirement, the

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<sup>111</sup> "Whatever the truth of the matter, on the following day (Jan 27<sup>th</sup>) Suárez lunched with the King at La Zarzuela. Before entering Juan Carlos's office, he informed General Sabino Fernández Campo of his decision. He wanted there to be no suspicion that any suggestion of his resignation had emanated from the King, saying, "No matter what happens, I want you always to be my witness and be able to say no one sacked me." (Preston 2004, 456-7), (Attard 1983, 190-1), (Fernández-López 1998, 160).

<sup>112</sup> For further information: (*El País*, 30 January 1981), (*El Alcázar*, 30 January 1981), (*Diario 16*, 30 January 1981), (Oneto 1981, 113,119,152), (Meliá 1981, 74-5), (Calvo Sotelo 1990, 24-32), (Prego 2000, 105-10), (Navarro 1995, 366-9).

<sup>113</sup> This is told in greater detail in (Ramón Arango 1985, 169-71).

transition ended.”<sup>114</sup> Further problems were to ensue when the vote that took place on 20 February was not a success and Calvo Sotelo did not receive sufficient votes to be sworn in as prime minister<sup>115</sup> and a second vote was scheduled for 23 February. This was a blow for both Juan Carlos and the continuity of the system itself. The first vote had demonstrated a lack of confidence in Calvo Sotelo as the candidate for prime minister and was to provide the military and illegal opposition with the ideal opportunity to exploit the situation to their advantage.

The faction within Spanish society at this time that desired change were well represented by high-ranking officials and influential men. While the depth and breadth of the conspiracy is still not known to this day, it is viable to claim that the power base enjoyed by the opposition was sufficient to mobilise the necessary forces needed for change to be exacted. As has been mentioned above, the main focus of the opposition was the leadership of the Cortes and by extension, the very nature of government itself. The opposition also followed a two-pronged strategy in order to ensure success. The main objectives were gaining control of the government and eliciting the support of Juan Carlos. The latter was fundamental to their success and can be seen as a remnant of the Francoist command structure so indoctrinated in Spanish military life. Among the conspirators were high-ranking military leaders<sup>116</sup> and so the possibility of using Marshall Law was a reality.

The two-pronged strategy can be seen as a viable option as it incorporated both political negotiation and the demonstration of military force. The opposition needed

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<sup>114</sup> (Calvo Sotelo 1990, 36). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>115</sup> “After presenting his agenda for the government before the *Congreso de los Diputados* on 20 February, the candidate received only 169 votes in favour and 158 votes against, leaving him seven votes shy of an absolute majority, forcing the convening of another session, scheduled for three days later, to ensure his investiture by a simple majority.” (Powell 2001, 292), (Alonso-Castrillo 1996, 433-4). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>116</sup> Captain-General Milans del Bosch, Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero, Lieutenant-Colonel Pedro Mas Oliver, General Carlos Iniesta Cano, General Manuel Cabeza Calahorra and General Luis Torres Rojas were among the more prominent members.



legitimacy for their actions and expected this to come from the person of Juan Carlos. The logical analysis of possible outcomes provides the opportunity for the establishment of an authoritarian monarchy to be set up with a military representative at the head of the government. The situation in Spain was conducive to change of some description; the increasing levels of violence that had gone unanswered and the decline of the economy were used as validation for the actions of the opposition. There is still speculation as to the true cause and origin of the conspiracy that led to the attempted coup but the fact that it existed and was able to go as far as it did, speaks volumes about the nature of the transition process in Spain. General Alfonso Armada headed the political side of the conspiracy<sup>117</sup>.

Armada enjoyed a close friendship with Juan Carlos, as demonstrated by his appointment as head of military intelligence on 3 February at the King's request. This appointment was designed to create an ally for Juan Carlos to have at his side in the light of the potential military threat but was ultimately used by Armada to the advantage of himself and the conspirators. Armada met with Juan Carlos several times in the build up to the attempted coup (23-F) and was able to put forward the case and position of the conspirators without actually declaring it thus to the extent that in the 'summer of 1980 Armada had presented Juan Carlos with a report drawn up by an unnamed constitutional lawyer, examining legal ways of resolving the situation with a coalition possibly headed by a soldier.'<sup>118</sup> The notion of a coalition government was not solely held by Armada at this point but was increasingly becoming a viable option to guarantee the continued

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<sup>117</sup> "At the beginning of 1980, Armada had moved from the *Escuela Superior del Ejército* to become Military Governor of Lérida. Increasingly, he had concluded that the solution to what he, and other generals, regarded as an intolerable situation was a non-violent substitution of UCD by a government of national salvation under his own premiership. On 22 October, at a lunch in the home of the Socialist Mayor of Lérida, Antonio Ciurana, Armada went so far as to broach his ideas with two Socialists...they immediately informed Felipe González and he duly passed on the information to Suárez. As a result of the conversations that day, however, Armada seems to have convinced himself that he could count on the support of the Socialists for his scheme." (Preston 2004, 446-7). (Armada 1983, 216, 223-7), (Morales & Celada 1982, 122-5), (Urbano 1982, 232-5)

<sup>118</sup> (Preston 2004).

existence of a functioning government. The manner in which Armada went about his negotiations with Juan Carlos can be interpreted as a legitimate response to the troubles of the times and in an advisory capacity. At this stage, the conspirators were presenting an alternative to the existing establishment with no threat of violence. The fact that there was a current underlying threat of a military coup can only have lent weight to the urgency of their argument.

Armada did not rely solely on his own influence on Juan Carlos but employed various other aspects of persuasion. After the resignation of Suárez and the opening of the political forum, it became increasingly possible that a coalition would be formed in order to preserve the authority of the government. Two days after Suárez's resignation broadcast, an article, written by the influential right-wing columnist Emilio Romero, was published in *ABC* discussing the options open to Juan Carlos to resolve the succession to Suárez. Romero suggested that rather than choosing another politician, the King should consider 'the idea of a politically blessed outsider' and proceeded to suggest the name of General Armada.<sup>119</sup> Given the nature of the friendship between Romero and Armada, the article can well be viewed as a further tool of persuasion. It has been demonstrated that Armada used a combination of personal negotiation and external populist pressure to gain the support of Juan Carlos, to this he would now add strength.

On 17 November Armada met with the Captain-General of the Valencia Military Region, Jaime Milans del Bosch. Both men were monarchists and had been friends since serving together on the Russian front. Armada was able to use this friendship to manipulate Milans to join efforts with him. Preston states that Armada told Milans that 'The King is worried about the situation in Spain. Things are going badly. Terrorism is

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<sup>119</sup> Story told in greater detail in (Preston 2004, 458), ('*Las tertulias de Madrid*', *ABC*, 31 January 1981).



shedding the blood of the Armed Forces and the autonomous regions are destroying our national unity'.<sup>120</sup> He also alluded that there was plenty Milans could be doing to help as Juan Carlos had confided his worries and spoken of the need to solve the problem of violence.<sup>121</sup> This was merely an elaboration and to a certain extent, fabrication, of conversations that had taken place between Armada and Juan Carlos and when we contrast this to earlier speeches by the King<sup>122</sup>, it is difficult to see how Milans would have been fooled. This is even more of a stretch when we take into account that Juan Carlos can be seen to have actively avoided Milans during this time, and certainly did not ask for his help.

The inability of Milans to see the reality of the situation is not the issue here however; the strategy now had a military element to it. Milans was in favour of a violent coup and Armada's assurances that they had the King's approval to 'redirect' an event of this nature to their benefit, coupled with his recent promotion were sufficient to convince Milans of the merit of his strategy. The plan was to storm the Cortes and seize control of the political structure and wait for the appropriate authority to arrive and take charge. This initiative would be supported by the activation of the military factions in Spain and the implementation of Marshall Law until such time as full control was obtained. Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero<sup>123</sup> was responsible for the storming of the *Cortes* and even as this took place, Armada was still negotiating with Juan Carlos for political legitimacy.

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<sup>120</sup> (Preston 2004, 451).

<sup>121</sup> Also see: (Segura & Merino 1983, 53-6), (Pardo Zancada 1998, 174-5).

<sup>122</sup> "In no circumstances should they rely on me to cover the slightest act against a constitutional government like ours. Such actions, if they took place, I told them, would be considered by the King as a direct attack on the crown." Speech given by Juan Carlos to a number of senior generals in the aftermath of the assassinations of October 31<sup>st</sup>. (Preston 2004, 448), (Vilallonga 1993, 166-7), (Semprún 1993, 194).

<sup>123</sup> "Tejero had also been told by Armada that they were involved in an 'operation backed by the His Majesty the King to strengthen the monarchy' and ordered him to stress when he entered the Cortes that he was doing so in the name of the King, the crown and democracy." (Preston 2004, 466)

At 6:25 p.m. on Monday 23 February 1981, a contingent of Civil Guards commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero stormed into Parliament while MPs were voting the investiture of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo. The ceremony was being broadcast live on television and therefore word spread immediately. Armada, denied the opportunity to be present at La Zarzuela by Juan Carlos, lobbied for the opportunity to go to *Cortes* to negotiate with Tejero. One last attempt was being made to secure the position of prime minister. The final nail in the coffin came when Armada was finally allowed to speak to Tejero under the understanding that he was the only man with whom Tejero would negotiate. What should have culminated in the proposal for a new government by Armada to the Cortes, was thwarted by Tejero's realisation that the new cabinet would contain both Socialists and Communists and that Armada would reap the benefits of the coup while he would become the scapegoat. The opposition's failure lay in the lack of cohesion amongst its members. It became evident as the night progressed that Armada had been acting without the direct approval of the King and that his agenda did not necessarily correspond to that of the initial concept behind the coup. 23-F failed largely due to the inability of the opposition to mount a unified challenge to the existing structure. Despite the obvious weaknesses of the system prior to the coup and the potential for upheaval that were rife at this time, the democratic system withstood the attack.

The establishment was able to contain matters, thanks in large part to the involvement of Juan Carlos during the night of 23-F. The following extract is taken from the speech delivered by Juan Carlos at 1:13 a.m. on the morning of 24 February and was to prove instrumental in re-establishing order and calm:



"In addressing myself to all the people of Spain, with brevity and concision, in the unusual circumstances through which we are living at this moment, I ask from all of you the utmost serenity and confidence and inform you that I have issued the following orders to the Captains-General of the Military Regions, Maritime Zones and Aerial Regions: 'Given the situation created by what has been happening in the Parliament, and in order to avoid any confusion whatsoever, I confirm that I have ordered the Civil Authorities and the Junta of Chiefs of Staff to take whatever steps are necessary to guarantee constitutional order within the legal framework currently in force. Whatever military measures may have to be taken in due course must have the approval of the Junta of the Chiefs of Staff. The Crown, symbol of the permanence and unity of the Fatherland, cannot possibly tolerate actions or attitudes by persons hoping to interrupt by force the democratic process determined by the Constitution which, in its day, the nation endorsed by referendum.'"<sup>124</sup>

Juan Carlos was able to gain control of the situation quickly and effectively, rally his supporters, reassure the population at large and prevent a military coup almost by force of will alone. The ultimate irony of the attempted coup lays in the fact that Juan Carlos' power and authority came, not from his democratic stance, but rather from the powers invested to him by Franco. The Armed Forces followed his lead due to loyalty to the position of Commander-in-Chief rather than to the man himself. The opposition and most certainly the military components of it were ultimately defeated in their attempts by the very system that they adhered to.<sup>125</sup> 23-F can be seen less as a political coup than as an internal power struggle among chiefs with victory going to the most powerful. Juan Carlos was able to avert the coup because of military control and position rather than in the name of democracy itself.

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<sup>124</sup> (Gibson 1992, 63).

<sup>125</sup> "One important study (Agüero 1991) concludes that consolidation of the Spanish constitutional monarchy was secured at that time, as virtually the entire military hierarchy joined the procedural consensus in support of the system. Agüero argues that one of the most important factors in securing the supremacy of civilian political elites over the military in democratic transitions is the absence of semiloyal or antisystem political party elites who call upon the military for support in the course of partisan conflicts. Instead, the attempted coup of 1981 met with solid opposition from all political parties. This was most clearly symbolized in the course of the coup when the leader of the right-wing Alianza popular and former Franquist minister Manuel Fraga Iribarne melodramatically stood up in the Cortes and dared his captors to begin by shooting him if they were serious about overthrowing Spanish democracy. The complete loyalty to the new regime of Alianza Popular denied the conspirators of the kind of civilian allies often necessary for the overthrow of democratic regimes." (Gunther 1992, 39).

This poses many questions about the nature of democracy within an actual transition process and posits that a strong influence must be maintained until all semblance of a threat is removed. The result of the attempted coup was the opposite of its aim<sup>126</sup>. Democracy appeared to have triumphed due to the end result but the actual process that led to this triumph was far from democratic in nature. The Spanish case, and in particular, the events leading up to and including 23-F, demonstrate that the action and decisions taken during a transition period represent the foundation for the nature of democracy to come and that ultimately, the process of a democratic transition can be far from democratic in essence until the process has moved from that of transition to consolidation and for this very reason, bear closer scrutiny and analysis.

The aftermath of the attempted coup served to stabilise the country to a certain extent and created a desire to reform that had hitherto not become fully crystallised.<sup>127</sup> The violence inherent in the night of 23-F harkened back to memories of the bloody second republic and the Civil War. In this sense, a direct attack upon the fragile democracy in Spain had failed in its objectives and demonstrated the capability for survival and development of the new government. Inevitably, the aftermath of the attempted coup also brought with it feelings of revenge and rumours of a 'cover-up' regarding the conspirators themselves. There were far from many suspects in custody and the level of comfort in which they were detained prior to the trial led people to believe that no punishment would be doled out to the *golpistas*.<sup>128</sup> In addition to this unrest, the government was pressing for rapid entry into NATO and attempting to curry

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<sup>126</sup> "The attempted coup merely served to strengthen the new democratic system rather than undermine it. It brought the politicians closer together than before, turned right-wingers like Fraga into staunch defenders of the new Constitution and created an even greater gulf between him and the extreme right." (Gilmour 1999, 192).

<sup>127</sup> "In a way that went far beyond the cabinet, the survival of democracy on the night of 23 February marked a new beginning. The mass demonstrations of 27 February marked the end of the *desencanto* (disenchantment). The contempt for democracy shown by Tejero, Milans and Armada had the inadvertent effect of obliging the population as a whole to reassess the value of their democratic institutions." (Preston 2004, 489).

<sup>128</sup> ABC, 12 April; *Cambio* 16, 20 April 1981; (Morales and Celada 1982, 166-8).



the favour of the military in the event that the increased level of terrorism escalated once more. For some time after the attempted coup, there still existed rumours of potential military involvement in the democratic process. The issue of the military was to remain at the forefront of both the government's and Juan Carlos's thoughts but progress of sorts had been made.<sup>129</sup>

In October 1981, Juan Carlos and his wife Sofia made an official visit to the United States. In many ways, this was a prudent decision at this time, in addition to cementing external relations between Spain and America; it gave Juan Carlos the ideal opportunity to lobby for Spain's admission to NATO. This in itself would serve more than one purpose; inclusion in NATO would pave the way for eventual membership into the EEC and it would deflect the attention of the military away from domestic affairs. Over the ensuing months, there would continue to be a threat of sorts from the military with the attempt to implicate Juan Carlos in the attempted coup. While these were eventually dealt with and the military issue reined in, the political climate was far from controlled.

The UCD party began to lose its foothold in the political arena and to fall apart from within. There are those who argue that this process began with the resignation of Adolfo Suárez and became an inevitable turn of events given the platform of the party and the situation in which it was operating.<sup>130</sup> Calvo Sotelo did not possess the force of will to hold together the government and the natural decline of UCD, coupled with the rapid rise of the PSOE only served to weaken the position of the government further and ultimately resulted in the announcement that he would not be UCD's presidential

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<sup>129</sup> "In the aftermath of the coup's failure there was a significant expansion in the scope of elite consensual unity, as those military officers previously ambiguous in their commitment to the new democratic regime abandoned all expectations that an alternative form of government was possible or desirable." (Gunther 1992, 39).

<sup>130</sup> "UCD was never a real party, it did not manage to institutionalize itself as such, and its successes depended upon the external leadership of Adolfo Suárez during a particular period, but once this had failed, it collapsed rapidly and with great ease." (Soto 1998, 92). (Translated from original by author).

candidate for the 1982 elections.<sup>131</sup> A definite shift in Spanish politics had begun as the PSOE focused their platform on the stimulation of employment, the reform of Spain's cumbersome civil service and the development of a more positive and independent foreign policy. Much attention was focused on the promise to create 800,000 new jobs and an aura of expectancy was evident.<sup>132</sup>

The elections were held on 28 October 1982 and resulted in a 79.78% turnout of voters, marking the highest thus far in an election in Spain and as such represent an integral part of any historical narrative of the transition.<sup>133</sup> The massive turnout served not only to cement the desire of the population to be involved in the democratic process but also 'made it impossible for officers to claim that the military subversives interpreted the national will.'<sup>134</sup> The Socialists received 47.26% of the votes and 202 seats. *Alianza Popular* came second with 25.89% and 107 deputies and UCD was reduced to 6.17% of the vote and only 11 deputies.<sup>135</sup> This vote provided Spain with its first Socialist government and began the process of democratic consolidation. While there existed a myriad of tasks facing the PSOE leader, Felipe González, the manner in which his party had won the election meant that they were able to govern alone without the necessity of forming a coalition within parliament. This was to be an important factor in the development of a strong and consolidated democratic state and as such, marked the true start of the consolidation process and with it, the definitive end to the struggle for control between the traditional establishment and the reformist contingent.

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<sup>131</sup> *El País*, 31 July; *Cambio 16*, 26 July, 2 August 1982.

<sup>132</sup> (Preston 2004, 500).

<sup>133</sup> "There are those who believe the transition ended with the ratification of the constitution. But it would appear more prudent to prolong this until the PSOE's victory on the 28 October 1982, as during those years events took place congruent with a period of transition, such as the failed coup d'état of 23F, the collapse of the UCD, the construction of the democratic State and the success of the autonomy process." (Soto 1998, 92). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>134</sup> (Preston 2004).

<sup>135</sup> Election figures taken from: (Muñoz Alonso, 1984), (Preston 2004, 502), (Soto 1998, 112-3), *El País*, 29, 30 October; *Cambio 16*, 1 November 1982.



The Spanish transition can be seen to have started at many points during the history presented above, and equally can be seen to have ended at various junctures. What has been provided above is an attempt to outline the timeframe in which my subsequent analysis takes place. Not all events have been covered and those that have, in no great detail. Sufficient literature exists to negate the need for any greater detail to be provided, but this chapter demonstrates the necessity for the illustration of those factors that contributed to the transition to be included in any attempt at a comprehensive analysis of Spain's democratic transition.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Constructing the Theoretical Framework: Analysis of suitable approaches**



*"The one great thing we have going for us is the premise that individuals act rationally in trying to satisfy their preferences. That is an incredibly powerful tool, because you can model it."*<sup>136</sup>

This chapter provides the theoretical underpinning to the contextual element of the thesis. Four key events from the Spanish transition have been chosen for detailed analysis, and given the varied nature of these events in respect to each other; a pool of equally varied theoretical tools is required. The theoretical approaches were selected as they provide a more comprehensive understanding of the period as a whole, through the analysis of individual events. The aim of this chapter is to not only eliminate the need for constant redefinition and elaboration of my working terminology throughout the body of the text, but also to provide the reader with a working basis with which to ground the theoretical applications that will follow.

There exists an extensive collection of applicable theoretical approaches for dealing with democratic transitions and therefore the challenge was to reduce this list to a manageable and useful selection, in order to create, not only an original piece of work, but also a coherent one. Approaches that were of limited use have been excluded from the analytical framework presented in this thesis in an attempt to further codify the explanatory power available in regards to democratic transitions. The greater the simplicity of the model employed, the greater the possibility of increased development in the field of political science.

The approaches selected, and the reasons for this selection, are as follows. The nature of this thesis requires that an attempt be made to explain not only 'how', but also 'why' certain actions were chosen and consequently, why others were disregarded.

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<sup>136</sup> The above quote is taken from Charles Schultze, the former President of the American Economic Association. (Kuttner 1985, 75).

While it must also be made clear that no infallible predictive power exists in this field, it is possible to, through investigation based on analysis of available data, with a fairly high degree of accuracy as to the expected outcome of events and in turn, explain the sequence of events via a process of reverse-engineering. The approaches selected for this thesis enable the questions raised above to be tackled and deconstructed in a manner that provides additional understanding into the Spanish transition to democracy. The approaches are outlined below:

## Rational Choice Theory

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) has provided much of the basis for analysis in this thesis. The underpinnings of RCT are fundamentally straightforward, and for this reason, intrinsically valuable to the questions addressed in this work.<sup>137</sup> The clear-cut and, to a certain extent, simplistic nature of RCT is evident in the name itself. RCT provides an all-encompassing term to explain the motivations behind human action and decision making. A fundamental interpretation of RCT sees human action primarily in economic terms<sup>138</sup> and subsequent analysis of actions is therefore analysed accordingly. If we view RCT in this light, it becomes increasingly clear that decisions are made based upon a system of maximising returns that will produce the most desired outcome

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<sup>137</sup> "The theory of rational choice is, before it is anything else, a normative theory. It tells us what we ought to do in order to achieve our aims as well as possible. It does not tell us what our aims ought to be." (Elster 1986, 1).

<sup>138</sup> "The fundamental core of RCT is that social interaction is basically an economic transaction that is guided in its course by the actor's rational choices among alternative outcomes. An action is taken only after its benefits and costs have been weighed. Essentially, an actor will choose an action rationally, based on a hierarchy of preferences (values, utilities), that promises to maximise benefits and minimise costs, or more precisely, that promises a net gain of benefits minus costs, or still more precisely, that promises the highest net benefit to the actor and the highest probability of its occurrence." (Zey 1998, 2).



for those involved in the decision process.<sup>139</sup> The implicit reality of the previous statement creates an inherent structure to RCT that in turn generates a predictive and explanatory capacity vital for the understanding of certain political processes.

RCT can be seen to rest upon very simple assumptions about the nature of choice and decision making in general.<sup>140</sup> Choice represents that which we do, desire represents that which we prefer and logic is the tool that connects these two together. This aspect of RCT dates back to the time of Aristotle<sup>141</sup> and has largely remained unchanged as a result of its intimate connection to the fundamental core of human behaviour and decision making. The true applicability for this analytical tool becomes apparent when we are able to analyse and examine real life situations using the above formula and therefore create greater understanding of events. The ability to interpret and situate decisions, which on the surface may appear firmly grounded in human nature, within a rationally orientated framework increases our ability to understand decision making and the contributing motivational factors that exist.

The central problem with RCT as a theoretical approach is paradoxically, that which also makes it applicable as a theoretical approach. RCT is based upon the assumption that actors will act in a rational manner best suited to their personal needs. *Rational* can be understood to be an action chosen with the highest utility outcome.<sup>142</sup> This is correct in and of itself but fails to address the context in which rational decisions are made. Why is it that actors behave as they do? What is it that drives them to believe they are acting in their own best interest? Can actions simply be attributed to an internal thought process resulting from a moral and ego-centric evaluation of variables, or is there in fact

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<sup>139</sup> "Rational-choice approaches begin with a set of individuals, assumed to have a well-defined set of preferences." (Weingast 2002, 661).

<sup>140</sup> "To use *Homo economicus*, one assumes that actors have complete and well-ordered preferences and complete information, and that they maximize the net value of expected returns to themselves." (Ostrom 1999, 44).

<sup>141</sup> Much of the information regarding Aristotle is taken from his *Nicomachean Ethics*.

<sup>142</sup> "Choosing rationally becomes equivalent to maximising utility: that is, to seeking the greatest fulfilment of pre-existing passions." (Allingham 1999, 1).

an exterior set of constraints that shape the decision making process and generate the rational actions themselves? If external parameters do exist, as they surely must, the recognition of them as contributing factors in any analysis of decision making must be apparent. The parameters that exist provide the 'choice-field' within which decisions are taken, and in so doing create the 'rational' aspect of choice subsequently seen as available by the actors involved. The existence of institutions and institutional constraints provide us with the wider context and the reality of parameter setting.<sup>143</sup> RCT alone does not comprehensively address the exact nature of decision making as it fails to take into account the connection between the individual and the arena in which they operate.

## **Rational Choice Institutionalism**

Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) takes the political scientist one step closer towards a more comprehensive understanding of the decision making process in politics. Rationality, according to this theoretical approach, stems from the existence of available alternatives and the stability and order of the active and established regime.<sup>144</sup> RCI can be better understood once we are able to deconstruct the structure and demonstrate the elements that constitute the rule base of the approach. These rules in turn, naturally provide the underpinnings for the final applicability of the approach and can be summarised thus:

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<sup>143</sup> "Institutions arise in part to help create the conditions for self-enforcing cooperation in an environment where there are gains from cooperation but also incentive problems that hinder a community's ability to maintain cooperation." (Weingast 2002, 674).

<sup>144</sup> "An important concept throughout this study is credible commitments, self-enforcing incentives provided by institutions for relevant actors to behave in a certain manner." (Weingast 2002, 675).



- a) A set of actions from which an individual chooses
- b) A set of outcomes
- c) A rule associating an outcome with each action in each environment

Bearing in mind the basic elements listed above, it becomes clear that the environment in which the actors find themselves affects the manner in which they make decisions and that it is perhaps this, and not an inbuilt wisdom that guides the decisions of human beings.<sup>145</sup> The existing parameters that govern the daily running of political life act as both guide lines and constraints for those operating within the system. This enables the actions of individuals to be explained in connection with the wider perspective. For a full understanding of RCI, it is necessary to observe it under real world conditions rather than as a purely abstract notion, as it is the environment that plays a vital role in the decision making process.

Actions and decisions are naturally shaped and directed by factors resulting from the surrounding climate. As such, we can say that actions in fact take place under invisible constraints. These constraints can perhaps be outlined accordingly:<sup>146</sup>

- 1) Scarcity of resources
- 2) Opportunity costs (maximise benefits)
- 3) Institutional norms (laws etc)
- 4) Information

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<sup>145</sup> "There is likely no unique method used by minds to make decisions. It is well known that individuals are generally not very logical, and that their decision behaviour can be modified by the surrounding culture or by the acquisition of some special skill." (Raymand 1986, 17).

<sup>146</sup> For further reference to these outlines please see M. Zey's *"Rational Choice Theory and Organizational Theory: A Critique"* (1998).

It is important to bear these factors in mind when it comes to the task of analysing data and attempting to make subsequent predictions. RCT sees human action primarily in economic terms and is therefore not overly concerned with the ethics or values that lead to rational decisions.<sup>147</sup> Bearing this in mind, it would appear that there is an element of RCT which needs a certain amount of revision before it can fully be integrated into the explanatory tool box required to more fully explain transitions. As Kuttner writes, "the central fallacy of RCT is that it postulates a single motivation, self-interest, as an explanation for all human behaviour, economic and otherwise."<sup>148</sup> This exposes a weakness of RCT, which I need to address in order to best incorporate this theoretical approach into my analysis.<sup>149</sup> No decisions, political or otherwise, are made in a vacuum and not only does the existing climate of a country play a vital role in the decision making process but the past also plays its part. RCI proved to be a most applicable theoretical tool for dealing with Spain during the transitional process.<sup>150</sup> Providing it is possible to ground RCT in the real world and move away from the purely abstract and theoretical that fails to take into account human response to decision-making and to situations that shape day-to-day living, it should prove to be useful indeed. The use of RCI creates the ability to connect the actions of individuals to the system in which they operate and to do so in a manner, that continues to recognize the importance of rationality in explaining human behaviour.

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<sup>147</sup> "For many problems, it is useful to accept the classical political economy view that an individual's choice of strategy in any particular situation depends on how he or she perceives and weighs the benefits and costs of various strategies and their likely outcomes." (Radnitzky 1987, 32).

<sup>148</sup> (Kuttner 1985, 41).

<sup>149</sup> "The kind of deductive logical system that informs rational choice analysis has important strengths, parsimony first among them, but its characteristic weaknesses, such as those imposed by the highly restrictive assumptions that make this kind of analysis possible, are also well known." (Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S. 1992, 12).

<sup>150</sup> "Riots, revolts, and other mob activities are engaged in by separate, rational, individual actors who have preferences. Societies, organizations, and mobs do not have preference orders as do individuals...Rational choice is about the business of explaining collective actions and outcomes on the basis of individual behaviour." (Zey 1998, 17).



## Game Theory

Game theory has proved an immensely useful tool in my analysis of the Spanish transition<sup>151</sup>. Many of the core assumptions are inherently applicable and the rules at the core of the model provide for a greater degree of understanding than do other approaches.<sup>152</sup> Game theory attempts to address the rules of interaction in order to derive patterns and trends from a seemingly chaotic and often turbulent process. This is largely due to the direct applicability of the subject matter to the model itself.<sup>153</sup> While Colomer's work on game theory<sup>154</sup> succinctly outlines many of the ways in which the approach can be applied to the case study of Spain, there is still room for further analysis when incorporated into the larger theoretically applicable political paradigm this thesis attempts to construct. The manner in which decisions were made, actions taken, and to an extent the collective memory of Spain; provides the ideal case study for the basic tenets of game theory to dissect and explain.<sup>155</sup>

Although game theory, as the name suggests, deals with the interpretation of data through the 'playing' of games, the fundamental underpinnings of the approach are

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<sup>151</sup> "Strategic situations are a subgroup of social situations. Social situations involve the interaction of individuals; to study and understand social situations, we need a theory that explains how individuals' decisions are interrelated and how those decisions result in outcomes. Game theory is one such theory. It is a theory of interdependent decisions – when the decisions of two or more individuals jointly determine the outcome of a situation. The 'individuals' can be persons or collective entities that make consistent choices." (Morrow 1994, 1).

<sup>152</sup> "Game theory provides tools that are particularly useful for studying situations in which the rules of the interactions are more imprecise or not defined at all, as happens with many characteristic situations in a process of political change. A regime change is precisely a change of the rules of the game and logically, the game for changing rules cannot entirely be shaped by the incentives structured by the rules being changed. Some interactions among actors in a process of political change are therefore less constrained than those of actors in a stable political situation, whether this is a dictatorship or a constitutional, consolidated democracy." (Colomer 1995, 6).

<sup>153</sup> "The 'Spanish model' has usually been identified with negotiations and pacts among political elites and a consensus among the citizenry which avoid acts of revenge, violent confrontation and civil war." (Colomer 1995, 1).

<sup>154</sup> Colomer, J.M. *Game Theory and the Transition to Democracy: The Spanish Model* (1995).

<sup>155</sup> "Partly, it was the experience of failure and the political process itself which shaped the preferences and choices of actors. It was this dread which induced a predisposition toward negotiation and compromise on the part of the main political actors." (Colomer 1995, 3).

rooted in RCT.<sup>156</sup> Game theory, like RCT, has at its core, the assumption that actions taken are grounded in the process of rational analysis by the actors, but this has been taken one step further, in this thesis, and refined to a certain extent.<sup>157</sup> If we assume that individuals act 'rationally', and we assign this rationality to self-interest, we have the basis for our analysis. This analysis, however, must be placed within a wider framework in order to fully explain the interaction between actors and the motivations that lay at the core of transitional politics. RCT provides us with the foundation, Game theory supplies the initial support for analysis by creating organised and ordered 'games' which enable interpretation and a greater understanding of data,<sup>158</sup> but more is needed in order to fully integrate historical linear accounts into a model of political interest that will provide us with some semblance of predictive ability. RCT by itself cannot fully explain information of this complexity due to the fundamental design of the model itself. For this purpose, additional tools are needed.

I have highlighted some of the problems with RCT and put forward an argument for the incorporation of game theory but this is still not sufficient to provide us with an explanatory framework equipped to handle transitions.

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<sup>156</sup> "The major premise...is that people are rational actors whose decisions are guided by rational calculations. A rational person is assumed to be driven by the pursuit of goals...What gives the rationality premise some explanatory power is the corollary assumption that only goals that are private in nature have any intrinsic value to an individual. Only private goals, in other words, are pursued for their own sake." (Chong 1991, 2).

<sup>157</sup> "Game theory is based on utility theory, a simple mathematical theory for representing decisions. In utility theory, we assume that actors are faced with choices from a set of available actions. Each action provides a probability of producing each possible outcome. Utility is a measure of an actor's preferences over the outcomes that reflects his or her willingness to take risks to achieve desired outcomes and avoid undesirable outcomes. The probabilities of obtaining each outcome after taking an action represent uncertainty about the exact consequences of that action." (Morrow 1994, 16).

<sup>158</sup> "Game-theoretical analysis does enable each player to discover the solution of the game and, therefore, to predict the strategies of the other players, provided that the latter will act in a rational manner. But the point is that, prior to such a game-theoretical analysis; he will be unable to make such predictions." (Harsanyi 1986, 89).



It turns out that rational individuals often will have difficulty producing public goods that depend upon collective contributions. Since these goods, if supplied, can be enjoyed equally by everyone, including those who have not contributed their share of the cost, there will be a strong temptation for everyone to let other people pay for them...From the standpoint of any individual, therefore, it is not what he does that counts; it is what the *other* members of the group do that will determine the outcome of the process.<sup>159</sup>

If we interpret 'goods' to be an end product of some kind, and for our purposes, democracy fits this definition, then we are able to see that having 'rational' individuals who act 'rationally' is not always sufficient to produce the desired end result. "Game theory is a theory of possibly conflicting (but not necessarily selfish) *individual* interests, ethics can be regarded as a theory of the common interests (or the general welfare) of society as a whole."<sup>160</sup> This notion presents us with a new avenue to tackle.

RCT deals with the actions of individuals, their motivations and the influences that have led them to act in a certain manner under certain circumstances. Viewed in this manner, RCT constitutes the basis for my framework, despite its failings that have been outlined above, namely that, "rational choice theorists do not question whether their assumptions fit reality in different historical, cultural, or institutional circumstances."<sup>161</sup> If this is the case, then how effective can RCT be as a framework for cross-case study comparison? The answer must surely lay in the manner in which we apply the tools to the subject matter at hand. Simply because RCT has flaws, does not make it useless in the explanation of transitions. What is required of us is to transplant the 'rational aspect'<sup>162</sup> of RCT and by placing it within a wider context, eliminate the

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<sup>159</sup> (Chong 1991, 4).

<sup>160</sup> (Harsanyi 1986, 89).

<sup>161</sup> (Kuttner 1985, 42).

<sup>162</sup> "One superficial way to look at irrationality is to say that rationality informs the agent as to what to do; if the actor behaves otherwise, then he or she is irrational." (Zey 1998, 19).

doubts and failings that may show themselves to be present in an analysis based solely upon a single theoretical approach.

Game theory provides the political scientist the mechanism to avoid precisely the pitfall highlighted above.<sup>163</sup> By placing the assumption of rationality, that exists at the foundation of human action, and then plotting these actions through 'games', it becomes possible to examine the manner in which actors behave in situations where the level of information available to them is either limited or alternatively, in some cases, perfect. These 'games' provide an explanatory tool that allows the purely theoretical to be grounded in the realms of the actual and consequently provides for some degree of predictive power to exist. Where the amalgamation of RCT and game theory still falls short is in the connection between the theoretical and the physical, and more importantly, in how we are able to understand this connection. As a result, additional theoretical approaches are required to address this shortcoming and attempt to provide a substantive explanation as to the connection between the actions of individuals and the overriding constraints of the system within which they manoeuvre.

## Historical Institutionalism

In order to address the gaps in the existing theoretical framework, I have incorporated historical institutionalism into the analysis of this thesis.<sup>164</sup> Information from approaches such as path dependency has also been a contributing factor but the

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<sup>163</sup> "Strategic decisions are the topic of game theory...There is a set of agents and, for each of them, a set of possible choices or strategies. When the agents choose one element from their respective strategy sets, they bring about a certain state of the world." (Elster 1986, 7).

<sup>164</sup> "In general, institutionalists are interested in the whole range of state and societal institutions that shape how political actors define their interests and that structure their relations of power to other groups. Thus, clearly included in the definition are such features of the institutional context as the rules of electoral competition, the structure of party systems, the relations among various branches of government, and the structure and organization of economic actors like trade unions." (Thelen, K. Steinmo, S. 1992, 2)



bulk of the model has its roots in institutionalism.<sup>165</sup> It became increasingly apparent that the analytical tools provided by RCT and game theory were open to criticism as they were without a strong attachment to the 'linear' understanding of transitions. While this is perhaps an ambitious task to connect very specific, micro-level approaches to one that takes into account the wider context of events that have taken place, unless a successful collaboration of these elements is achieved, our understanding of transitions will remain blinkered and therefore lacking in true meaning and applicability.

Historical institutionalism provides us with, what many may see as a linear account of political situations and therefore can be viewed as falling short of possessing any real semblance of political design. This is true to a certain extent, but once again, the manner in which the information is put to use will ultimately determine the usefulness of the approach.<sup>166</sup> In essence, this bears many similarities to the basic premise of RCT; in that customs are created based upon an examination of the past with a view to applying it to the future. The fundamental difference lays with the manner in which RCT views the role of individuals as paramount but historical institutionalism sees the role of society, or institutions as relevant when it comes to explaining the relationship between decision making and the actual development of ideas into policy. The two approaches are both possessed of merit when viewed individually, but it is when we are able to combine the two that they are at their most effective.

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<sup>165</sup> "Historical institutionalists tend to conceptualise the relationship between institutions and individual behaviour in relatively broad terms...they emphasize the asymmetries of power associated with the operation and development of institutions...they tend to have a view of institutional development that emphasizes path dependence and unintended consequences...they are especially concerned to integrate institutional analysis with the contribution that other kinds of factors, such as ideas, can make to political outcomes." (Hall, P.A. and Taylor, R.C.T. 1996, 936).

<sup>166</sup> "Scholars working in different disciplines and writing on subjects as diverse as the political economy of advanced capitalism and policy-making during China's Great Leap Forward have all focused on the significance of institutional variables for explaining out-comes in their respective fields." (Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S., 1992, 1).

The aim behind the nature of the analysis presented in this thesis is to situate the initial focus of the actions of individuals within a wider context.<sup>167</sup> Institutionalists see factors that shape the actions of actors as being other than mere self-interest.<sup>168</sup> Here we have an indication of interpretation of the data from a more macro-orientated perspective. This is relevant, in that human behaviour and decision making is far more complex than an analysis focusing upon a single element or perspective would indicate. The assignation of a value, namely self-interest, which can account for any given end result, is a valid technique, but this value must take account those factors that shape it. In other words, while we are aware that no action takes place in a vacuum, it is still necessary to examine the nature of the metaphorical vacuum in order to better understand the initial action itself.<sup>169</sup>

It can be argued that political actors are not aware of the true relevance and impact of institutions and that the structure of institutions can cause actors to fight the same battles over and over again.<sup>170</sup> For this very reason, institutions do matter. It is a fair assumption to make that an actor will be aware of RCT, in as much as he is motivated to act in his own best interest, but it is possible that he will not be fully cognizant of the vast scope of institutions and the effect that these have in shaping the outcomes of various situations.<sup>171</sup> Ellen Immergut writes that, "self-conscious political

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<sup>167</sup> "For historical institutionalists the idea that institutions provide the context in which political actors define their strategies and pursue their interests is unproblematic." (Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S. 1992, 7).

<sup>168</sup> "Rational choice institutionalists in effect 'bracket' the issue of preference formation theoretically, though of course in the context of specific analyses they operationalize self-interest, and generally they do so by deducing the preferences of the actors from the structure of the situation itself. This is quite different from historical institutionalists, who argue that not just the *strategies* but also the *goals* actors pursue are shaped by the institutional context." (Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S. 1992, 8).

<sup>169</sup> "If there is no single political choice or outcome that maximizes the individual's self-interest, then clearly game-theoretic tools need to be supplemented with other methods to understand which solutions will be or were chosen." (Ibid. 9).

<sup>170</sup> For a more detailed explanation into the nature of historical institutionalism and its relation to the actions of individuals, please refer to Steinmo, S. et al. (ed). *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in comparative analysis* (1992).

<sup>171</sup> "Institutions create their own environments by the way they interpret and act in a confusing world. It is not simply that the world is incompletely or inaccurately perceived, but also that actions taken as a result of beliefs about an environment can, in fact, construct the environment. In politics, a standard



actors, reflecting on their pasts and futures, can divert the supposedly ineluctable march of progress onto unexpected paths. Such contingent developments stand beyond logic and can only be grasped through historical analysis."<sup>172</sup> This is important to factor into our analysis of transitions because, were actors aware of the impact of institutions<sup>173</sup>, the end result would be much more susceptible to manipulation and exploitation.<sup>174</sup> Here we have found our wider context.<sup>175</sup> Bo Rothstein (1992) sums up this notion when he writes, that by focusing on these intermediate institutional features of political life, institutionalism provides the theoretical 'bridge between men who make history and the circumstances under which they are able to do so.'

Historical institutionalism has proved useful in highlighting cross-national differences and outlining patterns or preferences over time within individual countries. This is done through explanation of different policy outcomes in different countries with reference to their respective institutional configurations. The obvious problem with analysis of this kind is that it lends itself towards a degree of institutional determinism.<sup>176</sup> This is naturally something that I wish to avoid, as it deliberately takes away from the notion of free decision making on the part of the individual. Given the central focus individuals and their capabilities constitute in this thesis, the notion that free will is completely subordinate to external pressures runs contrary to the wider context intended. While it is certainly true that the nature of institutions will play a vital

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example is the way in which a reputation for power is transformed into the reality of power." (March and Olsen 1989, 47), (Meyer and Rowan, 1977), (Weick, 1979).

<sup>172</sup> (Immergut 1998, 19).

<sup>173</sup> "Instead of making completely independent or autonomous decisions, individuals may be embedded in communities where initial norms of fairness and conservation may change the structure of the situation dramatically...Further, they may change their strategies over time as they learn about the results of past action." (Ostrom 1999, 47).

<sup>174</sup> "It should be noted that the values and preferences of political actors are not exogenous to political institutions but develop within those institutions." (March and Olsen 1989, 40).

<sup>175</sup> "Institutional analysis also allows us to examine the relationship between political actors as objects and as agents of history." (Thelen, K. and Steinmo, S. 1992, 10).

<sup>176</sup> This information is paraphrased from Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo's chapter in Steinmo, S. et al. (ed). *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in comparative analysis* (1992).

role in the shaping and ordering of preferences<sup>177</sup>, there has to exist a mechanism for analysing the other factors that weigh on the decision making process. We have seen then that the micro involvement of actors within the macro system is just as relevant for our analysis, but what has not been made clear is how it will be possible to truly connect the two?<sup>178</sup> Peter Hall argues that a better understanding of institutions can be achieved by creating a broader matrix of competing interests and ideas.

Within this matrix, institutions interact with interests and ideas in a variety of ways. By providing routines linked to processes of socialization and incentives for certain kinds of behaviour, they contribute to the very terms in which the interests of critical political actors are constructed. By making organized activity and the expression of political views more or less viable for certain groups, they affect the power with which the interests of key social groups are pressed. In many instances the routines that have been institutionalised into the policy process filter new information, affecting the force with which new ideas can be expressed. In other cases they alter behaviour in such a way as to produce wholly unintended consequences of considerable moment for a nation.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> March and Olsen argue that it is possible to outline a basic set of propositions that reflect the dynamics of balancing within organizations, the lives of each participant. (1) Individuals will come to trust others whom they see as producing relevant events that they like and preventing relevant events that they dislike. (2) Individuals will come to believe that people they trust cause events they like and that people they distrust cause events they dislike. (3) Individuals will come to believe that events are relevant if they agree about them with people they trust and disagree about them with people they distrust. (4) Individuals will be active to the extent to which their seeing, liking, and trusting are unambiguous. (5) Individuals will – to the extent to which the political system and their activity levels permit – seek contact with people they trust and avoid contact with people they distrust. (6) Individuals will feel integrated into a political system to the extent to which they like the relevant events that they see. Taken together, these propositions suggest a view of reality forming that emphasizes the impact of interpersonal connections within a political system and the affective connection between the system and the participant and liking. (March and Olsen 1989, 45).

<sup>178</sup> "Analysis of individual preferences cannot fully explain collective decisions, for in addition we need to understand the mechanisms by which individual decisions are aggregated and combined into collective decisions." (Dahl 1961, 770).

<sup>179</sup> (Hall 1992, 91).



The matrix, mentioned in the above quote, and its 'links to processes of socialization' will be of paramount importance for my thesis. Within this matrix the role of the individual<sup>180</sup> is seen as a relevant factor, providing a substantial underpinning to the wider contextual framework of analysis. It is apparent that actors react, at least in part, according to the climate in which they find themselves but this will not automatically guarantee a specific outcome under a specific set of circumstances.<sup>181</sup> While it is possible to predict, to a given value of accuracy, how an actor will behave according to RCT, it is not as straightforward when we employ historical institutionalism.<sup>182</sup> I am not denying the connection between the past and the future and have no desire to refute out of hand the notion of causation, but it must be made clear that there is an existing cleavage between the two factors I am attempting to unite and by bringing the two together, I hope to eliminate some of the weaknesses by pooling the foundations, assumptions and relative successes, thereby creating a virtual subset within a theoretical framework.

Historical institutionalism provides me with tools that have proved most useful in answering some of the questions that have arisen from my research. We have established that individuals act based upon utility maximisation, we have seen that these actions can be better understood by placing them within a 'game-theoretical' situation,

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<sup>180</sup> "The individual is seen as an entity deeply embedded in a world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation, of both the situation and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed. Not only do institutions provide strategically-useful information, they also affect the very identities, self-images and preferences of the actors." (Hall, P.A. and Taylor, C.R. 1996, 939).

<sup>181</sup> "The institutionalist approach views the summation of preferences – or for that matter, the aggregation of individual behaviours into collective phenomena – as exceedingly problematic... Human interests are so complex, that to speak of summing or aggregating them is merely applying a metaphor to a complicated process." (Immergut 1998, 7).

<sup>182</sup> "Historical institutionalists have been strong proponents of an image of social causation that is 'path dependent' in the sense that it rejects the traditional postulate that the same operative forces will generate the same results everywhere in favour of the view that the effect of such forces will be mediated by the contextual features of a given situation often inherited from the past." (Hall, P.A. and Taylor, C.R. 1996, 941).

we have seen how institutions must be regarded as relevant when it comes to the explanation of behaviour<sup>183</sup> and we have seen how the notion of social causation is one that must be examined very closely, and even then, its applicability is not possible without major problems. What we have also seen is the realisation that, despite the connection we are able to draw between events in different countries, based on assumptions inherent in RCT; it is not possible to create a blanket framework based on these assumptions alone.<sup>184</sup> There naturally exists a vast array of options available to actors in any given situation and it is the job of the 'matrix' to provide us with the most coherent explanation for this behaviour.

An additional factor worth considering is that despite not necessarily being fully aware of the impact of institutions, and not being in possession of complete information, actors are aware of certain elements of the process, which may well affect their actions.<sup>185</sup> They are privy to information and rules that have helped to shape and still constrain the actual system itself.<sup>186</sup> If actors are aware of the system in which they operate, they are also able to manipulate it. This ties back to the notion that self-interest is at the very heart of actions taken. The course of action adopted may not always be that which is most desired, but simply that which is possible to achieve. It is not

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<sup>183</sup> "A complete view of society would also be a complete view of all the individuals, and vice versa; there would be no difference between them...through both the hereditary and the social factors in his life a man is bound into the whole of which he is a member, and to consider him apart from it is quite as artificial as to consider society apart from individuals." (Cooley, C.H, 1967, 154).

<sup>184</sup> "There may be a number of reasons why, under one particular set of circumstances, someone may make a political choice that deviates from the choice the same individual, with the same preferences, would make under other circumstances...Institutionalists aim to analyze why these actors choose one particular definition of their interests and not some other equally plausible alternative. Definitions of interests are viewed as political results taken at face value. Thus, institutionalist theory aims to expose and analyze the discrepancy between 'potential' interests and those that come to be expressed in political behaviour." (Immergut 1998, 7).

<sup>185</sup> "We often fancy that institutions, social custom, collective habit, have been formed by the consolidation of individual habits. In the main this supposition is false to fact. To a considerable extent customs, or wide-spread uniformities of habit, exist because individuals face the same situation and react in like fashion. But to a larger extent customs persist because individuals form their personal habits under conditions set by prior customs." (Dewey 1967, 149).

<sup>186</sup> "Because political actors are aware of the effects of these rules, they will attempt to cast their votes or to manipulate the rules in such a way as to achieve their most-preferred outcome." (Immergut 1998, 13).



necessary to reach the ultimate goal with every decision taken and every political move engineered, what is required is constant forward movement.

The design I have arrived at for my framework involves varying levels of analysis all directed towards a single objective. This project was born from a desire to address the gaps that I felt existed in current literature. In an attempt to better explain transitions to democracy, I feel it necessary to incorporate the ideas of various approaches and attempt to develop the field of political science accordingly. A micro-level initial analysis or RCT based design, outlining the reasons and motivations behind the decisions and actions of individuals will be at the core of my design; this will be situated within a game-theoretical framework. Historical institutionalism will provide that mechanism with which to connect these two fundamental approaches to the wider context of political and social understanding.<sup>187</sup> The manner in which these approaches have been employed allows for a comprehensive understanding and provides the ability to better answer some of the questions surrounding the Spanish transition to democracy.

“The first step in analysing a problem is to identify a conceptual unit – called an *action arena* – that can be utilized to analyze, predict, and explain behaviour within institutional arrangements.”<sup>188</sup> Once this ‘action arena’<sup>189</sup> has been established, the process of analysis can begin. It is of paramount importance to define the parameters within which analysis will take place but also to realise that this step is but one in the

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<sup>187</sup>“Historical institutionalists address big, substantive questions that are inherently of interest to broad publics as well as to fellow scholars. To develop explanatory arguments about important outcomes or puzzles, historical institutionalists take time seriously, specifying sequences and tracing transformations and processes of varying scale and temporality. Historical institutionalists likewise analyze macro contexts and hypothesize about the combined effects of institutions and processes rather than examining just one institution or process at a time.” (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 695-6).

<sup>188</sup> (Ostrom 1999, 41).

<sup>189</sup> For further explanation of an action arena, please refer to E. Ostrom's chapter titled “Institutional Rational Choice: An Assessment of the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework” found in P.A. Sabatier's book, *Theories of the Policy Process*. (1999).

process of constructing a framework for increased political understanding.<sup>190</sup> Significant analysis can only really begin once the terms and parameters of the problem have been outlined. Without this having taken place, the complex and intricate varieties that will result, become far too great to chart. Although the setting of parameters could well be seen as limiting, especially in light of the relatively minor area of data employed, the introduction of a more multi-layered and encompassing paradigm, allows for compartmentalisation of this kind. The problem with this system of analysis, it seems to me, is that prediction of an outcome depends upon the elements within for the degree of accuracy that can ultimately be obtained. To clarify, the final conclusion can only be as good as the initial data used to test the model. Bearing this in mind, it becomes imperative that the initial data are not only carefully chosen, but also dealt with in the correct manner.<sup>191</sup> It is required that the data be correctly chosen and investigated in order to provide the analyst with the ability not only to connect the physical to the theoretical, but also to ensure that the structure of the investigation is harmonious with the mechanisms engaged in the original process itself.

It is no longer sufficient to simply regard the data from a macro perspective and attempt to interpret information in what would be a posteriori rather than a priori terms, rather we need an analytical framework that provides us with the necessary tools<sup>192</sup> for interpretation on a micro level, the ability to discount the irrelevant and draw on both reason and logic to arrive at a satisfactory level of explanation. It is, of course, important to be aware of a macro perception of events as this will enable the setting of congruent parameters to take place, but the refusal to analyse and thus to situate the

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<sup>190</sup> "A major proportion of theoretical work stops at this level and takes the variables specifying the situation and the motivational and cognitive structure of an actor as given. Analysis proceeds toward the prediction of the likely behaviour of individuals in such a structure." (Ostrom 1999, 42).

<sup>191</sup> "Formal tools such as these simply serve to reduce the huge amount of intervening factors in the real world to those which allow the author and the reader to have a clear and parsimonious explanation of the real outcomes." (Colomer 1995, 4).

<sup>192</sup> 'Game theory is not knowing what theorems to apply but which tools to use, it is the emergence, transformation, diffusion and stabilisation of forms of behaviour.' (Gintis 2000, 18).



rational actions of individuals within the wider context, is to fundamentally fail to achieve the possible degree of explanation available.

The role of institutions is one that must be carefully taken into account in any analysis of the Spanish transition to democracy. The constraints that exist and serve to shape the decisions of actors are provided by, not only the natural environment<sup>193</sup> in which they live, but also the formal structure of society that generates and guides the available alternatives. Institutions dictate the structure of a society in that they provide the system of rules and operating procedures under which actors live.<sup>194</sup> This structure, whether recognised formally by the participants or not, is responsible for much of the parameter setting within which decisions are made. RCT allows for the assumption that actors behave in a rational manner and are aware of the possible outcomes of their respective decisions, institutionalism provides the connection between the physical and the theoretical.<sup>195</sup> Institutional constraints prevent anarchy and generate accepted and expected outcomes to political decision making.

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<sup>193</sup> By 'natural environment' I am referring to the shared historical memory of the country and the social character, taught over generations. This is an incredibly problematic variable to accurately map and yet it is one that can be easily recognised as relevant despite an incomplete understanding of its shape or nature.

<sup>194</sup> "In fact, institutions create their own environments in part, and the resulting complications are significant. For example, much of the richness of ecological theories of politics stems from the way in which the actions of each participant are part of the environments of others. The environment of each political actor is, therefore, partly self-determined as each reacts to the other." (March & Olsen 1989, 46).

<sup>195</sup> "In general, the predictions that can be made depend on the fine detail of the ways an institution organizes contact and experience. However, a few broad predictions can be made. Where meaning develops within such a system, there is a tendency to partition a population of individuals into groups or institutions that share interpretations and preferences within groups but not across groups." (March & Olsen 1989, 45).

**“The institutional constraints imposed on actors reduce the scope of alternatives to be chosen and indirectly induce a bias in favour of a particular group of preferences. ‘Rational choices’ are, hence, analysed within an institutional framework and as a frequent source of ‘irrational’ collective outcomes. The advantage of the formal, deductive reasoning characteristic of the rational choice approach, is that it permits the identification of those elements which can explain real outcomes in a more accurate and precise manner than the conventional method of inductive generalization from empirical observations. Once a set of alternatives, relevant actors and preferences has been put forth and the deductive implications of the analysis have been formulated, the contrast between formal results and real outcomes can either confirm the validity of the explanation or suggest a modification or enlargement of the assumptions in order to produce a fit between the model and reality.”<sup>196</sup>**

Examination of the existing literature has led me to conclude that the existing models, despite their inherent strengths and applicability, can be exposed and their weaknesses highlighted by the gaps that exist within their very structures. The applicability of these approaches rests upon the nature of their construction and yet it is this exact facet of their structure that exposes their weaknesses. Theoretical approaches predominantly explain political processes from a specific point of view but lack the ability to incorporate varying interpretations of the data. By drawing on the strengths of various theoretical approaches, it is possible to create a more fundamentally coherent explanatory framework that is capable of analysing democratic transitions not just from a single viewpoint, but rather from a wider and thus intrinsically more valuable perspective.

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<sup>196</sup> (Colomer 1995, 5).



## **Chapter 3**

### **The nomination of Don Juan Carlos: An unexpected successor**

His Majesty, Juan Carlos I de Borbón y Borbón is the central figure of the Spanish transition to democracy and yet, his actions during the period have been largely under-researched. As has been detailed above, the opinion of Juan Carlos, both prior to his nomination, and to a certain extent after it, was less than complimentary. At best Juan Carlos was seen as a Francoist puppet, at worse a fool. Analysis of the events will show that the transition was moulded very much in the image of the young monarch and to ignore such reality is to do the period a disservice. I have chosen Franco's decision to nominate Juan Carlos as the first event to be analysed in this thesis for several reasons. It is plausible to argue that the Spanish transition to democracy began well in advance of this event and that the seeds had already been sown, albeit unwittingly, by Franco during his regime. Despite this, I believe the nomination to be a crucial juncture that merits further analysis as it clearly demonstrates the interaction between actors and presents an interesting political dilemma.

The basic tenet of this thesis is to examine the role of individuals within transitions and therefore, the point at which the leadership of Spain was passed from dictator to monarch represents a turning point in the history of Spain. The role of both Juan Carlos and Franco in the nomination process will be examined below in an attempt to analyse the parameters within which the decision was made and outline the contributing factors and the expected results. This chapter will investigate the motivations of both primary actors as well as peripheral ones such as Don Juan, Juan Carlos's father and the exiled King of Spain, in an attempt to outline the initial stage of Spain's transition to democracy. Efforts will be made to demonstrate the importance of interpersonal communication and coherent strategy building for the construction of applicable political decision making.



Francisco Franco's decision to nominate Juan Carlos as his successor in 1969 was both prudent and self-serving, best suiting as it did the immediate needs and long-term goals of the dictator, and yet, the ramifications of the decision were not congruent with the motivation behind it. This in itself represents an interesting case study with which to apply Rational Choice Theory (RCT) as the decision was taken after careful consideration and logical analysis and yet produced an end result, completely contrary to that designed by the originator of the decision. The nomination of Juan Carlos would be included in any analysis of the Spanish Transition to democracy as it marks a definitive point in the process; but the actual nature of the event itself provides a remarkable demonstration of individual choice and planning in the face of structured and systematic constraints. At the time of the selection of Juan Carlos, the balance of power lay firmly with Franco. The reigning dictator was able to choose the option that best suited his plans for the continuation of his regime and therefore, any decision to accept the nomination, made by a potential successor was contingent upon a variable outside of their control, namely their actual nomination.

While we are not privy to the internal decision process Franco underwent in this matter, we are able to calculate and determine the likely reasons behind his choice, based on a cost-benefit assessment of the options available to him and the subsequent outcomes attached. Analysis of this event is made relatively straightforward due to the number of primary actors involved in the process. While the role of Don Juan will be examined, this will represent the secondary focus and concentrate on the manner in which he related to the interactions of the primary actors; the focal point of this chapter will rest firmly upon the persons of Francisco Franco and Don Juan Carlos. The decisions taken by these two men and the level of communication experienced between them will be investigated so as to produce a comprehensive awareness of the

motivations behind the action and the resultant consequences of it. There are a number of varying approaches that can be adopted when examining this event and I will deal with these in turn in an attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and implications inherent in this event.

In order to adequately analyse the nomination of Juan Carlos, it is necessary for certain assumptions to be made. These assumptions will be outlined below in greater detail but a necessary underpinning of approaches such as RCT and Game theory (GT) is the belief that actors make decisions based on a rational analysis of the available options and subsequently act in their best interest. Due to the absence of specific and relevant personal insight, we are required to examine the decisions taken, in light of what appears rational to us based upon a careful and logical determining of the parameters available. There is little margin for error in this process in that we are assuming human nature will be consistent and respond accordingly to set parameters. In order to counter the element of uncertainty, it is necessary to construct, as accurately as possible, the conditions under which the two men were operating and determine the subsequent rational course of action thus.

Franco had assumed and held power in Spain from the aftermath of the civil war (1936-39) until his death in 1975. During the time of his reign, he established himself as the untrammelled leader of Spain and consolidated the mechanism with which to perpetuate this system after his death. The choice of a successor lay with him alone and as such provides us with the first of the parameters necessary for analysis. While it is true that Franco must have received advice from Ministers and advisors, the ultimate decision was his to make. This denotes a controlling interest in the decision making process and forms the basis of a dominant strategy that will be examined in greater detail below. The issue of power distribution is one that must be factored into any



analysis of political decision making and is particularly relevant when dealing with only two individuals, one of whom, represented an institutionalised form of control. Without adequate attention paid to the capabilities of the actors in question, it would be impossible to construct a workable action-field. Actions taken are contingent upon an analysis on the part of the actors, as to which actions they are in fact able to make, and not those which they would necessarily most like to make.

In addition to the agency of individuals, a further element to consider, prevalent in literature, is the notion of an underlying historical deterministic trajectory that directs, and ultimately controls the actions of both individuals and institutions involved in political processes. This notion is one that is at the heart of approaches such as historical institutionalism<sup>197</sup> and system approach<sup>198</sup>. This 'grand scheme' imposes a series of latent constraints upon the actors and generates a final outcome independent of the decisions taken by individuals. While this approach does appear far too simplistic on the surface, and negates the need for any real analytical work to be done, it does possess some relevance to the Spanish case. Even a brief glimpse into Spanish history provides us with evidence to support the need for order and control.<sup>199</sup> Collective psychology aside, the pattern that had become a part of Spanish life was one of a strong leader in charge of all facets of life. The fact that Franco's reign had come after a bloody civil war and on the heels of the fracas of the Second Republic, only lent further

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<sup>197</sup> "The Historical Determinist view...that institutional legacies determine the future. Institutions have an autonomous logic and cannot be replaced at will. Rather they will change in an organic way independent of purposeful action." (Nielsen et. al. 1995, 6).

<sup>198</sup> "Systems Approach – sees all political activity as a manifestation of a grand but as yet unrevealed design, wherein human needs and desires set in motion social and political processes called systems and these in turn eventually bring about the creation of political laws and institutions." (Charlesworth 1967,7).

<sup>199</sup> "Historical memories of the suffering caused by the civil war and Franquist authoritarianism were also clearly relevant to the Spanish elite settlement. Virtually all the constituent elites of 1978 were keenly aware of the origins of the civil war...major Spanish parties made innumerable references to that historic conflict and to their awareness of what Santiago Carrillo described as 'the dangers that menace our society'." (Gunter 1992, 77).

weight to the necessity for a figurehead leader.<sup>200</sup> The very structure of the system may indeed have predicated certain outcomes as “structures, including political structures or institutions of the former authoritarian regime, impose certain limits on the number and availability of political alternatives.”<sup>201</sup> There are constraints placed upon actors that perhaps they are not aware of. Having spent almost thirty years coming to terms with a particular type of government and leadership<sup>202</sup>, the idea of a successor selected by Franco would not have constituted a radical solution.<sup>203</sup> By the year 1969 when Juan Carlos accepted the nomination from Franco, the reality that a successor had been chosen and was being prepared would have been accepted and welcomed and thus Franco would have made the decision free from rebuke or opposition. This is an important factor to bear in mind; the decision to nominate Juan Carlos was made by the existing ruler, without opposition from functioning sectors of the government. The laws of probability dictate that there must have been those who disagreed with the result; the structure of power distribution made this a moot point. Juan Carlos was Franco's choice and this was to be a crucial factor as the transition progressed.

Approaches such as historical institutionalism and systems approach provide us with the initial understanding of the parameters of the event under analysis. There existed a certain tradition in Spain, based upon past experiences and taught over almost forty years of political life. It was this tradition that created a virtual political vacuum in which Franco was able to operate. His decisions were not questioned and this provided

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<sup>200</sup> “It is clear for example, for all actors and witnesses of the Spanish transition of the 1970s that the very memory, the trauma of the civil war of the late 1930s, fed the fear of a repetition of a violent conflict in broad layers of society.” (Colomer 1995, 3).

<sup>201</sup> (Colomer 1995, 3).

<sup>202</sup> “In thirty-eight years of absolute personal power the people have become accustomed to personalizing politics. This is dangerous for the king, because it will take the people a long time to get used to seeing him as a symbol rather than the supreme ruler.” (Alba 1978, 292).

<sup>203</sup> What is interesting to note is that this sense of continuation and inertia was all but over-ridden in subsequent events in the transition process, such as the nomination of Adolfo Suárez and the reform of the Cortes, and therefore provides us with evidence that no one approach will satisfy all criteria, no one approach can explain all. Outcomes are not always guaranteed and are not always dependant upon past performance.



him the opportunity to fully prepare his decision in order to ensure that his objective would be realised: namely the continuation of his regime after his death. What is required at this juncture is a more in-depth analysis into the actual motivations behind the nomination of Juan Carlos and the potential implications associated with these motivations. Historical institutionalism alone will not provide us with the necessary analysis, as the supposition that actors are not aware of the true relevance and impact of institutions and therefore operate in a continuing cycle of uniform response does not provide the answers to the questions at hand. To a certain extent, there is merit in this assumption and it will be analysed in greater detail in subsequent chapters but for the purpose of analysing the event at hand, greater explanatory tools are needed.

As has been mentioned above, Franco's choice of Juan Carlos was free from external constraints and therefore was based upon the determination of suitability for the role. Here lies one of the principal assumptions that we must make for the purpose of this chapter. There exists the possibility that Juan Carlos was the only feasible candidate due to a complete lack of faith, on the part of Franco, in anyone else. If this was indeed the case, then the young prince was, in essence, the default choice but can still be viewed as the desired choice nonetheless.<sup>204</sup> Once the decision to select Juan Carlos had been made, something that may well have taken place during the 1950s, when his education was being decided by Franco and Don Juan,<sup>205</sup> or perhaps even earlier when Franco fully realised his distrust and dislike for Don Juan, as both a man and a potential successor.<sup>206</sup> In either respect, the decision was made and Juan Carlos became regarded, in certain circles at least, as the 'man who would be King'. There did

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<sup>204</sup> "Broadly speaking the Rational Choice approach...begins with the assumption that men have given wants, goals, values, or 'utility functions'. It then assumes that these goals cannot all be equally realized. Men live in a world of scarcity and therefore must select between alternative courses of action. They will, it is assumed, do so rationally, selecting the course of action which is the most effective means to their goal or selecting the course which leads to their most preferred goal." (Heath 1976, 3).

<sup>205</sup> Refer to footnote 33 for additional information on this.

<sup>206</sup> Refer to footnote 35 for additional information on this.

exist alternatives to Juan Carlos but it became apparent that Franco had the tacit support of the 'Bunker' in his decision.<sup>207</sup> Franco needed a successor who he could trust to ensure his legacy continued. He needed someone whom the 'Bunker' would support and who would engender the support of the Spanish people.<sup>208</sup> We have evidence of Franco's approval of Juan Carlos in an interview the Caudillo gave to General Vernon Walters, special envoy of President Nixon in 1971 where he claimed that "there was no alternative to the Prince, and Franco sincerely believed that the presence of Juan Carlos would guarantee order and security after his own death."<sup>209</sup> Juan Carlos was viewed as Franco's choice in the face of other available options and yet he was not accepted without reserve but rather with a sense of tempered optimism.<sup>210</sup>

The reasons for Don Juan's acquiescence of his son's education at the hands of his enemy are very straightforward to understand. Failure to abide by Franco's rules would have removed all possibility of a Borbón becoming King. It is not a great stretch of the imagination to assume that Don Juan believed his son would obtain the nomination to be King after the death of Franco and then step aside in favour of his father. A rational analysis on the part of Don Juan would have created this future scenario and allowed for the events to transpire in the manner best suited to his personal interests. We must also assume that Franco foresaw this possibility too and when we

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<sup>207</sup> "By the early 1960s a number of prominent *franquistas*, including Carrero Blanco and López Rodó, had come to the conclusion that Franco's successor should be Juan Carlos. There was an array of possible candidates, including the Carlist family of Borbón-Parma, and the Borbón-Dampierre nephews of Don Juan. But strong arguments could be made against all of them: the Borbón-Parma family was French, while Don Jaime, the elder brother of Don Juan and father of Alfonso and Gonzalo de Borbón-Dampierre, had long since renounced his rights. López Rodó and his associates knew that monarchist support in Spain was not strong, and that it would be even weaker if the main Borbón line was discarded in favour of some lesser branch. Thus, if Franco had excluded Don Juan, his son became the only plausible candidate." (Gilmour 1985, 135).

<sup>208</sup> "Franco's nomination of Juan Carlos in July 1969 appeared to be able to secure, within the normal development of events, a relatively unproblematic restoration of the Monarchy, by contrast, what would be much more difficult would be the possibility of moving onwards to democracy." (Tusell 1995, 515). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>209</sup> (Powell 1991, 57). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>210</sup> "The *franquistas* knew that the prince was a risk, but they hoped and believed that, after his Spanish education and a long spell in the armed forces, he would free himself of this father's influence and embrace the idea of a *franquista* monarchy." (Gilmour 1985, 135).



examine the manner in which Juan Carlos was treated by the caudillo and the skill with which son was played against father; we understand that Franco was very much in control of the situation up until the time of his death. The fact that this element of control was inevitably removed from Franco upon his death does not negate its existence during his life.<sup>211</sup> This control structure was recognized by Juan Carlos and must have been understood as by such Franco. This enables us to construct an additional parameter to our analysis, the players of the game are aware of the rules and the ramifications of deviating from them. This permits us to situate the decisions made within a wider context of constraint and direction. Franco possessed the power in the game and Juan Carlos, and therefore by extension Don Juan, was subordinate to this.

Juan Carlos was a relative unknown prior to the death of Franco, while he had been involved in political life to a certain extent; he had amassed no great power base of his own<sup>212</sup> and was seen as Franco's puppet by many. This is presumably the impression that Franco wanted to instill, that Juan Carlos would adhere to the regime's structure and authority, even when he assumed the role of King with all the power that would entail. Franco appeared to have coordinated and controlled the rules of the game and subsequently chosen the ideal candidate for the task at hand. A key element of this manipulation was the manner in which the young Juan Carlos was denied full access to the inner decision process of Franco. Juan Carlos was effectively kept guessing as to what his eventual role would be and when, if ever, he would be allowed to assume

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<sup>211</sup> "Every system needs to develop a set of formal or operating constraints that are generally accepted, through quiescent indifference or positive consensus, by rulers and ruled alike and that give at least broad indications of what are or are not permissible goals, practices, and structures in the system. Whether the limits are broad or narrow, relatively changing or constant, the same for all or specific to various social groups or individual members, they do set up expectations about who is to wield power, the limits within which it is to be used, who are expected to comply, and the conditions under which these obligations arise." (Easton 1967, 192).

<sup>212</sup> "In 1973, Don Juan Carlos represented a hope, albeit possessing a vaguely known profile, not solely by Spanish society but also in intellectual circles and the opposition. In contrast, it could not remotely be said that he had behind him any semblance of a bureaucratic or administrative capability to develop any political action." (Tusell 1995, 551). (Translated from original by author).

power.<sup>213</sup> This enabled Franco to protect his investment and ensure that Juan Carlos did not deviate from his design for the future. Franco possessed constitutional legitimacy for his actions, in the shape of the Law of Succession that granted him unlimited power in the decision of who would succeed him, to the extent that the position could be granted and then taken away again as and when he saw fit.<sup>214</sup> This in itself is a manner of game playing, and constitutes an additional parameter. Juan Carlos was subject to the effective whims of Franco and only strict obedience would ensure a favourable response for both actors.<sup>215</sup>

Franco's role in the process has been outlined above; he had the ability to dictate the rules, was able to place constraints upon the other players within the game and was in possession of perhaps the most valuable commodity of all, the information necessary for an accurate strategy to be mapped out. The role of Juan Carlos was naturally somewhat different in this respect; subordinate to the desires of the dictator, unsure as to his future position and not privy to the full extent of information needed to accurately construct a response strategy to the actions of the dictator. One area in which Juan Carlos did possess information was in the possible ramifications for deviation. From a rational perspective this represents an integral part of Franco's strategy. There is little point after all, expecting a player to adhere to the rules of the game, should they have no knowledge or appreciation of the ramifications that would ensue should they fail to do so. Rationally then, Juan Carlos would follow the guidelines as set by Franco,

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<sup>213</sup> "Why did I always maintain my silence? Why did I never say anything? Because it was a time in which nobody, not even I dared to talk. The self-censorship, or prudence if you prefer, was the norm. Personally, I did not know how things would turn out. I did not know if I was going to succeed Franco while he was still alive or if I would have to wait until his death to become King of Spain." (De Vilallonga 1997, 102). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>214</sup> "The people had not taken the prince seriously while Franco was still alive: he was used to inaugurate highways and open veterinarians' conventions....Spaniards became aware of the impossible role that was his to play. He kept silent in 1974 when Franco became ill, handed power over to the prince, then recovered and took it back as chief of state. But the people also noticed his serenity and detachment as he lived through those difficult years." (Alba 1978, 290).

<sup>215</sup> "Previously, during the 70's, he had had to go through the humiliating position of having nothing to do except wait for Franco to appoint him." (Tusell 1995, 519). (Translated from original by author).



regardless of what future plans he may have had for his monarchy and Spain. This is an interesting aspect of the Spanish transition as there exists a disparity of opinion. There are those who believe Juan Carlos was merely a pawn in the political game<sup>216</sup> and that any decisions made after the death of Franco were reactive as opposed to pro-active in nature; and there are those who believe that Juan Carlos was in possession of a master plan for the future of democracy.<sup>217</sup> In either respect, one must rationally assume that the end goal of Juan Carlos' game was the throne and the subsequent power that would result from this eventuality.

Mistakes were made by Juan Carlos but his response to them and the manner in which he conducted himself subsequently indicate that he was conscious of the parameters of the game and was attempting to prevent an unfavourable outcome by constructing an effective strategy. One such mistake took place in 1970 when Juan Carlos gave an interview to Richard Eden of the New York Times, in which he expressed his intention to be involved in a post-francoist transition.<sup>218</sup> This mistake was corrected<sup>219</sup> and from this point on, we do not see a public display of conflict between the opinions of Juan Carlos and those of Franco. Juan Carlos was therefore presented with a structured choice pattern that would determine his actions in relation to Franco.

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<sup>216</sup> "He had little to wait before he understood that he was simply being used like a chess piece, held under whatever method would best assure that the dictator and his followers maintained power." (Castellano 2001, 134). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>217</sup> "He wanted political liberalization, but he knew that he could not achieve this while Franco lived....This 'quiet and melancholy youth', confined to himself much more than was perceived by his discoloured public image. Those who became close to him found him 'better informed, more intelligent and above all, much more decisive than they had previously believed, despite this he was 'unsure of how to proceed, of where to go, and in whom to confide.'" (Tusell 1995, 518). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>218</sup> "Many Spaniards active in public life – according to the report – did not take into account the determination of the Prince to play an active role in the post-francoist evolution...He hopes he will be allowed to journey widely throughout and without Spain, to talk to the people, to demonstrate his interest for their problems, to begin to speak with his own voice and to convince Spaniards that he is more than an insurance policy taken out by Franco and kept in a drawer." (New York Times February 4 1970). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>219</sup> "Aware that he had been far too explicit, the Prince attended a few days later, perhaps at the recommendation of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda, the General Council of Franco's Guard, at the Institute of Political Studies, where he presented an emblem with the yoke and arrows upon it." (Tusell 1995, 519-20). (Translated from original by author).

Decisions made during Franco's lifetime would be restricted and predicated upon the wishes of the dictator. Necessity demanded that Juan Carlos curtail his actions until a more suitable time when he was granted the autonomy to act accordingly.<sup>220</sup>

The decisions facing Juan Carlos were contingent upon the time and events as they progressed. Given the manner in which the two men interacted and the power lauded over Juan Carlos by Franco, and coupled with the mistakes made by Juan Carlos, listed above, it was crucial that the young prince reassess his actions in response to the situation at the particular time of analysis in order to form a strategy congruent with the demands of the time. Given the power distribution, there existed only one realistic alternative for Juan Carlos but the outward manifestation of his strategy had to comply with that which Franco expected it to be. In essence, Juan Carlos was demonstrating his willingness to follow an already dictated course of behaviour, while making it appear as if it was of his own volition.

The actions of Juan Carlos were therefore dependent upon those of Franco and his decision process differs depending on the particular period under focus. What does not differ, however, is the manner in which we can illustrate the interaction between the two actors in this game. Using the tenets of GT, I have plotted various scenarios below in order to highlight the manner in which decisions were made. It is important to understand that the numbers used in the diagrams bear no physical relevance to actual reward and were selected at the author's discretion and are merely symbolic in their numerical value. The purpose of the diagrams is to reinforce the text above and demonstrate that in a two-person game, it is still possible for there to be varying pay-

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<sup>220</sup> "He made it clear that nothing was possible while Franco lived and that the final destination of the process, that by stages unknown at the present time, would be democracy." (Tusell 1995 555). (Translated from original by author).



offs and outcomes.<sup>221</sup> What is relevant for any appreciation of GT is a fundamental understanding of the exact conditions under which the game is played. The lack of true communication between the actors predicates a non-cooperative game analysis.<sup>222</sup>

There is a marked difference between cooperative games and noncooperative games<sup>223</sup> and between games with a dominant strategy and those with equilibrium. Given the inevitability of uncertainty, there are various possible scenarios that depend largely upon the perspective with which we are analysing the event. The figure below demonstrates the power held by Franco in the process. We can see that Franco was in possession of a dominant strategy and that in turn greatly narrowed the freedom with which Juan Carlos could act, in light of the assumption that the uniform goal of the game was for Juan Carlos to succeed Franco.

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<sup>221</sup> "The best move in a chess game, the best way to bid or the best card to lay down in a bridge game, depends on what one's opponents are likely to do." (Schelling 1967, 237).

<sup>222</sup> "Noncooperative games force us to consider how collaboration among players is implemented in the game and what incentives the players have to violate such agreements...Three of the key questions game theory should address is when, how, and why the players cooperate to their mutual benefit. The enforcement of agreements is a critical question, and cooperative game theory assumes away that critical question." (Morrow 1994, 76).

<sup>223</sup> "A traditional distinction between cooperative and noncooperative games is that the latter do not allow any communication between the players. Each player must determine its own strategy on its own." (Morrow 1994, 76).

**FIG 3.1:**

**DOMINANT STRATEGY FOR FRANCO: NON-ZERO-SUM GAME**

S1 represents the choice for the nomination of Juan Carlos to be rejected in favour of an alternative candidate.

S2 represents the choice that the nomination of Juan Carlos be accepted.

The numbers in the left hand side of each box correspond to Franco and those in the right hand side of each box correspond to Juan Carlos.

		JUAN CARLOS Player 2	
		s1	s2
FRANCO Player 1	S 1	-1, -1	0, -1
	S 2	0, -1	1, 1



In the above diagram we see evidence of a dominant strategy on the part of Franco. The dominant strategy, namely that of accepting Juan Carlos as the nomination, is represented by S2 and as we can see, when Franco, Player 1, adopts his dominant strategy, it is in the best interest of Juan Carlos, Player 2, to adopt his strategy s2. Franco is very much in control in this example. Irrespective of the decision that Juan Carlos makes, Franco will win. For this to be accurate there must exist the possibility that there was an alternative to Juan Carlos. While this was not to be true, it does represent an accurate account of the information available to Juan Carlos in the years preceding his nomination and gives some indication as to why he so readily accepted the nomination. If we concede that power and control lay in the hands of Franco, a rational analysis on the part of Juan Carlos would have logically driven him to the structured response illustrated above.

The conditions vary slightly when we examine the situation from the perspective of Juan Carlos. While it is not possible to conclude that Juan Carlos was ever able to act from a dominant position of strength, as was Franco, there are conditions under which a greater sense of equilibrium was established. If we posit that Juan Carlos was one of several choices available to Franco, but that he constituted the most desirable, then we are presented with a less one-sided game. Franco still maintains the upper hand but it is in his own best interest to nominate Juan Carlos. We assume for the purpose of this analysis that Juan Carlos is aware of the ranking of preferences that place him at the top. With this awareness would also exist the knowledge of the risk involved in deviating from the set rules of the game.<sup>224</sup> This awareness would not stem from any real communication with Franco but rather from an analysis of the events of the past

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<sup>224</sup> "Game Theory is based on utility theory...we assume that actors are faced with choices from a set of available actions. Each action provides a probability of producing each possible outcome. Utility is a measure of an actor's preferences over the outcomes that reflect his or her willingness to take risks to achieve desired outcomes and avoid undesirable outcomes." (Morrow 1994, 17).

and the lack of any obvious competition for his position. Fig. 3.2 below demonstrates the possible outcomes of the scenario outlined above.

If we posit that Juan Carlos was the only possible choice for Franco and without him, the regime would fall with the death of the dictator, we are afforded a noncooperative equilibrium.<sup>225</sup> It remains in the best interest of both parties to ensure that the nomination is passed to Juan Carlos and that nothing occurs to jeopardise this in the years leading up to the death of Franco. We assume again for this game that the two players were aware of the overall consequences of the game and once again, this awareness stems from logical analysis rather than direct communication. Fig. 3.3 below demonstrates a game in which the balance of power is equal among the two players and provides us with a possible interpretation of the events that took place.

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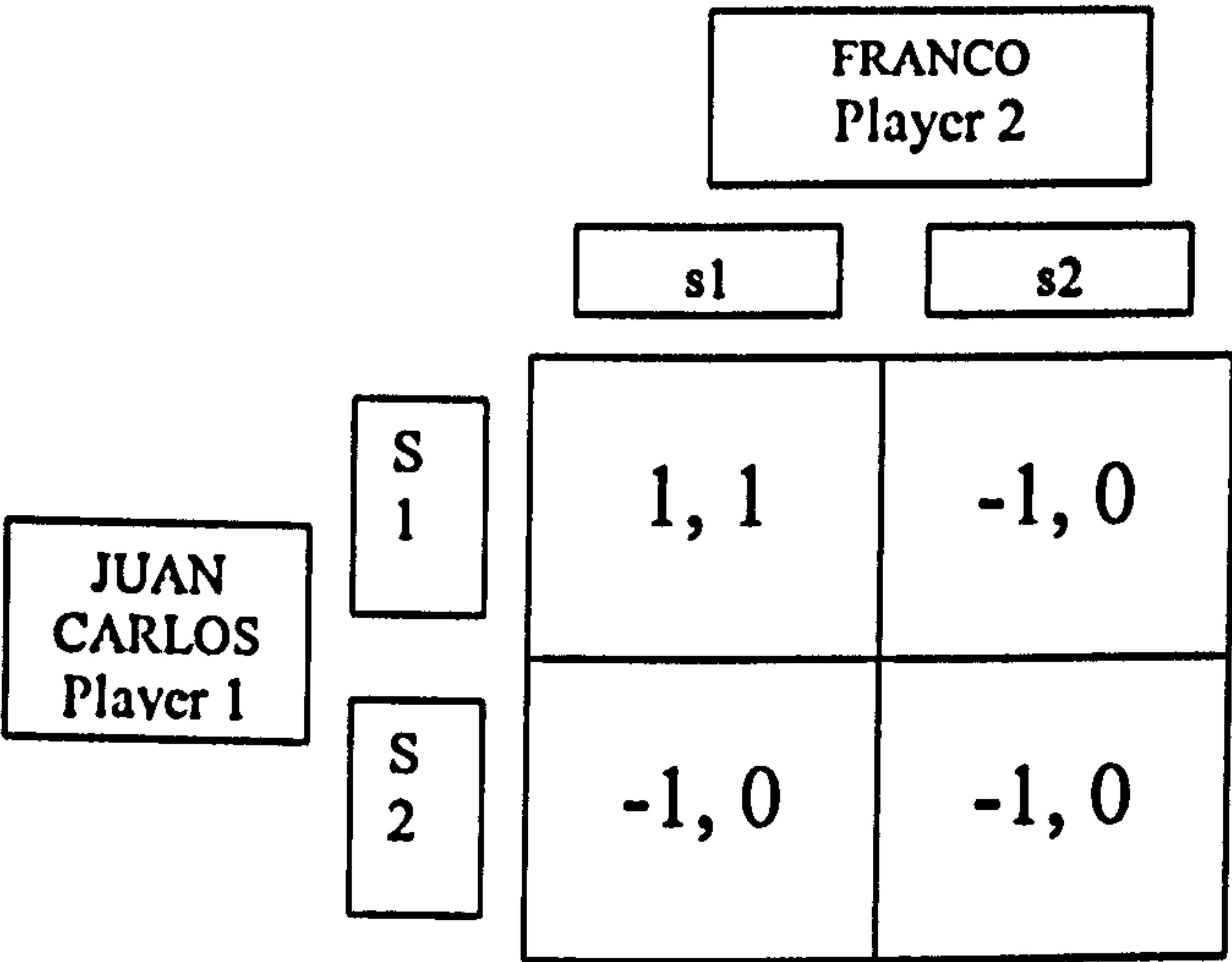
<sup>225</sup> "A noncooperative equilibrium point in a two person game consists of a pair of strategies, one for each player which are stable with respect to each other in the sense that if either player knows the strategy chosen by the other, he will not be motivated to change his own strategy." (Shubik 1967, 252).



**FIG 3.2:**

**GAME PLOTTING: JUAN CARLOS ONE OF SEVERAL OPTIONS FOR FRANCO**

S1 represents the option of playing the game according to the rules dictated by Franco.  
S2 represents the option of playing the game by deviating from the rules dictated by Franco.  
The numbers in the left hand side of the boxes correspond to Juan Carlos and the numbers in the right hand side of the boxes correspond to Franco.



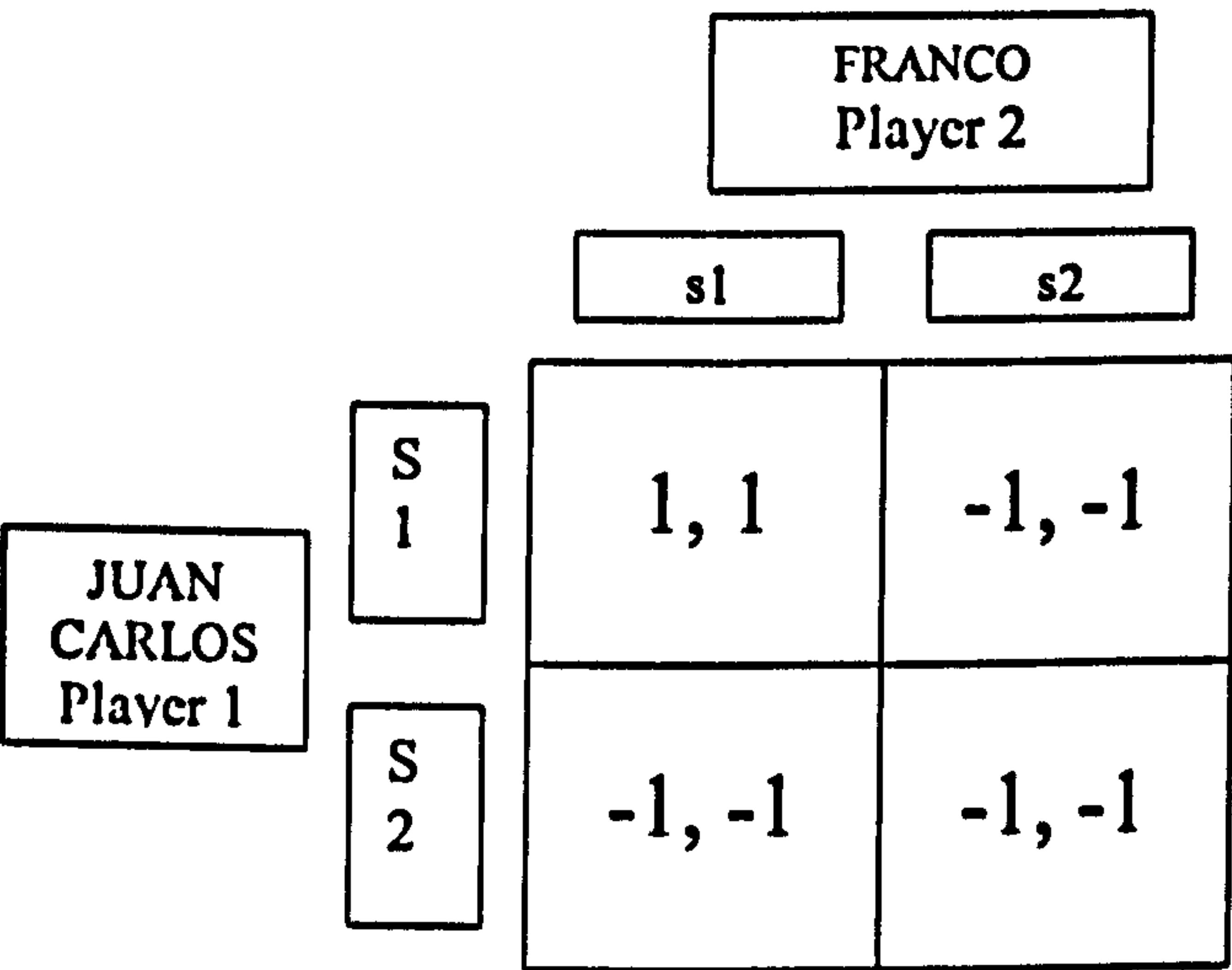
According to the diagram above, it was in Juan Carlos' best interest to adhere to Franco's desires and 'rules' even if they contradicted with his own aims for the future. If we assume that Juan Carlos was not the only choice then this represents the best strategy for him to follow and once again, we see Franco in the position of power. (Rules refers to the agreement that once a strategy had been adopted, it would be adhered too.)

**FIG 3.3:**

**GAME PLOTTING JUAN CARLOS AS THE ONLY CHOICE**

S1 represents the option of playing the game according to the rules dictated by Franco.  
S2 represents the option of playing the game by deviating from the rules dictated by Franco.

The numbers in the left hand side of the boxes correspond to Juan Carlos and the numbers in the right hand side of the boxes correspond to Franco.



Here we can see a much more balanced 'game'. In order for this outcome to be achieved, communication had to have existed between the two actors in order for preferences to be known and therefore, consequences of actions to be realised. If Juan Carlos represented the only available choice, it was in the best interests of both parties to follow the rules and create a mutually beneficial outcome through structured and organised play.

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The diagrams above clearly demonstrate that Franco had the upper hand in all but one of the realities. The balance was only created when we assumed that Juan Carlos represented the single viable choice and that both men were aware of this. The two players stood to lose if either deviated from the 'unspoken' strategy seemingly employed by both men. The sublime structure of the event outlined in this chapter is



manifested by the reality that there was no real alternative available for either of the two actors, and yet the manner in which it was played out suggests that a less than subtle demonstration of power was being exacted. The dismissal of Don Juan as a viable successor left Franco with but one name on the list. Juan Carlos' education was supervised, structural constraints imposed and the threat of banishment from the political arena kept in the forefront, and yet, the reality illuminated through the lens of hindsight prevents us from seeing a realistic alternative.

The construct of game manipulation was carried to the very end by Franco and this further demonstrates the fragility of the situation for Juan Carlos. Despite the potential recognition that he was the only real candidate, this was never fully realised, perhaps until the death of Franco itself, and certainly not during the period preceding this event. Juan Carlos was forced to succumb to the machinations of Franco, even at the expense of his familial duty.<sup>226</sup> This was an element that Franco was to emphasise throughout the period of Juan Carlos' education and indoctrination into the institutionalisation of the regime. The manner in which Franco nominated Juan Carlos was to have an enormous impact upon the decision to accept.<sup>227</sup> At the beginning of July 1969, Juan Carlos was preparing to leave for Estoril to spend the festival of San Juan with his family. Franco enquired as to when he would be returning to Madrid and requested that he present himself upon his return in order to discuss a matter of some importance. When Juan Carlos presented himself to Franco it was announced to him that he would be named as Franco's successor and would be awarded the title of King. Naturally a decision of such magnitude required some thought, even if only in regard to

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<sup>226</sup> "He had to put up with being a kidnapped Prince, in order that one day perhaps, at the pleasure of the dictator's cohort, he would be the hostage king of the National Movement. He had to sacrifice family ties in order to rescue the historic task and appear the subordinate in order to one day be in charge." (Castellano 2001, 134). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>227</sup> For a full account of these events, refer to De Vilallonga, J.L. *El Rey: Conversaciones con D. Juan Carlos I De España* (1997).

the impact that it would have upon Don Juan but the Caudillo pressed Juan Carlos for an answer immediately. The quote below outlines some of the internal thought process experienced by Juan Carlos and demonstrates the need to successfully weigh the consequences of actions in connection to the other actors of the game, prior to constructing a strategy.

“Now, the main question was not whether I or my father would be King of Spain. The important question was how to restore the Monarchy to Spain. ‘What have you decided Your Highness?, General Franco asked me. If I had not responded there and then, I would have been removed from his project as he did not like to be contradicted and he did not lack pawns with which to continue the game were I to leave. In either case, it was definite that Franco would not turn to the Duke of Barcelona...I naturally wanted things to turn out differently, above all out of respect for my father. But that day, Franco placed me between a rock and a hard place. He waited for my answer. I responded, ‘Very well, my General, I accept.’ He smiled imperceptibly and gave me his hand.”<sup>228</sup>

Franco masterfully constructed the parameters of the game. It becomes apparent that not only was Franco choosing a successor, he was pitting the son against the father. Franco was well aware of the power he held over Juan Carlos and to what extent his involvement had aided the young prince's development. By forcing Juan Carlos to choose immediately, without the counsel of his father and with the threat of loss of support and patronage, Franco had ensured that Juan Carlos would feel grateful and relieved that he had been nominated. It would appear to have been less earned than actually bequeathed by Franco. While Franco had selected Juan Carlos carefully, he was still to retain control until the very end. I would argue that the manner in which Franco took this decision might well have altered the way in which Juan Carlos played the game from this point onwards.

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<sup>228</sup> (De Vilallonga 1997, 99). (Translated from original by author).



Juan Carlos was aware that he needed Franco's patronage in order to fully capitalise on the potential of his new position but the treatment he had endured at the hands of Franco and the way in which decisions were made, demonstrated that what was happening was indeed a game and could therefore be played and won providing he adhered to the Caudillo's rules. Having been forced to take a decision that placed him at odds with his father and essentially subservient to Franco's whims, Juan Carlos became more aware of the situation in which he was operating and this was to affect the manner in which he made decisions subsequently. It would appear from this evidence that Juan Carlos was a man of strong character and that the events shaped much of his future involvement in the transition process. He was able to survive the doubts of those around him, the lack of confidence in his abilities and the belief that he would not last long in his role as King.<sup>229</sup> It has been contested that there was more to the young prince than common perception dictated and here is additional testimony to that.<sup>230</sup> Franco may well have constructed a 'game' of the process but the manner in which it was played out is testament to the awareness of Juan Carlos and his ability to adapt to the constraints placed before him and to manipulate the situation in turn to suit his needs.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> "The Prince of Spain appeared to be aware that 'Spaniards – who doubted that any successor of Franco could last – called him Juan Carlos the Brief'" (Tusell 1995, 518). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>230</sup> "The peculiar biographical trajectory of Don Juan Carlos could well have converted him into a haughty and cornered individual, but this was not the case. It could also have engendered a distrustful character but on the contrary, it accentuated the capacity to adapt and to accept things as they came in the firm belief that he was channelled to the single objective that was the politics of the Monarchy. None of that this would have been possible without a particular conscience that corresponded with a destiny to fulfil, characteristic of an Institution with which he would become personified. Don Juan Carlos always felt the weight of responsibility of the task before him." (Tusell 1995, 674). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>231</sup> "It was a most complicated task that consisted of educating himself, maintaining silence while allowing his position to be known, to wait with patience, to moderate possible inopportune statements by his father, to always tread carefully and to feed the flames of expectation based upon his looming accession without arousing suspicion. It is still possible to include more stipulations: he had to refine as much as possible his greatest asset as a politician in training, intuition, that sixth sense that allowed him to grasp both people and situations in order to fulfil the task he had been given." (Tusell 1995, 675). (Translated from original by author).

The nomination of Juan Carlos as Franco's successor is a remarkably simple one on the surface. Franco had established a regime that needed a strong leader to continue his work after he was gone; the available candidates yielded one favourite who was educated, cajoled, and manoeuvred into position and the existing structure provided the security that the system would protect itself even after the caudillo was no longer alive. From the perspective of the relatively weak Juan Carlos, obedience to Franco was the only manner in which to secure the throne for his family once more, and therefore the constraints imposed by Franco can be seen to have existed as much for his protection as for that of the Caudillo. The design employed for the nomination process existed to ensure that both parties adhered to a theoretical structure, whether fully perceived or not, in order to realise the mutually beneficial end goal. Under the surface, analysis shows the power games between Franco and Don Juan and the use of Juan Carlos as a pawn in the political game. Given the parameters of the situation, there was little alternative available to the Borbóns and while the scheming and subterfuge of Franco may well have been distasteful, and certainly counter to the primary objective of Don Juan, the end result was ranked among the leading preferences of both father and son.



## **Chapter 4**

### **The nomination of Adolfo Suárez: A valuable asset in place**

The event outlined in the previous chapter, namely Franco's selection of Juan Carlos as his successor, constituted the final decision taken by the previous regime and as such marks not only the end of the previous period of rule but also comprehensive start of the transition period. As has been clearly demonstrated in the previous chapter Juan Carlos had little choice in the matter and was subject to the whims of Franco. The decision to accept the nomination was the only possible solution for the young prince, in spite of his father's natural objections, to re-instate the monarchy in Spain and preserve his family title. While it is indeed possible to view the nomination of Juan Carlos as the start of the transition period, the event itself does not represent the beginning of the process of the democratic transition, rather a precursor necessary to set the wheels in motion. The motivations behind the decision to accept Franco's nomination can be more realistically grounded in family survival and personal honour than in a far-reaching democratic agenda designed to transform the face of Spanish politics.

The previous chapter was intended to demonstrate the necessity for certain factors to be in place before subsequent action can be contemplated, let alone achieved with any modicum of success. The current chapter constitutes the first major pro-active decision in the democratic transition by the primary actors. There existed the very real possibility that despite the best of intentions, Juan Carlos would simply remain a puppet to the Francoist Bunker and the existing prime minister, Arias Navarro. The return of the monarchy to Spain did not guarantee the return of democracy. The relative power distribution at the time of Franco's death created the expectancy of inertia, Juan Carlos was simply not in a position to exact significant change.

The replacement of Arias Navarro with Adolfo Suárez was a carefully planned and expertly executed political manoeuvre and represents the true starting point of the democratic transition. The shift in power was perhaps imperceptible at the time but



current analysis highlights the subtle structural changes that were taking place. The existing government of Arias Navarro was not only firmly rooted in the past regime but was also to prove detrimental to the process of reform through its inability to adapt to the changing climate of political debate. The following chapter will analyse the method employed and explain the reasons behind this political decision.

Carlos Arias Navarro was Franco's appointee<sup>232</sup>, he enjoyed the support of the Bunker and the military, was firmly rooted in Francoist tradition and saw his role as that of Franco's de facto successor.<sup>233</sup> Herein lies the parameter within which all decisions were made, by which all risk was measured and against which, future courses of action were constructed. Arias Navarro viewed himself, as did others, as representative of an institution, long since established and understood as a reality of political life.<sup>234</sup>

The position of Arias Navarro, while legitimate in its appointment, did not equate to a perpetual guarantee of authority, despite his belief to the contrary.<sup>235</sup> Coupled with Arias Navarro's expressed conviction that he embodied the role of Franco's successor, came a measure of arrogance and, at times, blatant lack of respect towards Juan Carlos.<sup>236</sup> Juan Carlos had, under Franco, been largely seen as an insignificant character that would not play a role in the governing of Spain and this attitude was perpetuated by the premier in his dealings with the young monarch, in the

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<sup>232</sup> There is some speculation as to the direct involvement of Franco in the nomination of Arias Navarro that is succinctly outlined in Preston (2004) pp 285-6 but the decision for a hard line president in response to the assassination of Carrero Blanco on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1973 is a justifiable one.

<sup>233</sup> "Arias was quoted in his first speech to his cabinet, as saying that he harboured "neither murky desires or revisionism nor suicidal aims of stirring up our institutional system because of an itch for novelty or out of crackpot irresponsibility." (Preston 2004, 334), (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 121), (Osorio 1980, 54-5)

<sup>234</sup> "What I want is to continue Francoism. And as long as I am here or still in political life, I'll never be anything but a strict perpetuator of Francoism in all its aspects and I will fight against the enemies of Spain who have begun to dare to raise their heads." Extract taken from a speech made by Carlos Arias Navarro on 11<sup>th</sup> February at the first meeting of the Comisión Mixta Gobierno-Consejo Nacional. (Arcilza, J.M de. 1977), 84.

<sup>235</sup> "His view was that Franco had appointed him and the King remained subject to the Caudillo's will." (Preston 2004, 331). "It's as if he believes that he is absolutely safe, that he is Prime Minister for five years and that all I can do is keep him on." (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 176-80), (Preston 2004, 346).

<sup>236</sup> "I think he sometimes believes he is stronger than I am and that deep down he does not recognize me as King." Taken from a conversation between Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda (Fernández-Miranda, L. 1994, 372).

immediate aftermath of Franco's death.<sup>237</sup> This animosity was to further enhance the parameter of interaction between the two men and as a result, dictate the mechanisms employed by both men.

An analysis of relative power distribution between Juan Carlos and Arias Navarro at the time of Franco's death in 1975 quickly reveals Arias Navarro as by far the stronger of the two actors. This was to play an important role in defining preferences and determining appropriate courses of action. The ability to make rational and logical decisions, and then act upon, them must also be tempered by the plausibility of said actions to be enforced. There must exist an additional analysis of the success rate of possible outcomes as it is not simply enough to formulate decisions based upon a moral determination of the desired outcome, consideration must be given to the complexity of variables and the likelihood of success versus failure.

It is useful at this juncture to hypothesize as to a basic ordering of preferences on the part of Juan Carlos in 1975. Arias Navarro did not constitute the ideal choice of premier for the democratic designs of the new monarch, he represented the 'old guard' in both position and age, and his actions and authority proved to have a negative effect upon the transition process.<sup>238</sup> The logical preference would have been to remove him from office and replace him with a more suitable candidate<sup>239</sup>, eliminating the problem as swiftly as possible and creating cohesion where there had previously been dissent. The diagram below outlines the choice pattern apparent to Juan Carlos.

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<sup>237</sup> "Juan Carlos was an inexperienced young man who should be kept safely away from the serious day-to-day business of government." This was a reported quote by Arias Navarro given to a senior US diplomat." (Preston 2004, 337), (Eaton 1981, 38).

<sup>238</sup> "The Arias government's programme, presented to the Cortes on 28 January, disappointed Juan Carlos and exasperated Fernández-Miranda. The Premier claimed his aim was to 'shift Franco's responsibility on to the nation as a whole, onto its politicians, its institutions and its citizens'." (Powell 1996, 92).

<sup>239</sup> "The Monarch explained that when he occupied the position of Head of State he felt a physical necessity to surround himself with people of his own generation." (Powell 2001, 159). (Translated from original by author).



## FIG 4.1:

### ORDERING OF PREFERENCES FOR JUAN CARLOS REGARDING ARIAS NAVARRO

1975

- 1) Remove Arias Navarro from power immediately
- 2) Bide time and replace Arias Navarro at a later date
- 3) Refrain from challenging Arias Navarro's position

### OUTCOMES OF CHOICES

- 1) The dangers inherent in this decision were considerable, the potential repercussions and backlash from the Francoist Bunker were substantial; the removal of Arias Navarro would be seen as a personal decision on the part of Juan Carlos and interpreted as a unilateral action and subsequent threat to the establishment. This course of action was far too dangerous to adopt as there existed too many unknown variables, too many potential sources of conflict and no guaranteed positive outcome.
- 2) The outcome of this decision represented by far the most prudent for Juan Carlos to adopt. The eventual removal of Arias Navarro would provide sufficient time to manipulate those variables currently out of the sphere of influence of the young monarch. The decision to wait until the situation was controllable constituted a mature and safe option. Given the volatility of the time and the relative power distribution, this would guarantee a much higher possibility of success.
- 3) Should Arias Navarro be allowed to remain in office unchallenged, this would not only be a personal affront to Juan Carlos, but also a damaging reality to the democratic transition. Arias Navarro's position had been made clear and his continued involvement in the political sphere was to have a negative impact of the transition process, and there existed the very real possibility that this negative impact would result in violence.

### REORDERING OF PREFERENCES

- 2) Most prudent solution – allows for agenda control
- 3) Preferred solution to one that could potentially generate violence
- 1) Largely impossible to realise – discarded option

The reordering of preferences was a necessary element of the decision process facing Juan Carlos and demonstrates the constraints that are placed upon individuals at times. The most desired outcome is not always that which can be achieved at once, the importance of balancing that which one wishes, with that which one can achieve is crucial for the creation of a successful political strategy.

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Actions taken by Juan Carlos do not reflect the moral base of the decision process. Arias Navarro was not in favour of the transition, he was in fact hindering any real semblance of democratic reform. In addition to this, there existed friction and distrust between Juan Carlos and Arias Navarro and therefore the logical choice would have been to remove him from office and replace him with a more suitable candidate at the earliest possible opportunity. Rational analysis of the event prevents this from happening and introduces the element of preventative decision making.

If we assume a moral deliberation of events<sup>240</sup>, the immediate removal of Arias Navarro and the nomination of a suitable candidate would have occurred, however the complexity of the situation prevented Juan Carlos from acting thus. The eventual decision taken was based upon an analysis of the existing power structure and the potential for success expected in removing Arias Navarro from office. It is clear that an attempt to remove Arias Navarro without sufficient political sway would have resulted in potential disaster for the young monarch. The diagram below outlines the potential outcomes of the three preferences detailed above and clearly demonstrates the necessity for prudent action and cautious advancement.

An historical institutionalist approach provides for the continuation of structures such as the office of prime minister, and given the constitutionally protected ability of

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<sup>240</sup> "An individual often evaluates a choice situation from many different perspectives, each of which has associated with it a preference ordering of the options. My egoistic, altruistic, moral and social selves may rank the alternatives differently, so that the need arises for some aggregation mechanism." (Steedman, I. and U. Krause 1985, 5).

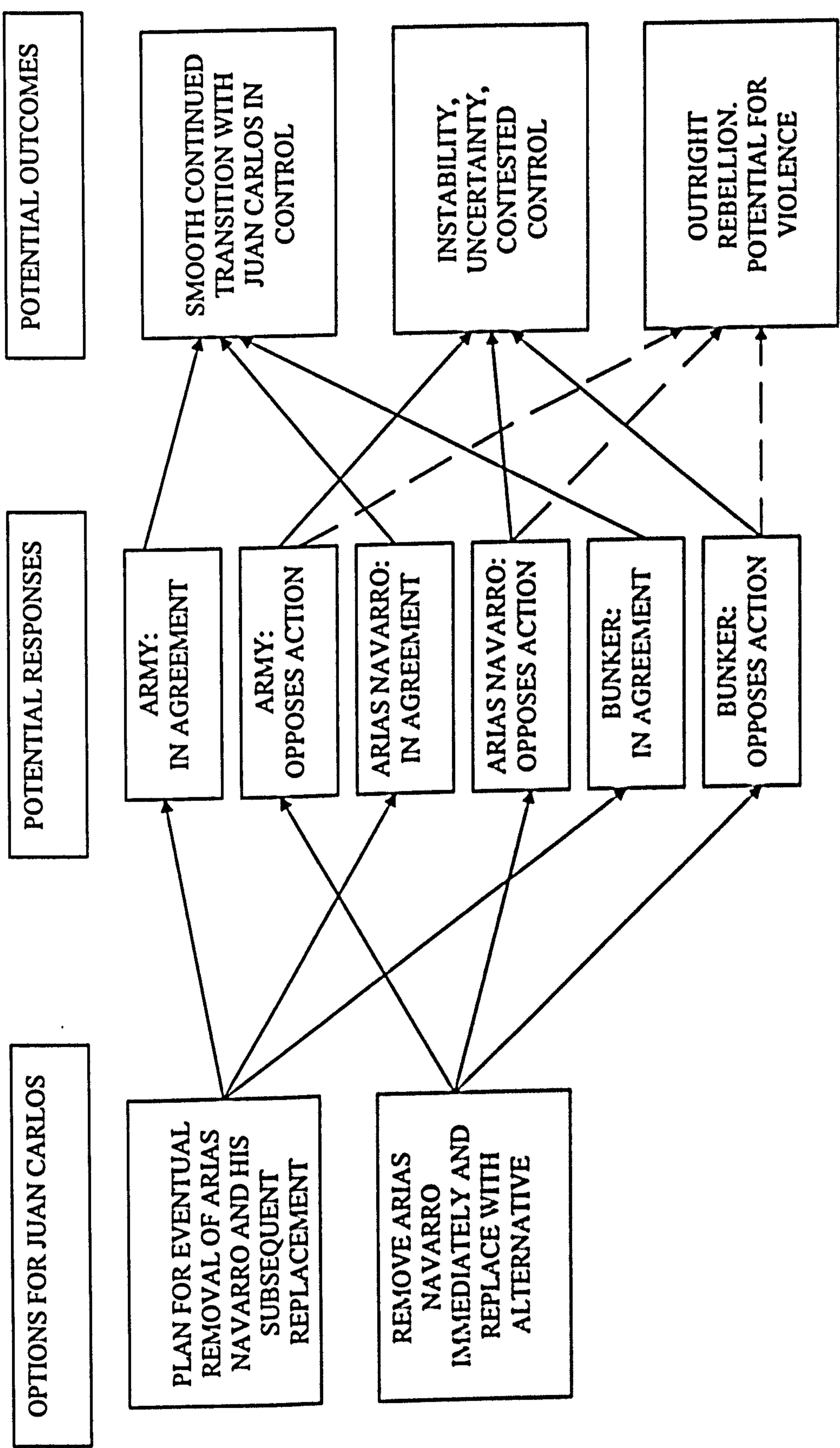


the Head of State to nominate according to his choice, there existed precedent for Juan Carlos to act according to his preferences. Unilateral action was not an option however; as an attack upon the person of Arias Navarro would have been seen as an attack upon the establishment, and this was not something that Juan Carlos could risk. The probability of political unrest and military backlash were far too real a threat to be taken lightly. It became rapidly evident that any action taken to remove Arias Navarro had to be undertaken with extreme care, minute preparation and the ability to support and substantiate the decision from both a political and an authoritarian perspective.

The diagram below outlines the possible outcomes for the decision to remove Arias Navarro. The two available options are highlighted in boxes on the left hand side of the diagram. The first box highlights the potential outcome were Arias Navarro to be removed eventually and in a much more structured and controlled manner than represented in the first diagram. This alternative represents by far the most adroit and sensitive approach to the problem at hand and one that stood a much greater chance of resulting in a potentially peaceful transition process. The second box demonstrates not only the inherent difficulties in removing the premier immediately but also the potential that it would also serve to de-stabilise the country and provoke possible violence and civil unrest. Here we are able to see the reality of power distribution and the extent to which external factors played into the decision making process. Juan Carlos was not free to act indiscriminately; his actions were constrained despite a moral and practical underpinning to the argument.

DECISION OPTIONS AND POTENTIAL OUTCOMES: THE ISSUE OF ARIAS NAVARRO

**FIG 4.2:**





The diagram above provides a visual outline of the potential outcomes of preferences 2 and 3, as outlined in Fig 4.1 above. The reordering of preferences was a necessary constraint that governed the actions of Juan Carlos. The removal of Arias Navarro and the subsequent nomination and confirmation of Adolfo Suárez can be viewed as the first real battle of the transition in Spain. Arias Navarro represented the 'system' and as such, for any semblance of reform to take place, his replacement was critical. In a rational analysis, morality plays a minor role and at times, must be overruled in favour of a more practical and coherent strategy. As has been outlined above, there can be little doubt as to the course of action that would best suit the needs of this time.

A more linear and historical institutional approach would suggest that the removal of Arias Navarro would be protected by convention. Simply put, the office of prime minister had existed prior to Arias Navarro and would continue to exist after he had vacated the position. The construction of institutions serves to protect and ensure the continuation of the system. The set of rules that govern a political democratic system, are designed to prevent abuse of power and any disregard for the established governing principals.<sup>1</sup> Simply possessing the ability to engender change does not automatically provide the owner with the right exert this power. What is evident from a linear approach is that the removal of Arias Navarro, if done at the correct time and in the correct manner, would not have provoked a backlash of opinion, residing, as it would have, within the confines of a structural framework.

It is essential in matters with a complex and sensitive ordering of variables that all efforts are made to create the semblance of legality. This naturally becomes an issue

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<sup>1</sup> "Institutions become second nature. Provided they continue to generate acceptable outcomes, there is no perceived need to think about, let alone incur the costs of trying to implement, institutional innovation." (Hausner. 1995, 53).

of greater importance, when those initiating the changes operate within the confines of a democratic framework. The system provides constraints upon those within it, which are not necessarily apparent to actors operating within an authoritarian system.<sup>242</sup> There are rules to follow and actions that can not be taken once adherence to the structure of the game has been established. The immediate removal of Arias Navarro would have resulted in a reversal of the democratic process and would have been counter to the 'spirit' of the transition itself. Actors operate within a set of parameters depending upon their relevant political position and this will affect the manner in which decisions are made, and even considered. To simply state that Juan Carlos acted according to personal preference is to miss the greater picture. The constraints placed upon him were to shape the transition and interestingly, the careful consideration and subsequent manipulation of these constraints provided the key to successful reform.

Juan Carlos was far too weak politically in 1975 to attempt that which he would later achieve with the removal of Arias Navarro. The relative power distribution between the two men has been discussed above and Fig 4.3. below outlines the interplay between the two actors. The game is relatively simple at this point as there are only two primary actors to be considered and therefore it is relatively straightforward to plot a coherent strategy from the point of view of the man in control at the time, namely, Arias Navarro.

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<sup>242</sup> "The defence of the realm involves a set of activities that contribute to the satisfaction of the goal - attainment functional requisite...The achievement of societal goals often involves the preservation of certain relationships." (Holt, 1967, 93)



**FIG 4.3:**

**DOMINANT STRATEGY: ARIAS NAVARRO 1975**

In 1975 Arias Navarro occupied the position of strength. He had the support of the military and the Bunker; he had been nominated by Franco and was seen by many as the rightful leader of the Francoist government. Juan Carlos by contrast, was relatively weak at this time; he was a political unknown without a real power base and could not afford to provoke the establishment at this early stage in his career.

Arias Navarro is in possession of a dominant strategy at this point, irrespective of the actions taken by Juan Carlos, Navarro is best advised to remain in power and assert his position. For the diagram below this strategy will be represented by S2. S1 would represent the alternative of resigning his office. The numbers in the left-hand of each box correspond to Arias Navarro and those in the right-hand side to Juan Carlos.

- S1     Arias Navarro resigns his office as prime minister
- S2     Arias Navarro remains in office as prime minister

		PLAYER 2 JUAN CARLOS	
		s1	s2
PLAYER 1 ARIAS NAVARRO	S 1	-1, 1	1, -1
	S 2	1, -1	1, 0

The game above is plotted for two actors but if we introduce the Cortes into the game and take into account the desire of Juan Carlos to replace Arias Navarro with Adolfo Suárez we are presented with the reality that no action taken immediately would have elicited a positive result for Juan Carlos and that patience and increased manipulation of the variables could produce a more favourable outcome.

**FIG 4.4:**  
**DEMONSTRATION OF ABILITY OF JUAN CARLOS TO CHALLENGE POWER**  
**BASE OF CORTES**  
**GAME PLOTTED IN 1975**

Below is a diagram representing the situation in 1975 when Juan Carlos had recently come to power. There are three potential strategies visible below and they demonstrate the extent to which Juan Carlos was subordinate to the control of Cortes. Given that this game is plotted for 1975, we must bear in mind the lack of reputation possessed by Adolfo Suárez at this time. Cortes held power, Juan Carlos was weak at this time and Suárez was largely an unrealistic candidate.

- S1 Suárez is proposed as Arias Navarro's immediate replacement
- S2 Suárez is proposed at a later date
- S3 Arias Navarro is confirmed as the Prime Minister

		PLAYER 2 JUAN CARLOS		
		s1	s2	s3
PLAYER 1 CORTES	S 1	-1, 0	-1, 0	-1, -1
	S 2	0, -1	0, 0	0, -1
	S 3	1, -1	1, 0	1, -1

It is apparent from the diagram above that given the structure of power distribution; it was in the best interest of the Cortes to retain Arias Navarro as the prime minister given that the payoff in Row S3 outweighs that of the other choices. The option that Suárez be proposed at a later date would not constitute a loss for either player to any great extent, merely a delay in the process. For Juan Carlos, player 2, the best possible outcome to expect from the plotted game would be to wait for a later date to propose Suárez. As demonstrated in Column s2, the payoff is zero, neither a loss nor a win. We assume for this game that Suárez was the choice for nomination, were he not, the issue would remain the same, the names would simply change.



Given the parameters expressed in the diagrams above<sup>243</sup>, the possibility of Juan Carlos achieving victory were nil. In order for success to be assured, the conditions of the game needed to be changed. This created the necessity to manipulate the variables present in the primary game so as to reorder the outcome. It was vital for the agenda to be set in favour of Juan Carlos and democratic reform. Given Arias Navarro's relative power in 1975 and the support which he enjoyed from both Cortes and the military, this was a daunting task indeed. The fact that Juan Carlos did not act as he would have liked in 1975 does not constitute a betrayal of his ideals<sup>244</sup>, nor can it be explained by his fear of Arias Navarro, although this certainly factored; rather it was a prudent and analytical approach to a situation that would have resulted in a negative outcome had the issue been forced under less than perfect conditions.<sup>245</sup>

The manner in which the agenda setting took place cannot be credited entirely to the designs and aims of Juan Carlos and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda. Arias Navarro was ill-suited for the position of prime minister given the political climate of the time. In the immediate years following the death of Franco, Spain experienced an opening of the political forum and a rise in awareness that had hitherto been smothered by Franco.<sup>246</sup> The character of Arias Navarro played a crucial role in the period leading up to his removal and in so doing, speaks against the notion that overriding importance can be given to the role of institutions as opposed to that of the individual occupying the

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<sup>243</sup> "The particular structure of the relationships among the authority roles will both reflect and condition the way in which power is distributed and used in the system. The rights and duties assigned to each role and the extent to which each limits or reinforces the power of the other helps to determine who has what authority and how it is used." (Easton 1967, 209).

<sup>244</sup> "Rational behaviour means choosing the best means to gain a predetermined set of ends. It is an evaluation of the consistency of choices and not of the thought process, of implementation of fixed goals and not of the morality of those goals." (Morrow 1994, 17).

<sup>245</sup> "Rational Choice Theory appeals to three distinct elements in the choice situation. The first element is the feasible set, i.e., the set of all courses of action which satisfy various logical, physical and economic constraints. The second is the causal structure of the situation, which determines what courses of action will lead to what outcomes. The third is a subjective ranking of feasible alternatives." (Elster 1986, 4).

<sup>246</sup> "General Franco preferred political apathy to enthusiasm. Except in unusual circumstances, his regime made no attempt to elicit mass support, rather preferring passive acceptance of its decrees." (Coverdale 1979, 13).

actual position. If the role of the actual individual were unimportant, it would not have been necessary to replace Arias Navarro at all, nor for that matter, would the leadership of Franco or Juan Carlos have provoked different outcomes.

Coupled with the machinations of Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda we are able to include the actions of Arias Navarro and the role he played in his eventual demise. Herein we see the importance of individual behaviour. Arias Navarro may well have occupied the position of strength in 1975 but failure to accurately assess the developments within Spain and therefore engender an appropriate response to them, caused irreparable damage to his position and consequently, to his support base. The actions of Arias Navarro could well have been plotted using a rational analysis of his past behaviour and his obvious allegiance to Francoist ideals but the reality is that much of what transpired was exploited at a later date, as opposed to posited and planned for in advance.<sup>247</sup>

The arrogance of Arias was polluting the political forum and adding to the level of distrust and ill feeling that existed amongst the various political parties. Arias Navarro's refusal to meet with members of the left<sup>248</sup> and his attitude towards those who deviated from the 'teachings of Franco' made his government far from either inclusive, or successful.<sup>249</sup> No longer simply a clash of personalities driven by a mutual lack of respect, the very existence of Arias Navarro was encroaching upon the transition to

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<sup>247</sup> "The writer of an essay on identifiable approaches to the study of politics and government might be tempted to look for a chain of evolution in the subject, whether molecular or holistic, but he soon finds that there is no evolution, no continuum. He also finds that there is not even an ostensible sequence of developments; some are consecutive, some concurrent, and most are apparently fortuitous." (Charlesworth 1967, 1).

<sup>248</sup> "On 3 May, when Alfonso Osorio asked Arias Navarro if he would meet representatives of the opposition, he refused categorically. Osorio pressed on, 'Not even with those who are closest to us?' to which Arias snapped, 'Would Franco receive José María Gil Robles? No he wouldn't. Neither will I.'" (Preston 2004, 348), (Osorio 1980, 123).

<sup>249</sup> "The politics of the government of Arias Navarro between November 1975 and July 1976 was a disaster, both as an initiative to reform as well as an attempt to control the change." (Maravall 1981, 24). (Translated from original by author).



democracy.<sup>250</sup> This reality created the legitimacy needed to begin the process of replacement. The structural framework of political institutions enabled the replacement of a candidate and the ineffectual and damaging behaviour of Arias Navarro brought this concept to the forefront of political debate.

It has been highlighted above that in 1975 Juan Carlos was simply unable to act according to preference but to assume that all was then left to chance is simplistic and naïve. While we may not agree with the notion that Juan Carlos had minutely planned the transition from the beginning, we must presume that if he were willing to remove Arias Navarro, a replacement candidate must have been considered. If we consider that there existed three groups within Spanish political life in the aftermath of Franco's death it enables us to demonstrate the task that faced the reformers.

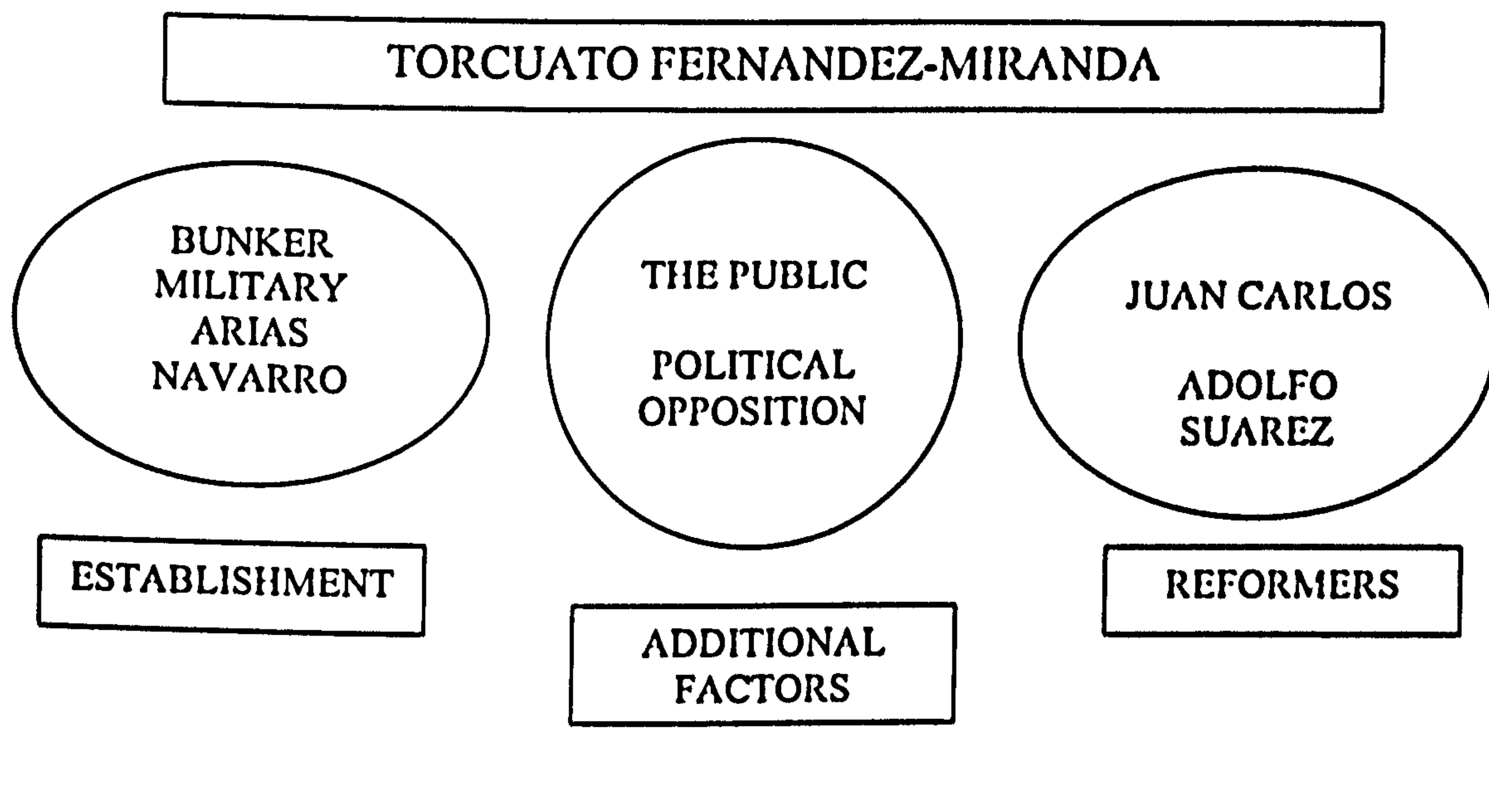
It was necessary for the 'reformers' to appease the traditional establishment while attempting not to alienate those factors who had hitherto largely been ignored under Franco, and were therefore expectant of change under a democratic system. This was to constitute a finely tuned balancing act and one that would be dependent upon careful planning and time management for its eventual success. As can be seen in Fig 4.5 below, Fernández-Miranda was to act as the bridge between the three groups. Any development that took place had to come from within and therefore appear as internal reform. Unilateral action was not possible, and the necessity for legal and accepted reform was paramount. While Juan Carlos did not possess great power at this time, his influence was on the increase as Arias Navarro's declined; this afforded a measure of control but not sufficient to provoke widespread change.

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<sup>250</sup> "There existed an impossible accord between Carlos Arias and the King. The King wanted political reform, Carlos Arias accepted political reform. The King wanted democracy; Carlos Arias preferred a Spanish version. The King spoke sincerely of being the King of all Spaniards, Carlos Arias, perhaps without realising it, saw him as King of a few Spaniards. The King thought of his son, Don Felipe, becoming King, Carlos Arias could not forget the immediate past." (Osorio 1980, 102-3). (Translated from original by author).

**FIG 4.5:**

**EXISTING POWER GROUPS IN SPANISH SOCIETY**



It became apparent that a measure of control was needed in order to maintain a balance between the establishment and the desire to reform. With the relative influence of Arias Navarro waning, came the necessity for Juan Carlos to demonstrate that, while acting within the framework of the system, he was able to engender change when it was needed.<sup>251</sup> Manipulation of existing variables was required and at the same time, an awareness and recognition of those additional variables that created new potential outcomes to the game.

The manner in which Arias Navarro was removed from office represents a sublime use of rational analysis coupled with an in-depth knowledge of the system

<sup>251</sup> "Juan Carlos knew that the transition to democracy would falter if it were not quickly placed in the hands of someone able to handle both bunker and opposition. Aware that dissatisfaction with Arias was also rife among senior Army officers, the King had to act before the military ministers formally requested that he dismiss the Prime Minister. In such an event, the preservation of his own authority would oblige him to keep on Arias if only to avoid a more reactionary figure." (Preston 2004, 351).



itself.<sup>252</sup> It would appear from Fig 4.5 that Fernández-Miranda's influence and ability made him an ideal choice for the candidacy of prime minister but his refusal to accept the position<sup>253</sup> despite the desires of Juan Carlos in this matter<sup>254</sup> was to prove most fortuitous to the democratic process. If we analyse this refusal we are able to see once again evidence of an aggregation mechanism at work. The role of prime minister would have represented a substantial promotion for Fernández-Miranda and yet he declined in order that he might be of more use to the democratic process in his eventual position as President of the Cortes.

In contrast to Juan Carlos' decision to delay action in 1975, Fernández-Miranda was acting from a moral standpoint when he rejected the offer of the prime minister. This selfless act allowed for the eventual replacement of Arias Navarro, as without the knowledge and expertise of Fernández-Miranda the process would have been largely impossible.<sup>255</sup> The role of individuals is highlighted in particular by the involvement of Fernández-Miranda in the transition. Rational analysis without the sufficient means to subsequently enforce the actions taken does not guarantee success. In his role as President of the Cortes, Fernández-Miranda was able to manipulate the situation from within and provoke internal reform. Much of what was happening within the government was taking place behind closed doors in the Cortes and was therefore hidden from public view. Juan Carlos took a close interest in the proceedings of the

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<sup>252</sup> Path-dependency suggests that the institutional legacies of the past limit the range of current possibilities and or options in institutional innovation...The path-shaping approach implies that social forces can intervene in current conjectures and actively re-articulate them so that new trajectories become possible." (Hausner et al. 1995, 6).

<sup>253</sup> "Torcuato rejected the offer of the Presidency with a gesture: that is better attributed to clairvoyance than to modesty. He responded to the King: 'I would be of better service to the Crown presiding over the Cortes and the Royal Council.'" (Morán 1979, 15). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>254</sup> The king suggested to Torcuato that he should preside over the *Consejo de Ministros*. If it was necessary to withdraw Carlos Arias, there was no one as suited to take command of the situation as he. (Morán 1979, 14).

<sup>255</sup> "The nomination of Suárez as President of the Government would never have been possible without the capable intervention of Fernández-Miranda." (Powell 2001, 160). (Translated from original by author).

Cortes but it became increasingly clear that he would need someone intimately involved in the process in order to sustain internal control and direction.<sup>256</sup>. This was to take precedence over replacing Arias Navarro and while it earned Juan Carlos criticism for being indecisive and weak, it was to benefit Spain in the long run. It became necessary to compromise on the issue of Arias Navarro in favour of being able to remove Alejandro Rodríguez Valcárcel as President of the Cortes and install Fernández-Miranda in his stead. This is a further example of preference re-ordering, in light of potential success, calculated against the ordering of existing variables.

Arias Navarro saw Fernández-Miranda as a potential rival for the position of prime minister and therefore the appointment of Fernández-Miranda as President of the Cortes created a smoke screen behind which the attempt at true reform could take place. This is a perfect example of variable manipulation and serves to demonstrate the manner in which Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda used the insecurities and arrogance of Arias Navarro against himself. Assuming that it was not possible to remove Arias Navarro at this point and that setting up Fernández-Miranda, as the President of the Cortes was the best possible pay-off that could be achieved, this did not constitute an end to the game at hand. With every action taken, a new set of variables is introduced and this in turn, allows for a new set of decisions to be contemplated. Juan Carlos had initiated change with the introduction of his mentor into a position of genuine power and authority but further development was needed in order to fully establish control over the mechanism of government.

The manipulation of variables continued and in effect was designed to erode Arias Navarro's power base to such a degree whereby reform would be unchallenged. The issue of a direct confrontation with Arias Navarro was rejected at this point in

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<sup>256</sup> For further information refer to footnote 46



favour of a much more subtle manner of political action. Whether this was as a result of Juan Carlos' continued fear of Arias Navarro or a more shrewd analysis of the events is unclear.<sup>257</sup> What is apparent, despite what conjecture or hindsight may tell is that the structure of the system was amended by Juan Carlos in order to realign the power base and thus create the ability to challenge the political stranglehold of the premier. When Arias Navarro announced his new cabinet on 10 December 1975, Juan Carlos had been able to make certain specific additions and moderate the nature of it somewhat, although the bulk of the cabinet remained comprised of traditional hardliners. Chief among the appointments, achieved by Juan Carlos, were those of José María de Areilza as Foreign Minister; Manuel Fraga as Minister of the Interior and Antonio Garrigues y Díaz Cañabate as Minister of Justice.<sup>258</sup>

Preston<sup>259</sup> claims that Juan Carlos had insisted on these three nominations as his price for Arias Navarro to remain as prime minister. If this is true then it represents a very astute strategy and evidence that rational analysis enabled agenda setting to override the structural framework that had previously constrained the actions of Juan Carlos. All three of these men carried enough weight and influence to make their voices heard against the premier. These appointments were not sufficient to completely overrule Arias Navarro, nor did they constitute the end of the struggle for Juan Carlos, but they represented a decisive and strong move on the part of the monarch.<sup>260</sup> Juan

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<sup>257</sup> "I just don't know how to deal with Arias. I've tried to establish some connection but I haven't managed it. He doesn't want, or doesn't know how, to listen and I have the impression that he doesn't feel the need to tell me anything....I think that at times he thinks he is stronger than me and that deep down he just doesn't accept me as King. He doesn't keep me informed, he talks and talks but the only thing he says is that, thanks to him, things are stable and that without him there would be chaos." (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 176-80), (Preston 2004, 346).

<sup>258</sup> For further information on these appointments. (Preston 2004, 332), (Powell 2001, 146), (Osorio 1980, 46-7).

<sup>259</sup> (Preston 2004, 332)

<sup>260</sup> "The cabinet created after the King's proclamation should be deemed the first government of the Monarchy and the second government of Carlos Arias Navarro but in reality it was neither one nor the other. It was not the first because Juan Carlos would rather have had from the start a President in whom he had confidence." (Powell 2001, 146). (Translated from original by author).

Carlos was maneuvering into a position of political security whereby he could legitimately provoke change and force the replacement of Arias Navarro to take place.

Juan Carlos was in a position of relative strength in 1975, albeit tempered by the knowledge that the fragile stability was predicated upon the cooperation and understanding of the groups outlined in Fig 4.5.<sup>261</sup> The cabinet had been amended to better suit the aims and objectives of Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda, Arias Navarro had continued to alienate not only the left but also members of the bunker and the military and the legal ramifications of reform had been carefully analysed by Fernández-Miranda in a manner that left nothing to chance. The first true battle of the transition had been well planned and constructed in advance and its execution delayed until such a time as the conditions would ensure success. In the diagram below we can see a complete reversal in the power structure between Juan Carlos and Arias Navarro from that present in 1975 and a realisation that the premier was firmly subordinate to the monarch.

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<sup>261</sup> The Monarchy could still be swept away in a catastrophic clash between the irresistible force of the left and the immovable object of the right. If that was to be avoided, it was essential that Juan Carlos do everything possible to facilitate more rapid progress towards the introduction of democracy, yet do so in such a way as to meet with the approval of the Armed Forces and the bulk of the Francoist old guard. (Preston 2004, 354).



**FIG 4.6:**

**DOMINANT STRATEGY: JUAN CARLOS 1976**

In 1976 Juan Carlos occupied the position of strength; he had increased his power base and enjoyed more support than in 1975. Democratic reform had the backing of the people due to Arias Navarro's failures as prime minister and Juan Carlos had both legality and legitimacy supporting his actions, as assured by the involvement of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda. Arias Navarro on the other hand had experienced a definite reduction in his own power base and was largely subject to the actions of Juan Carlos.

Juan Carlos possesses a dominant strategy at this point, irrespective of the actions taken by Arias Navarro. Juan Carlos is able to assert authority and remove Arias Navarro from office. For the diagram below this strategy will be represented by S2. S1 would represent the alternative of allowing Arias Navarro to remain in power and thus hinder the democratic process further. The numbers in the left hand side of each box correspond to Juan Carlos and those in the right hand side of each box to Arias Navarro.

- S1 Allow Arias Navarro to remain in office
- S2 Remove Arias Navarro from office

		PLAYER 2 ARIAS NAVARRO	
		s1	s2
PLAYER 1 JUAN CARLOS	S 1	1, -1	-1, 1
	S 2	1, -1	1, -1

Given the reversal in the power structure, Juan Carlos was in possession of the dominant strategy in 1976 and by the time he asked Arias Navarro to tender his resignation on 1 July 1976 there was little doubt that it would be received. Arias Navarro had never respected the position or the authority of Juan Carlos and therefore was likely not expecting the request for his resignation. The ability to manipulate and control the agenda from behind the scenes to such a point whereby victory in the game was secured, enabled the removal of a man who believed himself untouchable. The scene was set for a replacement to be nominated and elected. This in itself would not be a process without difficulty, despite the preparation and care taken by Fernández-Miranda. From a logical and rational analysis; the candidate chosen would have been one that would have elicited the least animosity in the election process. Should Juan Carlos' nominee fail to be ratified, it would have rendered the past year of preparation moot and dramatically undercut the emergent power base of the monarch and that of democratic reform.

The choice of Adolfo Suárez may in hindsight seem a natural one, he had good credentials, was roughly the same age as the King and was charismatic enough to gain the support of the Bunker<sup>262</sup> and the military and had proved himself during the period leading up to his eventual nomination, but at the time he was considered far from the ideal candidate, if he was considered at all.<sup>263</sup> The two most likely candidates to replace Arias were perhaps embodied by the persons of José María de Areilza and Manuel Fraga. Areilza was the Minister of Foreign Affairs, sixty-six years of age and with a strong Francoist past, and Fraga was the second Vice-President of the Government and

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<sup>262</sup> "In 1976 Suárez was a relatively unknown politician outside of the official circles of Madrid. Although he had associated almost exclusively with the Movement, in his youth he had served in 'Catholic Action' and had never belonged to the youth organizations of the sole party." (Powell 2001, 160). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>263</sup> "In truth, Adolfo Suárez was little known at the national level, he had barely made statements declaring his political position...combined with this it is evident that his age was not the most calming of factors for the veteran politicians." (Osorio 1980, 130). (Translated from original by author).



head of FEDISA<sup>264</sup> and GODSA<sup>265</sup> and was far too belligerent a character to be considered. Both men were far too dominant in their personalities and it is suggested by Preston (1986) that Juan Carlos needed someone younger, someone of his own generation who would share his own motivation and drive for progress.

In essence, one can view the preparation of Adolfo Suárez in a similar vein to the grooming that Juan Carlos underwent at the hands of Franco. While the process was less pronounced and certainly less obviously made public, there is evidence to suggest that Suárez had long been the choice to replace Arias Navarro.<sup>266</sup> The decision to select Suárez was the right one for Juan Carlos and for Fernández-Miranda<sup>267</sup> and yet it would not be a popular decision with all parties. Preston (1986) tells us that Juan Carlos was aware that the Ultras would attempt to block the transition and therefore, he matched Suárez's appointment with that of General Gutiérrez Mellado as Chief of the General Staff. This action goes some way to demonstrating that Juan Carlos' fundamental understanding of politics exceeded what many believed. While there were those who opposed Suárez, mainly for his connections to the Francoist past, this did not represent an immense hurdle and would eventually work in his favour. Juan Carlos had been wise in his choice of a youthful running mate as this was to impact upon the manner in which those both within Spain and without viewed the transition.<sup>268</sup> He was clearly the King's choice<sup>269</sup> and would, in time, become accepted by the population at large too.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Federation of Independent Studies

<sup>265</sup> Cabinet of Orientation and Documentation

<sup>266</sup> As detailed in footnote 48

<sup>267</sup> "The Monarch and his mentor required somebody 'manageable' and 'available' who would be 'open to ideas', and the Secretary General Minister of the Movement had given numerous signs that he was the man for the job." (Powell 2001, 158). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>268</sup> "Spaniards wanted change but not confrontation and this favoured Suárez...In Contrast, Carrillo and Fraga awakened memories of the conflicts of the past." (Preston 1986, 119).

<sup>269</sup> "Because he came from Francoism and because he would not create suspicion that he was attempting radical change that would be viewed as unacceptable by certain sectors of our society...he was young, modern and sufficiently ambitious as to wish to be the man capable of confronting the times in which we lived. Adolfo Suárez the francoist successfully convinced the antifrancoists that they should place their trust in him to set the wheels in motion." (Vilallonga 1993, 120). (Translated from original by author).

The manipulation of the agenda did not cease to be a priority until Suárez had been confirmed as prime minister. Once Arias Navarro had been relieved of his duties, it fell to the Council of the Realm to present the Head of State with a list of three candidates to choose from. The Chairman of the Council of the Realm was Fernández-Miranda and the list of three names, the *terna*, had been carefully prepared so as to assure the inclusion of Suárez. This was far from a straightforward task as the motivation behind the action had to be concealed from those involved. As has been mentioned above, Suárez was far from the ideal candidate at the time and the inclusion of his name was seen as a means to pacify the Bunker with whom he had connections, but ultimately a waste of an entry on the list.<sup>271</sup> Fernández-Miranda was able to exploit the existing structure of the system to the advantage of Juan Carlos and himself. It became possible through careful manipulation of the functional framework to create the basis whereby the desired outcome would be obtained, in a manner that was both legal and legitimate.<sup>272</sup> We see a perfect example of latent control being displayed. The battle ground had been carefully selected, the sides had been clearly drawn and the 'reformers' were supremely armed for the task ahead.

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<sup>270</sup> "For the bulk of non-politicized Spaniards, however, fearful of losing the material benefits of the previous 15 years, but receptive to political liberalization, the combination of Juan Carlos and Adolfo Suárez was an attractive option. It seemed to offer the chance of both protecting the economic and social advantages of recent times and of advancing peacefully and gradually towards democracy." (Preston 1986, 94).

<sup>271</sup> "Torcuato then proposed Suárez, because, in spite of having openly shown his reformist tendency on certain occasions, he had come from a Falangist background, having been General Secretary and Minister of the Movement, the Francoist single party, and Chairman of the official association known as the Union of the Spanish People. For the majority of Councillors, he was hardly suspicious. On the other hand, Suárez was less well known than other former ministers, and so his name was not rumoured and neither did it appear in the lists of favourites put out by the press. Provoking fewer rebuffs, he could make his way more discreetly into a trio." (Colomer 1995, 42).

<sup>272</sup> "On the occasion we are referring to, the device used by the Chairman of the Council of the Realm was the introduction of a new dimension for classifying and grouping the available alternatives in different subsets to be voted separately. It is important to remember that the voting of the Councillors had to produce not one but three winners, from whom the King would later select one. By grouping the candidates in three subsets, the scope of the available alternatives to be chosen at every voting round was reduced. This obviously favoured certain candidates who might not have been winners in a combined voting among all candidates." (Colomer 1995, 41).



The strategy worked flawlessly, Suárez was included in the *terna* and was duly chosen by Juan Carlos. In perhaps the only occasion during the transition process, we are able to see the pride taken by Fernández-Miranda in his task and the degree to which the planning and agenda setting had resulted in success. On his way from the Council to Zarzuela to present Juan Carlos with the *terna*, Fernández-Miranda commented to the Press that he was in a position to “deliver the King, that which he had asked for.”<sup>273</sup> This is a clear indication that forethought and planning had played an extensive role in the removal of Arias Navarro and the subsequent selection of Adolfo Suárez.

The event outlined above is an example of rational analysis and gaming on a scale so complex and sublime to be seemingly invisible to those not involved in its creation. The shift in the power structure that occurred with the removal of Arias Navarro can not be entirely attributed to Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda and yet their role in the process can not be overlooked or marginalised either. Time was taken to properly prepare the groundwork, to accurately assess the risk involved in decision making and to secure success. The system was manipulated from within, the actors were arranged accordingly and the end result mapped and designed with precision. Within the structural framework of a Francoist government, Fernández-Miranda had engineered democratic reform. The choice of a candidate suitable for the role was paramount given the volatility of the times and the dexterity with which Suárez was introduced into mainstream political life is a further example of agenda setting. From the constraints of the old, a new ethos and allegiance had been crafted.<sup>274</sup> Operating

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<sup>273</sup> “On the way to Zarzuela, Fernández-Miranda commented to the press that he was in a position ‘to offer the king, that which he was asked of me’, in the only instance when his pride for a task achieved outweighed his proverbial discretion.” (Powell 2001, 160). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>274</sup> “A belief in legitimacy may become an autonomous goal for the members of a system. Some students of modernizing nations have observed, in this respect, that the breakdown of a sense of obligation to the old authorities leaves attitudes of ‘free floating obedience’. These can readily be attached to an appropriate leader who is clever enough to recognize and take advantage of such loosened attitudes. The

within the system in fact allowed for a degree of freedom that is perhaps not immediately obvious. One would think that a structural framework would constrain and hinder the actions of those seeking to reform it but correct manipulation of variables and an in-depth knowledge of the system enabled these constraints to be turned against those seeking to protect the existing order and provided the perfect sleight of hand with which to engender change.<sup>275</sup>

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new leaders fill the void created by the absence of objects to which these attitudes of obligation attach themselves." (Kahin et. al. 1955, 309).

<sup>275</sup> "Not only are institutions man-made, men are also institution made. In other words, people are socialized by the 'hidden curriculum' effect of institutions into accepting the values, norms and rules embodied in them; hence they know, expect and anticipate that institutions can be relied upon and reckoned with." (Hausner et. al. 1995, 52).



## **Chapter 5**

### **The reform of the Cortes: Knight to King Four**

The reform of Cortes represents the most complex and delicately executed political event of the transition analysed in this thesis. The enormity of what was being attempted should not be underestimated. The reformers, despite an increased sense of authority as demonstrated in the previous chapter, were far from occupying a position of strength as the Bunker was still powerful and perhaps more importantly, continued to represent a recognised institution both of Francoism and of the government itself. The successful replacement of Arias Navarro with Adolfo Suárez, as detailed in the previous chapter, marked a definite shift in the power structure and enabled the reformers to operate from within the system as opposed to implementing change unilaterally from without. The existence of Suárez in the position of prime minister did not guarantee democratic reform but it did provide the opportunity to manipulate the system internally and initiate change in a manner previously impossible.

The removal of Arias Navarro represented a comprehensive victory for the process of democratic reform and yet without control of the mechanism of government itself, namely the Cortes, this change would have been without real merit. The events outlined in the previous two chapters represent the initial steps taken towards reform and demonstrate that a subtle power shift was being experienced in Spanish political life. For any real transition to democracy to take place, complete control of the political system was required. The tremendous scope of the undertaking is explained below and an attempt is made to demonstrate the highly skilled and sophisticated manner in which individuals successfully executed what amounts to one of the greatest political undertakings of Spanish history.

The events outlined in the two chapters above differ considerably to the one discussed below. The nomination of Juan Carlos was a game played between two individuals based upon shared preferences and understood implications of actions; the



nomination of Adolfo Suárez involved more than two men although was consistent with the first event in that it was very much constructed on individual preferences and capabilities. The role of individuals and the manner in which they interacted with each other dictated the adopted course of action. The reform of the Cortes is of a different nature, while the role of individuals is still important, and will be detailed below; the existence of the institution of government with its structured environment produced regulated responses from its members and allowed a strategy to be constructed by the primary actors accordingly. Not simply dealing with the impulses and actions of single actors, the reform of the Cortes would force the primary actors to confront a system designed to withstand external pressure and one that had been firmly established and institutionalised during Franco's regime. The very nature of the 'game' was therefore substantially altered from the previous two events.

A tremendous amount of preparation was involved in the planning and execution of the reform discussed below.<sup>276</sup> The reform of Cortes required tremendous attention to detail, and the reality of change in Spain was a result of careful planning, political strategising and a comprehensive manipulation of variables. The Cortes was an institution in Spain, implemented and strengthened during Franco's regime to the point of acceptance by the people and the political forum. It is arguable that the Cortes, in and of itself, was not a hugely powerful entity but its true influence lay in its existence and perpetual involvement in political life.

The successful nomination of Adolfo Suárez as prime minister and the appointment of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda as President of the Cortes were crucial

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<sup>276</sup> "I believe that the entire installation process of the Crown has been misunderstood. Almost as if it had taken place suddenly and by accident. As if by surprise, a sort of happy improvisation. That was not the case. The Crown, before setting itself up as the axle of the State and indeed, from the moment this had been achieved, had a minutely calculated plan. Improvisation was the last thing that took place." (Alcocer, J.L. 1986, 13). (Translated from original by author).

steps in the process of democratic development but the Cortes itself lay at the very heart of Francoism and constituted a staunch obstacle to genuine reform. Given the nature and motivational essence of the transition, an open and accountable Cortes was paramount. Reform was essential and yet the manner of its implementation depended largely upon various societal and institutional constraints that could not be ignored. These constraints, imposed by Franco during his rule were felt at both a personal and collective level and were to shape the construction and subsequent execution of any reform action that was taken.

The decision process before Juan Carlos would have been very similar to that regarding the issue of Adolfo Suárez's nomination, given that the success of any action taken was directly dependent upon the timing and preparation implemented prior to the fact. One can assume that the preference ordering of Juan Carlos would have indicated a desire to remove the Cortes and install a new one of his choosing, in the same manner as had been executed the replacement of Arias Navarro. Initial analysis of the situation and any subsequent action to be taken, would have resulted in a determination of what Elinor Ostrom terms an 'action arena'.<sup>277</sup> It is perhaps useful to view the ordering of preferences and any resultant actions taken, from the traditional understanding put forward by RCT and analyse these preferences in terms of return maximisation. The process of deliberation that Juan Carlos and his advisors undertook, would have taken into account the outcomes of previous events such as the replacement of Arias Navarro and any subsequent course of action would have been determined accordingly.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> For further explanation of an action arena, please refer to E. Ostrom's chapter titled "Institutional Rational Choice: An Assessment of the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework" in P.A. Sabatier's book, *Theories of the Policy Process*. (1999).

<sup>278</sup> "Two varieties are reflected in the model. The first is the mapping of choices onto decision makers, the decision structure. The second is the mapping of problems onto choices, the access structure." (March and Olsen 1989, 13).



It is important to highlight the constraints that were involved in regards to the decision to reform Cortes. As mentioned above, these constraints existed on both a personal and collective level. Juan Carlos was directly affected by decisions taken by Franco and by the institutional framework that curtailed absolute freedom of movement. The very nature of the system under which Juan Carlos was operating served to dictate the potential avenues available and acted as a deterrent from unilateral action.<sup>279</sup> The institutional safeguards were designed to prevent abuse and direct and wholesale change, while providing for the continuation of the establishment. No decision is made without consideration of additional factors and awareness of the 'game-scenario' was integral to any progress that could be attempted. Chief among the constraints in place at this time were the *Leyes Fundamentales*. These had been implemented by Franco during his regime in an attempt to create a straightjacket against any future reform of the system that Juan Carlos may attempt to initiate.<sup>280</sup> When examining the role of Juan Carlos in the process of reforming the Cortes, we become aware of the tenuous position in which he found himself, constrained on the one hand by his acceptance of Franco's nomination<sup>281</sup> and yet desirous for change on the other.<sup>282</sup> The decision to reform the Cortes could not be implemented based upon personal preference, but rather through a more detailed and analytical awareness of the variables. The delicacy of the situation demanded a sophisticated and subtle approach to the problem at hand, one that would

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<sup>279</sup> "In contrast to some (though not all) rational choice analyses, historical institutionalists tend to see political actors not so much as all-knowing, rational maximisers, but more as rule-following 'satisfiers.'" (Simon 1985), (March and Olsen 1982).

<sup>280</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the *Leyes Fundamentales* see Preston (2004, 129, 188-191, 200-205), Powell (2001), Hernández Gil (1982), (Fernández-Miranda 1995, 22).

<sup>281</sup> "The conversation was most cordial and emotional. The Prince reiterated that which he had said on the 15 January: namely that he was committed to serve Spain that he had committed to this when he had sworn on the flag. At the end of the interview, Franco embraced him." (Lopez-Rodo 1977, 335), (Preston 2004, 235), (Vilallonga 1993, 99). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>282</sup> "During the early months of his reign, Juan Carlos was obsessed with the need to convince the democratic opposition both of his democratic intentions and of the viability of a far-reaching transformation of the political system." (Powell 1996, 96).

ensure a greater degree of success than a personally motivated onslaught of an established institution.

A cost-benefit analysis of the events would have indicated a preference for patience over immediate action. While the Cortes was perhaps not as powerful as once it had been, a direct attack upon the institution of parliament would still have represented a dangerous move indeed. Such an attempt would have been unconstitutional and would have provoked a dramatic backlash from the armed forces and the entrenched Bunker. Every effort had been made thus far to operate within the constraints of democratic principles and to ensure that all action taken was done so in a legal manner, correctly coordinated and executed. Despite the possible desires of the monarch, there is no reason to assume that action taken in this event would be the result of anything less than a careful assessment of available options. Here exists evidence of personal preference being over-ruled by the reality of the situation at hand. It is not always possible for unilateral action to be taken, not even if it is feasible. Respect and awareness of the game itself must exist in order for a successful outcome to be assured.<sup>283</sup> This constitutes a reordering of preferences as dictated by the game, but also signifies an awareness of the game itself and an appreciation of the parameters that are in place. The actor is connected to the game just as the game is ordered by the actions of the actor in play. The diagram below outlines the ordering and necessary reordering of preferences on the part of Juan Carlos in his decision to reform Cortes.

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<sup>283</sup> "In short, people don't stop at every choice they make in their lives and think to themselves, "Now what will maximise my self-interest?" Instead, most of us, most of the time, follow societally defined rules, even when so doing may not be directly in our self-interest." (Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 8).



## **FIG 5.1:**

### **ORDERING OF PREFERENCES FOR JUAN CARLOS REGARDING CORTES.**

- 1) Remove Cortes and install a democratically minded Parliament
- 2) Proceed with lengthy process of internal reform

The first option constituted a potentially dangerous course of action on the part of Juan Carlos. There were far too many unknown variables involved with this decision. Given the volatile nature of the situation, it was necessary for maximum control of the sequence of events to be attained before acting. Bearing in mind the potential for a backlash from the Armed Forces and the unrest that would emanate from the Bunker itself, the decision to unilaterally remove Cortes would not only have been illegal, but also highly dangerous and ill-advised.

If the Cortes was allowed to remain in power but was subjected to internal reform, Juan Carlos would need to appease the factions of Spanish political life outside of the immediate political arena such as the fringe parties and the people themselves. Given the public opinion in favour of democratic reform, this could have proved potentially dangerous as well. The level of strikes within Spain at this time and the rise in violence from ETA was indication enough that change was required and even expected.

Given the potential for unrest from both sides outlined above, it would appear that Juan Carlos was in a no-win situation. An analysis of the potential repercussions and the memory of Civil War would have indicated that the greater risk lay with the alienation of the Armed Forces. It would be an easier task to appease the people with demonstrations of political reform than it would to confront the established Francoist power base head on.

### **REORDERING OF PREFERENCES BY JUAN CARLOS**

- 2 Proceed with lengthy process of internal reform
- 1) Remove Cortes and install a democratically minded Parliament

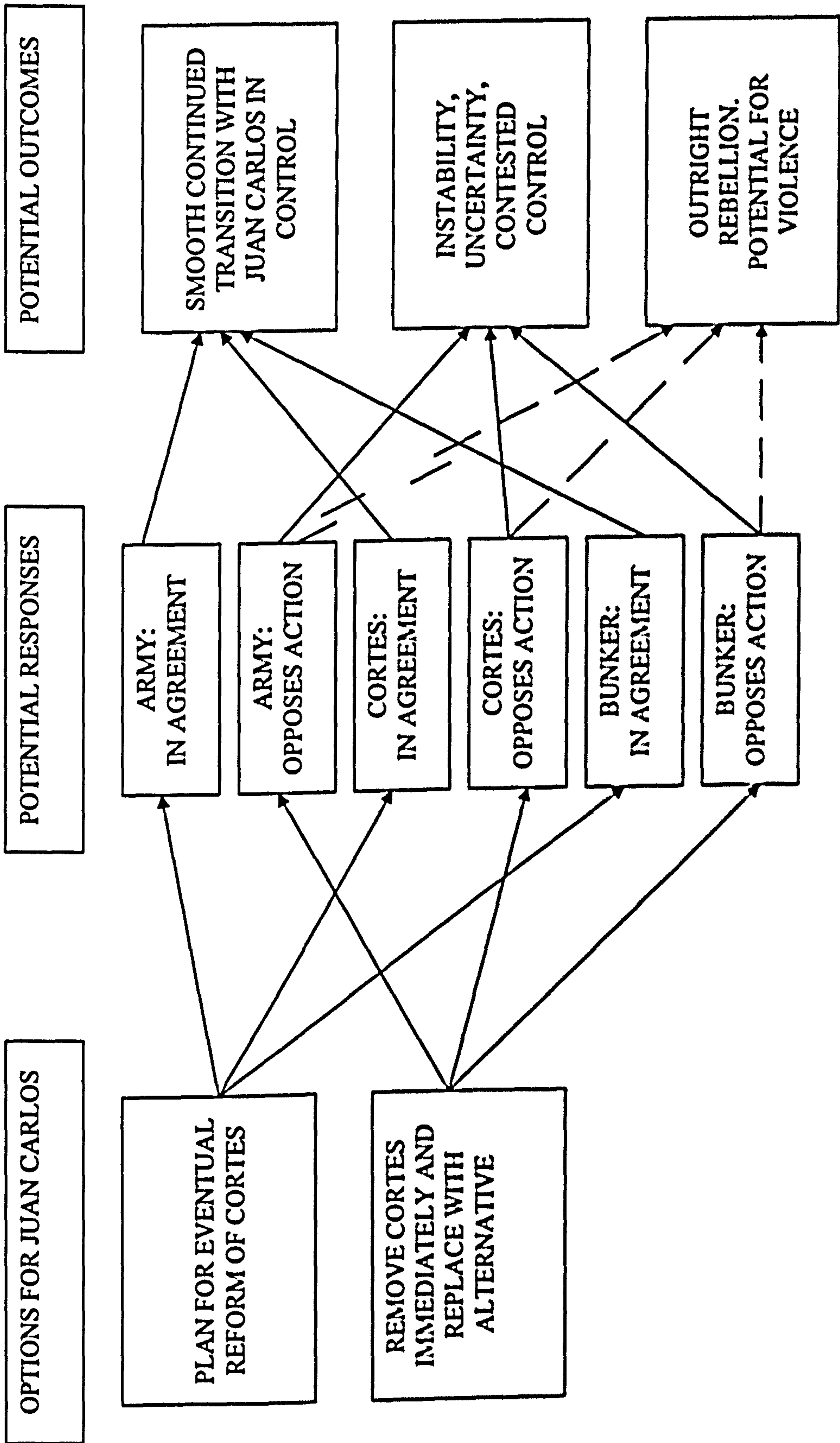
A cost-benefit analysis of the situation would have therefore led Juan Carlos to determine that the safer course of action lay with a meticulously, albeit gradual process of reform, one that allowed for the manipulation of variables and therefore a reordering of preferences would have been constructed and this would have been at the heart of the decision to act henceforth. While the decision to reform gradually would not guarantee success, there existed greater scope for control and success than offered by a direct confrontation with Cortes and the Constitution itself.

The diagram below (Fig 5.2) outlines the potential outcomes for the two choices detailed above. It is evident that the most prudent option was to allow sufficient time to pass thus creating the opportunity to manipulate the existing variables. The decision options are presented in the boxes on the left hand side of the page and the potential responses and subsequent outcomes are shown accordingly. Fig 5.3 represents the possible outcomes involved, as demonstrated by a game scenario, involved in the decision to replace the Cortes in 1976.



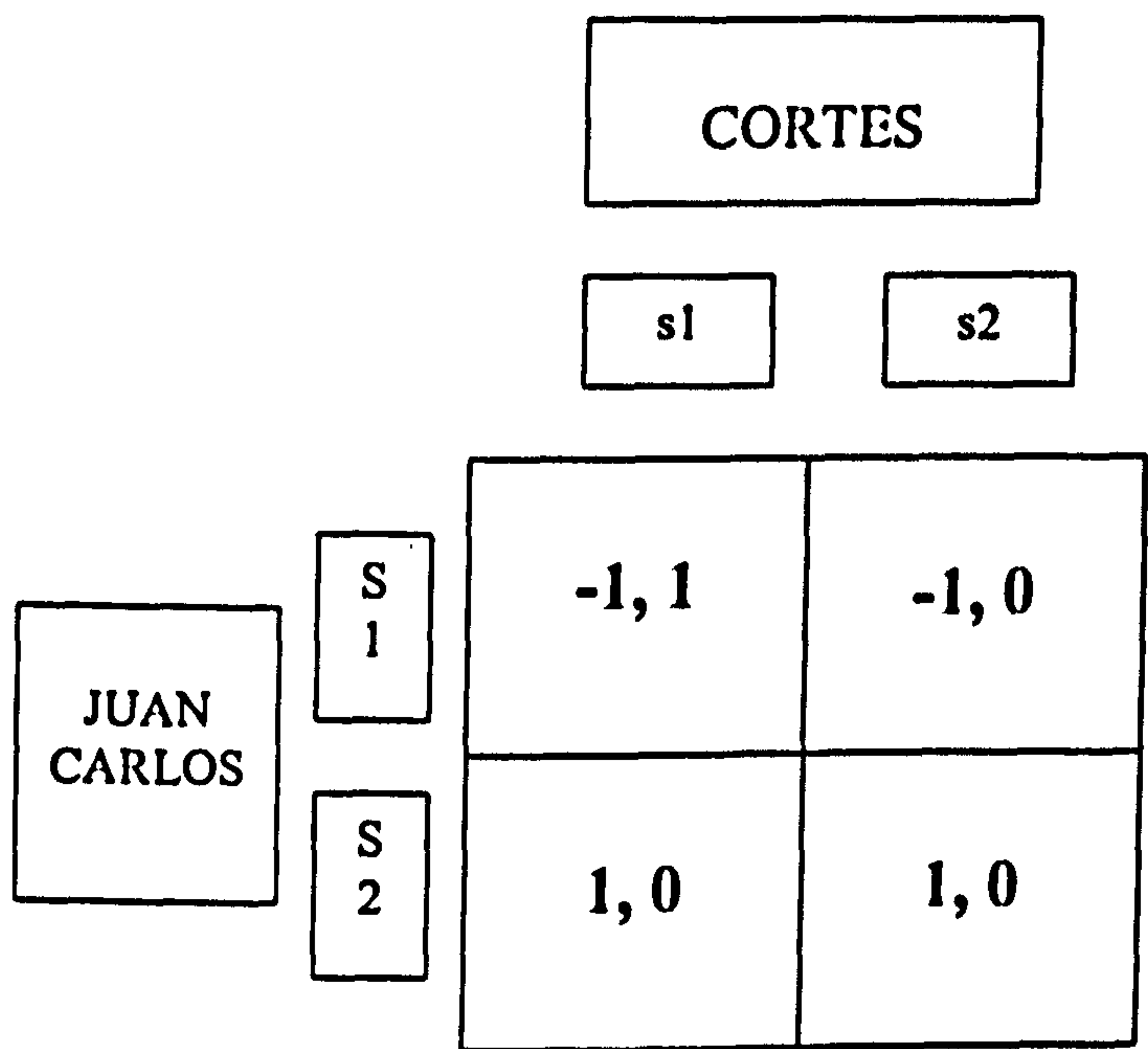
DECISION OPTIONS AND POTENTIAL OUTCOMES: THE ISSUE OF THE CORTES IN 1976

FIG 5.2



DECISION TO REPLACE OR REFORM CORTES IN 1976

FIG 5.3:



The numbers in the left hand side of each box correspond to Juan Carlos and those in the right hand side of each box correspond to the Cortes.

S1 represents the choice to reform now. This would have involved the direct removal of an established institution. It would have been incredibly difficult to complete and would have met with extensive if not violent opposition from the Cortes itself and the Army.

S2 represents the choice to reform later and from an internal perspective. This provided sufficient time for the agenda to be set in favour of reform, for the various parties to be convinced of the merit of change and for the legality of the operation to be assured.



The diagrams above illustrate the decision process before Juan Carlos in 1976. The power base of the King had grown, as the internal strength of the Cortes had waned and yet the monarch was still not capable of removing the Cortes in what could only have been interpreted as a unilateral action. Public opinion aside, it would have constituted an illegal act and one that would have weakened the very fabric of the democratic process.

As can be seen from the diagrams above, the desire to replace the Cortes and install an openly democratic parliament aligned to the transition process would have resulted in political suicide for Juan Carlos. The potential ramifications far outweighed the potential for success. Arguably more important was the element of uncertainty and the inability to control the outcome. Previous events in the transition had been meticulously planned and flawlessly executed and to deviate from that formula at this point, despite personal desires would have been a mistake. Juan Carlos was not acting alone in this process and it was the advice and direction he received from Fernández-Miranda in particular that helped to form the course of action that would be adopted. Having taken the oath to serve Spain and the institution of the Monarchy, the parameters to the decisions before him were somewhat limited. It was not without considerable internal debate and the invaluable involvement of Fernández-Miranda that any such decision to progress was reached.<sup>284</sup>

In a conversation that took place between Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda on the 18 July 1969, the personal involvement of the primary actors is highlighted. Evidence such as this illustrates a real human connection to the process being undertaken and in turn, enables us to construct additional parameters that permit a

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<sup>284</sup> "In any theory of deliberate choice, action depends on the decision maker's values. Since the consequences of interest are to be realized in the future, it is necessary to anticipate not only what will happen but how the decision maker will feel about those outcomes when they are experienced." (March and Olsen 1989, 6).

certain degree of prediction. Juan Carlos was concerned about his responsibilities to his oath<sup>285</sup> and Fernández-Miranda went to great lengths to assure him that reform of the *Leyes Fundamentales* would not constitute a breach of ethics; on the contrary, it was a constitutionally protected avenue of action.<sup>286</sup> The legal acumen and expertise of Fernández-Miranda was instrumental in the manipulation of the variables necessary to allow reform to become a reality. External reform was not possible given the nature of the system and the relative uncertainty of the outcome and therefore, internal reform became the most attractive option available.

The necessity to set the agenda and control the parameters in which the game would take place was vital. The institutional framework that outwardly constrained actions could be inwardly subverted to produce the desired results.<sup>287</sup> Internal reform would not only have the semblance of legality but would also appear indigenous to the very institution it was attempting to alter. This would in turn serve to reduce the threat of repercussion from the armed forces. The task at hand therefore was a mammoth one that would require all the expertise of the actors involved and more than just a little luck.<sup>288</sup> As has been mentioned above, Juan Carlos was desirous of reform and we can assume from the level of involvement in the process, so were both Torcuato Fernández-

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<sup>285</sup> "His concern was clean, clear and noble, very deep and sincere. He wanted to have a clear conscience regarding what he did and of the commitments he would acquire. He had received from Franco a legitimacy that he accepted but the Monarchy had in addition its own legitimacy." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 53). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>286</sup> "By swearing to the Fundamental Laws, you are swearing to them in their entirety, and therefore, you are swearing to Article 10 of the Law of Succession, that states that the laws can be reformed. Subsequently, you accept the possibility to initiate reform." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 54). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>287</sup> "While rules guide behaviour and make some actions more likely than others, they ordinarily do not determine political behaviour or policy outcomes precisely. Rules, laws, identities and institutions provide parameters for action rather than dictate a specific action, and sometimes actors show considerable ability to accommodate shifting circumstances by changing behaviour without changing core rules and structures." (Olsen 2003).

<sup>288</sup> The constituent Cortes set out to draft a charter to break the legal and political framework that existed under Franco and resume the tradition interrupted by the Civil War in 1936. In addition, the constitution needed to be amenable to both conservative and progressive interpretations....Only a powerful and dynamic state founded on the principles enunciated by the constituent Cortes would make sense out of post-Franco Spain and set it on a new course. (López-Pina, A. 1985, 34).



Miranda<sup>289</sup> and Adolfo Suárez but an additional element that helped to lend impetus to the reform process was that of public opinion. While this was not a factor that Juan Carlos could engineer, it was possible to harness it to the greater good of the transition. Awareness of the external factors enables manipulation of internal structures to generate a desired outcome.

Public opinion was manifested in various forms and created a level of uncertainty on the part of the Cortes. While the Francoist parliament had been considered untouchable during Franco's regime, cracks were beginning to show and the aura of invincibility was being gradually eroded by more direct and active participation, in the political arena, by the general public. The increased levels of interaction between the police and the general public and the resultant animosity this caused were an additional factor to consider.<sup>290</sup> The problems experienced at this time were not restricted solely to internal ones, the combination of increased strike activity<sup>291</sup> and the indirect involvement of certain members of the international community,<sup>292</sup> contributed to the setting of the parameters within which the primary actors were permitted to operate. External factors play a decisive role and one cannot afford to overlook them in an analysis of political events.

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<sup>289</sup> "I interviewed the King at six...he took me by the hands and spoke to me of his long and difficult hope of so many years... of the difficulties he had experienced to form the Government and of the resistance he had encountered. He eulogised the fidelity and flexibility of Torcuato in the twin position he occupied." (Areilza 1977, 20). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>290</sup> For a more detailed account of the events of this period and the clashes between the Spanish police and the general public, refer to Historical Chapter p 40-41

<sup>291</sup> "Meanwhile in 1975, the most conflict ridden year of Francoism, 3156 strikes had been declared, in only the first three months of 1976, 17731 had been recorded." (Powell 2001, 152). (Maravall 1981, 27). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>292</sup> "Kissinger asked me whether the King had as much power as Franco had had, and whether he would one day become a Constitutional King. Whether he could direct politics by overruling the Government? Whether the Army respected him? Whether he would rush reform or take his time?" 24/1/76 (Areilza 1977, 61). (Translated from original by author).

The ability to reform from within, was an institutionally protected right that was successfully exploited to engender change.<sup>293</sup> The regulated and formulaic existence of the parliamentary system both constrained and facilitated the actions taken.<sup>294</sup> Constitutional reform was protected by the *Leyes Fundamentales* and this provided the avenue for human intervention. Institutions are protected by a governing set of rules that not only dictate the behaviour of the entity but also protect its very existence and survival. Providing these rules are correctly adhered to, there exists the possibility for institutionally sanctioned reform.<sup>295</sup> Despite the backing of public support, the additional pressure of negative feeling towards the Cortes, the ability of Fernández-Miranda and the protective cloak of legality, the task was still a complicated and tenuous endeavour. While the power and influence of the Cortes may have been weakened due to external factors, they were still very much intact and represented a powerbase against which Juan Carlos was forced to tread carefully. Juan Carlos was far from respected at this point by the Cortes, his personal influence and reputation had indeed grown throughout Spain but his political persona was a mere shadow of that enjoyed by Franco during his lifetime.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> "Most institutional actions result neither from extraordinary processes or forces, nor from heroic interventions, but from relatively stable, routine processes that relate institutions to their environments. The stable rules and meanings...produce a great variety of behaviour flexibly responsive to environmental changes. If the environment changes rapidly, so will the responses of stable institutions. As a result, with respect to many aspects of their behaviour, political institutions change quickly in response to environmental signals." (March and Olsen 1989, 58).

<sup>294</sup> "A central defining feature of 'institutionalization'...is the stable, recurring, repetitive, patterned nature of the behaviour that occurs within institutions, and because of them. 'Institutionalism' has been characterized as 'the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability.'" (Goodin 1996, 22).

<sup>295</sup> "An important part of the modern democratic creed is that impersonal, fairly stable, publicly known, and understandable rules that are neither contradictory nor retroactive, are supposed to shield citizens from the arbitrary power of authorities and the unaccountable power of those with exchangeable resources. Self-given laws are assumed to be accepted as binding for citizens. A spirit of citizenship is seen to imply a willingness to think and act as members of the community as a whole, not solely as self-interested individual or as members of particular interest groups." (Arblaster 1987, 77).

<sup>296</sup> "All Franco's powers were theoretically subject to limitation by the Cortes and the *Consejo del Reino* but, in practice, both bodies acted as rubber stamps. They could not be expected to behave like that if faced with a reforming King. The task thus facing Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda – that of winning over the *Procuradores* to their project and of asserting the authority of the Cortes over the government –



The mechanism involved in engineering the internal reform of the Cortes, was human based rather than institutional in the main, although the end result is a clear demonstration of agency driven institutional manipulation. Evidence exists to posit that the process was by no means a spontaneous one and that a great deal of planning and forethought had been employed.<sup>297</sup> Initial action had begun well in advance of the actual reform itself,<sup>298</sup> and can be attributed to the influence and interaction of elite actors, namely one man in particular, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda, whose fundamental understanding of the structural workings of the Cortes and comprehensive legal knowledge were put to great use.<sup>299</sup> No attempts at institutional reform can be successful without detailed planning and forethought, and even then, success is far from guaranteed. The attack on the Cortes would be a many pronged offensive. Efforts had been made to increase the number of potential supporters within parliament itself and the very structure of the system itself would be subjected to the scrutiny and machinations of Fernández-Miranda, so that when the time came to introduce a reform bill, the scene would be set and a greater chance of success permitted.

Fernández-Miranda's role in the preparation and construction of the reform bill was as significant for its success, as was his involvement in the subsequent debate over the bill itself. The bulk of this preparation lay with ensuring that the Cortes and the *Consejo del Reino* were sufficiently prepared for the task at hand. Here is evidence of

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was awesome in its enormity." (Preston 2004, 329), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 125-8), (Prego 1995, 365-9).

<sup>297</sup> "It would require an over-active imagination to comprehend that the political reform had been designed in detail from the moment of ascension to the throne. It is, without doubt, an historical reality that the backbone of the reform had indeed been designed, greatly debated and prepared, at least since 1969." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 20). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>298</sup> "As we have seen, between 1976 and 1971 many young attorneys, with a more open mentality than the older members and the ability to view the governmental project favourably, had been incorporated into the Cortes." (Powell 2001, 171). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>299</sup> "One cannot overlook the importance of Fernández-Miranda, not solely as President of the Cortes but also as President of the Royal Council. The first of these charges enabled him to control the discussion process in the Cortes in order to avoid obstruction from the 'continuity sector', and in the Royal Council, he was able to control those items brought before the King." (Soto 1998, 26), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995), (Castellano, P. 2001). (Translated from original by author).

manipulation of the control-field. The necessity adequately to construct a suitable playing field could not be more pronounced than in this instance. The manner in which Fernández-Miranda set about adapting the existing political structure to better suit the needs and aims of the transition is evidence of the importance of agenda-setting. Fernández-Miranda did not act alone in this process although the responsibility for preparing the groundwork fell to him.<sup>300</sup> While the King was in the background somewhat, albeit lending his support, the practical aspect was largely left to the two men who, between them, held the crucially important positions of political power, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez. Having chosen to follow the option of internal reform, the primary actors were presented with the unenviable task of convincing the Cortes to voluntarily vote to self-destruct.<sup>301</sup> Given the inherent difficulties involved in this process, it was imperative that all pieces were correctly positioned.<sup>302</sup> Despite the fact that Fernández-Miranda had been influential in the creation of the *Ley para la Reforma Política*<sup>303</sup> (Reform Bill) it stood a greater chance were he not openly associated with it.<sup>304</sup> Having been instrumental in the removal of Arias Navarro, additional action of this nature could well have jeopardised the transition process itself.

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<sup>300</sup> "For him, the greatest part of political activity of the President of the Cortes and of the Royal Council, during the stage of Arias' Government, was to prepare the two organisms via strategic planning to take over the institutions and the State's power resources." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 22). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>301</sup> "It was not a law, dictated in foresight of possible reform, rather it incorporated the decision to reform with a potential that, according to Article 1, would result in the abandonment of the political system from which it emanated." (Hernández-Gil, A. 1982, 129). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>302</sup> "The debate surrounding the plan of the Law to reform the Cortes was prepared meticulously by the King, the Government and Fernández-Miranda, in order to guarantee its ratification by at least two thirds of the attorneys as required by the law." (Powell 2001, 167), (Preston 2004). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>303</sup> "Fernández-Miranda drew up the script for true political reform, from the restoration of the monarchy by the government, in accordance with the legislation of the regime, in order to preserve the system by counting on the ordered and selective response of those carefully chosen to attend the party." (Castellano 2001, 178). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>304</sup> "He could not also be the protagonist, the executor. He did not possess the audacity, self-confidence, youth, seduction, charisma or patience. He had more enemies than friends, aroused more suspicion than confidence." (Ibid. 178). (Translated from original by author).



A logical analysis of events and the possible consequences attached to them dictated that Fernández-Miranda could not be directly associated with the reform in the manner he perhaps deserved to be. This bears evidence of a rational approach on the part of the actors involved and a subtle understanding and awareness of the parameters that they had in essence constructed for themselves. Despite the relative importance of individual actors in the Spanish Transition, what is strikingly evident is the importance placed upon the role of institutions and institutional sensibilities by the very men who sought to manipulate them. Actors are expected to behave in a certain way and follow a given set of accepted rules. These rules exist to protect both the actors themselves, the institutions under whose auspices the actors operate and those members of society who benefit from the protection and equilibrium afforded by these institutions. Were Fernández-Miranda to deviate in any way from the expected norms of institutional play, the likelihood of a detrimental outcome to the process would have been greatly increased.<sup>305</sup>

The importance of Fernández-Miranda, and therefore that of individuals, cannot be overlooked in the transition in Spain. He was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the reform bill and his personal attitude and approach to the process typifies the reason for the success of democratic reform in Spain,<sup>306</sup> namely the ability and willingness of the key actors to place the role of institutional integrity above personal motivation and to allow for subtle manipulation of both events and personnel. Having laid the foundation from a political point of view, Fernández-Miranda elicited the help

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<sup>305</sup> "In short, actors are expected to behave according to distinct democratic norms and rules and the democratic quality of a polity depends on properties of its citizens and officials. If they are not law-abiding, enlightened, active, civic-minded and acting with self-restraint and a distance to individual interests, passions and drives, genuine democratic government is impossible." (Mill 1962, 30).

<sup>306</sup> "I must confess that I never enjoyed being a man of mystery, nor an enigma. If I did not explain my conduct on one occasion or other, it was simply because I was unable to do so, an explanation at the wrong time destroys the efficiency of the efforts, my task was to fulfil my specific missions of decisive historic importance, not to show off, and even less to prejudice action by sheer vanity, thus making it impossible to explain whilst in the process of acting." (Manuscripts from Torcuato Fernández-Miranda, quoted from Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 62). (Translated from original by author).

of Adolfo Suárez to continue the task. The two men would work in tandem for much of the process but it was Suárez, who represented the future of the regime and was sufficiently accepted by the entrenched Francoists, who would be the true face of reform.<sup>307</sup> This decision is a further example of resultant analytical deliberation; the chances of success were much greater with Suárez at the helm than they would have been had Fernández-Miranda claimed ownership of his own reform bill. Suárez had been made prime minister for precisely this purpose, to ensure the support of the Bunker while presenting a youthful face to the democratic process.

Despite the hypothesised increased chance for a successful return should Adolfo Suárez, at least publicly, assume control of the reform process, his involvement far from guaranteed anything more than a slightly more favourable reception. In addition to the, not insubstantial, complexities of the political process itself, the primary actors were also forced to deal with remnants of the Francoist regime. The continued existence of the institution, under attempted reform, was of course a decisive element in both the preparation and the actual execution of the adopted strategy. The need to take into account the position and potential action of not just the Francoist government, but also the military was paramount. The simple existence of individuals is not sufficient to generate a positive outcome if they are lacking in the recognition of their status by others. The involvement of Adolfo Suárez improved the prospect of success but did not guarantee it; much was the same for the role of Juan Carlos during this portion of the procedure. Juan Carlos was Chief of State in little but name only for much of the

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<sup>307</sup> "Moreover Fernández-Miranda presented to Adolfo Suárez the possibility that he assume ownership of the text. 'Here, I give you this, that which has no father', said the author to the President of the Government. And precisely, the next day, 24 August, Adolfo Suárez presented without further ado the sparse papers that would open the door to political reform before the Council of Ministers." (Prego 2000, 43), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995), (Powell 2001), (Hernández-Gil 1982). (Translated from original by author).



transition process, lacking the true backing and support of the military, and understandably so, reluctant to risk unilateral action without adequate reason.

The transition in Spain is marked by careful planning and an in-depth consideration of the variables on the part of the primary actors. Rational analysis dictated that any course of action pursued without previously garnering the support of the military could potentially result in a return to violence and as such would run counter to the aims of establishing democratic stability. The subsequent actions taken highlight the importance of individuals in relation to the stability of institutions. Adolfo Suárez was instrumental in the task of convincing the army as to the inherent applicability of the reform bill and this was achieved by personal interaction between the premier and high-ranking military officers. It was imperative that Suárez been seen to take the lead in this action as he had the tacit approval of the army<sup>308</sup> due to his former involvement in the *Movimiento*, but his action was sanctioned and directed by Juan Carlos.<sup>309</sup> The inclusion of the military in this respect represented the result of a difficult choice on the part of the primary actors. The necessity to placate the military<sup>310</sup> was marred by the possible ramifications of involving them unduly in a political process in which they had little or no place.<sup>311</sup> A preference ordering on the part of the primary actors would naturally dictate that the military remained distanced from politics but the harsh reality of the political climate prevented this from taking place.

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<sup>308</sup> "During three and a half hours, Suárez offered a show of sympathy, imagination, talent and companionship. He appeared as one of them, putting forward his worries and being inflexible in his principles. Nobody doubted his loyalty or his affection for the old Regime." (Moran 1979, 310), (Powell 2001), (Preston 2004). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>309</sup> "The idea had come from Fernández-Miranda with the full blessing of the King, and Adolfo made it his own and lent it his style." (Morán 1979, 310). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>310</sup> "After consulting with the King, who under no circumstances wanted to convert the victors of the war into those defeated by democracy." (Powell 2001, 66). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>311</sup> "At the outset of the transition, Suárez and his collaborators thus confronted an awkward choice...Inclusion of elites in negotiations over democratic transitions can co-opt the participants in those talks and help secure their loyalty to the new regime. But at the same time, inclusion of military elites in negotiations regarding the structure of a civilian democratic regime would imply that the military had a legitimate role to play in domestic politics. In short, such inclusion might have implicitly redefined the role of the military, increasing its involvement in domestic politics in the future and undoing the good deed that Franco had inadvertently performed on behalf of the new regime." (Gunther 1992, 73-4).

The meeting between Suárez and the military officials was designed to provide him the opportunity to explain the legality of the proposed reform bill and the manner in which it would need to be ratified by Cortes. This in itself was an intelligent strategy as the bill would need a two-third majority to pass and the bulk of the Cortes were traditional Francoists. On the surface, this would have been welcome news to the military and demonstrates the continued relevance of institutions and the ability to predict actions based upon an individual's reliance and faith in the stability and predictability of said institutions. Given the information outlined above, a rational interpretation would have concluded that the Cortes would, under no circumstances, vote for their own demise; and providing the reform bill was introduced in a legal manner, there was no real threat to the continued existence of the Francoist government.

The ability and foresight on the part of the primary actors to construct a control-field of this nature represents a sublime manipulation of events and a fundamental understanding of human nature. To this the primary actors would also add the weight of public pressure. The awareness of external parameters enables them to be self-constructed and manipulated accordingly. In the aftermath of the meeting with the military officials, Suárez took part in a televised broadcast that served a double purpose. The primary objective was to inform the public as to the status of the reform process and to ensure that democracy was conducted in an open fashion; the added result was the increase in public support and expectation. Coupled with the increased levels of public unrest and violence, this additional pressure would serve to further influence the actions of the members of Cortes.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> "The President intervened by television, explaining the reach of the Plan for Political Reform. At half past nine at night, in the face of the expectations of the entire country, the President confirmed that: 'We have begun to make reality that which I spoke of on another occasion: namely, to raise the level of politics to that which is considered normal in the streets; to remove drama and fiction from politics via the process of elections.'" (Morán 1979, 310), (Powell 2001), (Hernandez-Gil 1982). (Translated from original by author).



The pieces were being correctly aligned, internal support was being assured and the media was providing the additional pressure of external expectations. Douglass North has discussed institutions as "the rules of the game for society or, more formally...humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions." (1990, 3). This is precisely what was being attempted, a form of institutionally protected constraint that would enable the actions of the Cortes to be accurately predicted and manipulated. Complete control of a situation is of course a near impossibility and yet the attempt to produce a favourable outcome based on the construction of preference reordering and variable manipulation was a prudent action and one based upon a rational analysis of potential alternatives. Situating the decision field as they did within the confines of a structured environment<sup>313</sup>, the reformers were able to reduce the options available to the actors within the game.<sup>314</sup> The balance of power was removed from those who believed themselves to occupy an institutionally protected position of strength and it was placed in the hands of those seeking to provoke change.

The central tenet behind manipulating the playing field to produce an optimal situation lay in the necessity to remove any existing alternatives until all that was left to the secondary actors of the game, was the pre-designed end game of the primary actors. Despite the relative strength and influence of the Cortes, this did not correlate to their respective political ability and knowledge. The power base of the Cortes lay in the traditional support they had shown to Franco and Francoism. During Franco's regime, the Cortes had acted as little more than a rubber stamp for decisions taken by the

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<sup>313</sup> "Historically, political science has emphasized the ways in which political behaviour was embedded in an institutional structure of rules, norms, expectations, and traditions that severely limited the free play of individual will and calculation." (March and Olsen 1989, 5), (Wolin 1960).

<sup>314</sup> "Institutional routines are followed even when it is not obviously in the narrow self-interest of the person responsible to do so. Even in extreme situations like war, or in concentration camps, individuals seem to act on the basis of rules of appropriateness rather than rational consequential calculation." (March and Olsen 1989, 22).

Caudillo and as such, was no match for the politically motivated primary actors.<sup>315</sup> The Cortes existed as an institution and was therefore constrained by the very manner in which it was able to operate.<sup>316</sup> In essence, it represented, not a free thinking individual able to respond to new and uncertain situations with free will, but rather an entity that would measure future action upon past performance and adhere to a strict set of governing rules.<sup>317</sup> The ability to restrict the possible avenues of action greatly increased the likelihood of success.<sup>318</sup> The involvement of the primary actors in the process of reforming the Cortes was a demonstration of leadership and control and as Goodin argues, "governance is nothing less than the steering of society by officials in control of what are organizationally the 'commanding heights' of society."<sup>319</sup>

The manner in which the debate within Cortes took place further compounded the ability of the primary actors to respond to the situation and construct a strategy accordingly. Delicate negotiations had convinced the Army that no reform would take place without the explicit approval of the Cortes themselves and therefore the remaining

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<sup>315</sup> "The fact that institutions encode experience into standard operating procedures, professional rules, practical rules of thumb, and identities does not imply that the rules necessarily reflect intelligence." (March and Olsen 1989, 54), (Brehmer 1980), (March 1981).

<sup>316</sup> "A straightforward and almost automatic relation between rules and action is most likely in a polity with legitimate, stable, well defined and integrated institutions. Action is then governed by a dominant institution that provides clear prescriptions and adequate resources, i.e. prescribes doable action in an unambiguous way. The system consists of a multitude of institutions, each based on different principles. Yet, each institution has some degree of autonomy and controls a specified action-sphere. The (living) constitution prescribes when, how and why rules are to be acted upon. It gives clear principles of division of labour, maintains internal consistency among rules, prevents collisions between divergent institutional prescriptions and makes the political order a coherent whole with predictable outcomes. Together, a variety of rules give specific content in specific situations both to such heroic identities as statesman or patriot and to such everyday identities as those of an accountant, police officer, or citizen." (March and Olsen 2005, 7), (Kaufman 1960), (Van Maanen 1973).

<sup>317</sup> "A central defining feature of 'institutionalization'... is the stable, recurring, repetitive, patterned nature of the behaviour that occurs within institutions, and because of them. 'Institutionalism has been characterized as the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability. In an institutionalised setting, behaviour is more stable and predictable.'" (Eisenstadt 1968, 410).

<sup>318</sup> "The behaviorist focus usefully serves to fix attention upon agency, upon individuals and grouping of individuals whose behaviour it is. But those individuals are shaped by, and in their collective enterprises act through, structures and organizations and institutions. What people want to do, and what they can do, depends importantly upon what organizational technology is available or can be made readily available to them for giving effect to their individual and collective volitions." (Goodin 1996, 13).

<sup>319</sup> (Goodin 1996, 13).



task lay with convincing the Cortes that the notion of reform was one that would benefit themselves and was in fact a legitimate and adequate course of action.<sup>320</sup>

The legislation had been drawn up, the relevant institutions had been prepared for the day when the reform introduced, the external factors had been placated to the best of the ability of the primary actors, and all that remained was to convince a parliament that the most appropriate course of action was to vote to remove their own power base.<sup>321</sup> It would require all of the personal charisma and charm of Suárez to achieve this objective.<sup>322</sup> There were several weapons in the arsenal of the president in his task to ensure that the reform bill would pass when presented to Cortes, some of which occupied a somewhat ethically grey area but were effective nonetheless. In many ways, Suárez played a game of chess with Cortes. There would be no single factor that could be used to influence every member of the Cortes and therefore it became necessary to attack the matter from a variety of fronts. The reform bill, although revolutionary in its eventual outcome, was far from being an inflammatory document.<sup>323</sup> The reluctance on the part of the ministers to accept was based on what it would mean for their own future.

The process was not a smooth one and there were stages during the process when success was far from guaranteed.<sup>324</sup> Suárez and Fernández-Miranda spent a great

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<sup>320</sup> "Sometimes action reflects in a straightforward way prescriptions embedded in the rules, habits of thought, "best practice" and standard operating procedures of a community, an institution, organization, profession or group. A socially valid rule creates an abstraction that applies to a number of concrete situations. Most actors, most of the time, then, take the rule as a "fact". There is no felt need to "go behind it" and explain or justify action and discuss its likely consequences." (Stinchcombe 2001, 2).

<sup>321</sup> "Make them see the lack of viability of a regressive position and that in the future they may take part without feeling marginalized." (Powell 2001, 168). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>322</sup> "Knowing the eloquence and personal charm of this master politician I have no doubt that he could win over many to his side. But it is one thing to win over many and quite another thing to win over a majority. Apparently something more than eloquence and charm was needed here." (Krasikov 1984, 108). (Powell 2001).

<sup>323</sup> "The objective of the law was, simply put, a call from the Cortes with constitutional powers, motivated by what has been characterized as a 'law-bridge'." (Powell 2001, 166). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>324</sup> "In the Council of Ministers on the 10 August 1976 the perplexity and indecision, the confusion and inaction were the risks to be dealt with. They knew what was wanted but not how to achieve it and there

deal of time developing strategies based upon rational analysis in order to increase the likelihood of success. During the period between 17 and 20 August, they met to discuss the nature of the reform.<sup>325</sup> The bill was submitted before the *Comisión Mixta Gobierno-Consejo Nacional* (National Government-Advisory Mixed Commission) for their consideration. This was necessary; as to spring a bill upon the parliament, without forewarning, would have potentially resulted in its outright rejection. The precautions were well founded as by and large, the bulk of the text was accepted and remained true to the spirit in which it was conceived. This is further evidence of using the system against itself; it is much easier to convince someone of an idea, if they believe they have played a role in its conception.<sup>326</sup>

The decision to introduce the bill for the consideration of the commission prior to an actual vote was very astute. The changes that were made were largely cosmetic and yet went a long way to placating the ministers who were sceptical of the bill. While it could be viewed as a courtesy to the commission, the introduction of the bill in this manner was a direct response to the need to gain the support of even one additional minister. The actual nature of the bill itself was not held in question, nor was the legality of the action<sup>327</sup> and yet time and effort had to be spent on securing the passage of the reform through the political waters that would ratify and accept it.

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are numerous witnesses to attest to this. On the 15 August Suárez called Fernández-Miranda in Asturias and admitted to the President of the Cortes that he could not see a way out." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 223). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>325</sup> "Between the 17 and the 20, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez held long conversations, the last of which lasted for more than four hours, it came out in the press the following day that: 'The presidents of Government and Cortes study the strategy of the reform.'" (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 225), (Europa Press, *Informaciones* 21/8/76), (El País, 21/8/76). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>326</sup> "The improvements to the plan were indubitable... and despite the fact that they were improvements, they were received with recognition and appreciation." (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995, 229). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>327</sup> "Article 10 of the Law of Succession established that various factors were required in order to modify any rule of the Fundamental Laws: the knowledge and pre-empting report, although not binding in nature, of the National Council; the agreement of the Parliament and a favourable vote by the people by process of a popular referendum. The proper nature in which was grounded its permanent and inalterable character was that of a constitutional nature and not that of a false nature of absolute truth based upon a rational, historical, philosophical or moral character. Neither the State, the supreme duties of the people,



Any approval, tacit or otherwise, of the bill by members of the Cortes would not be sufficient to return the required two-thirds majority<sup>328</sup> and so it became necessary for additional tactics to be introduced.<sup>329</sup> True to the nature of previous involvement by the primary actors, complete variable manipulation is conspicuously apparent. Evidence exists that all alternatives were explored, where negotiation and debate proved unsuccessful, less honourable methods were employed. Activity such as this is condoned in the literature and represents an integral element of much political activity.<sup>330</sup> Ministers were offered future governmental positions or threatened with financial repercussions should they not act accordingly.<sup>331</sup> The combination of reward and punishment proved successful and is a further demonstration of the understanding of human nature displayed by the primary actors.<sup>332</sup>

While the actions may have been less than sanitary, the underlying motivation was driven by a common objective; namely that of generating a suitable game-arena in which to introduce the reform bill.<sup>333</sup> When control of the players within the game

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nor any constituent power can lend more value to a political enunciation than the constitutional and historical." (Torcuato Fernández-Miranda quoted in *Gentleman*, July 1974). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>328</sup> "The creation of an instrument – that of a democratic Parliament – that permitted discussion with the nation, needed approval by a two thirds majority from with the Parliament itself and from a subsequent referendum." (Powell 2001, 165). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>329</sup> "The task facing the government regarding the lawyers has been both long and intense: the ministers have divided the attorneys into groups and using personal interviews, they have attempted to convince them one by one of the merit of the plan to reform and of the future possibilities that would await the attorneys in a Parliament elected by universal suffrage." (Prego, 2000, 45). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>330</sup> The rational choice approach to institutions also reminds us that creating institutions is not a cost-free activity. The creation of an institution requires the investment of time and talent, and may require the use of other more tangible resources if a design effort is to be successful. (Peters 1999, 59).

<sup>331</sup> "One should also not forget the vast capacity of the Government to place the attorneys who supported them in the numerous Administrative posts available and in public companies." (Soto 1998, 41). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>332</sup> "If I had not had senate seats to offer the lawyers, how would I have been able to advance the Political Reform?" (Adolfo Suárez quoted in Soto 1998, 41). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>333</sup> "Very few details of the vote were left in the hands of fate." (Ysart 1984, 45). (Translated from original by author).

became impossible, they were simply removed from the game altogether.<sup>334</sup> As has been mentioned above, action of this sort is condoned when viewed from the perspective of the overall transition and underpinned by a desire for democracy. It would appear, from the evidence, that the manner in which the members of Cortes were manipulated was legal, if morally questionable, and is proof of the commitment to detail and dedication of purpose of the primary actors. The denial of the right to vote for certain hard-line members of the Cortes should be interpreted as a political maneuver rather than a betrayal of the democratic principles that the transition was attempting to instill. The result of the transition was far too delicately balanced to subject to anything less than perfect conditions.<sup>335</sup>

Attention to detail was observed throughout the process of introducing the bill, right up to, and including the manner in which it was presented to the Cortes. As has been mentioned above, Fernández-Miranda could not claim outright ownership of the reform bill and so this was awarded to Suárez but when it came time to defend the reform bill during the debate in Cortes on the 16 November, the primary actors turned to a figure intimately connected to the Francoist regime, namely Miguel Primo de Rivera. While his arguments did not convince the more staunch hardliners, chief among them Blas Piñar<sup>336</sup>, his involvement and the subsequent implications of this, were to have a pronounced effect on the process.<sup>337</sup> Awareness of the situation in which the

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<sup>334</sup> "Half of the 34 attorneys were absent, evidently those whose vote was doubted, embarked on a boat voyage a week earlier to Panama and Cuba." (Soto 1998, 41), (Preston 2004), (Moran 1979). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>335</sup> "Fernández-Miranda had made it clear that, should the resultant plan to reform not be to the liking of the government, they could withdraw the plan from Parliament in connection with the King and suspend the deferment thus far enjoyed by the organic chamber." (Powell 2001, 171). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>336</sup> "He accused the plan of breaking with legality and using arguments of a moral nature, to remind the attorneys and the King of their decision regarding the Fundamental Principles of the Movement: that by their essence were immutable." (Soto 1998, 40), (Hernández-Gil 1982), (Morán 1979). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>337</sup> "Perhaps the most important aspect of the strategy was enlistment as speakers in favour of the reform law of prominent figures in the Cortes (such as Miguel Primo de Rivera, whose late brother had founded



game had been constructed and a fundamental understanding of the opposition allowed for a strategy to be constructed in this manner. Decisions are not made in vacuums and the likely reaction to any action taken must be considered and plotted carefully in order to limit the chance of failure.

The final step in the process was the vote itself before Cortes. This vote would be the linchpin for true reform in Spain<sup>338</sup>, if the bill were to fail to pass, all the careful groundwork and planning done by Juan Carlos, Fernández-Miranda and Suárez would have been for nought. The voting style was changed in order to create the appearance of an open and democratic procedure.<sup>339</sup> The way in which the vote was conducted is a clever demonstration of the system being manipulated against itself; the element of privacy was removed and with it, so was the ability to avoid the pressure of expectation. While this may have been the overt justification, the subtle undertone of this decision made it immediately obvious who had voted both in favour of, and against the reform bill. The relevance of this may not be immediately obvious but members of the Cortes were no longer protected by the shroud of invincibility that had existed during Franco's regime. The assassination of Carrero Blanco<sup>340</sup> and the shift in public opinion created an undercurrent of fear amongst the *procuradores*, and this undercurrent was exploited by Fernández-Miranda. The 'control-field' was constructed in such a manner as to dictate the actions of those involved in the playing of the game. The actors were left

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the Falange española, which later became the Movimiento nacional) who were regarded by many as very influential and who had extensive clientelistic networks within that body." (Gunther 1992, 49).

<sup>338</sup> "The object of the Law, although not exclusively, was to create a new procedure for constitutional reform that would be immediately applicable." (Hernandez-Gil 1982, 128). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>339</sup> "Preventing them from voting upon the amendments, one by one and in order they complied perhaps, and I doubt it, with the rules but they performed a weak service for the country, in light of the necessary clarity for the law and for the government." (José María Ruiz Gallardón, *Recordatorio*, ABC 17/11/76). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>340</sup> Information on the assassination of Carrero Blanco and the repercussions for Spain can be found in (Preston 2004), (Preston 1986), (Morán 1979), (Vilallonga 1993), (Powell 2001).

with no room to manoeuvre and in essence, the end-game was in place before the game itself even began.

Where the attempts at bribery or blackmail had failed, the anticipation and fear of external repercussions had perhaps succeeded. While this is a difficult area to quantify, the likelihood of it having played a part is high. The vote was engineered in such a way as to force those voting to reassess their actions in the glare of public opinion.<sup>341</sup> The vote was passed on 18 November and returned the desired result for the primary actors. What is remarkable is less that the detailed preparation at the hands of Adolfo Suárez and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda played its part,<sup>342</sup> but more that the members of the Cortes played theirs. This was evident to the extent that not only was a two-third majority reached, it was surpassed.<sup>343</sup> Despite absence of a precedent the result was a resounding success.<sup>344</sup> There is even a degree to which the secondary actors involved failed to understand exactly how the events had transpired in the manner in which they had<sup>345</sup>. The successful manipulation of variables had allowed for internal reform to take place at the expense of the institution charged with the responsibility of

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<sup>341</sup> "Torcuato had demanded a nominal vote, alleging that in this manner, the people would know the actions of their representatives." (Morán 1979, 315), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995). "The object of the Law, although not exclusively, was to create a new procedure for constitutional reform that would be immediately applicable." (Hernandez-Gil 1982, 128). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>342</sup> "The fundamental pitfall had been evaded with a degree of success that surprised the authors. One magazine termed Suárez 'Suárez-Man'." (Morán 1979, 316). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>343</sup> "The manoeuvres of the Torcuato-Suárez duo to obtain a majority percentage bore fruit: 425 voted in favour, 59 against and there were 13 abstentions. The tasks of the duo were principally directed at breaking the syndicate block...Various negotiations proved successful and the law to Political Reform, obligatory trampoline in the political transition, was approved. Franco's Parliament had committed suicide by a decisive majority." (Moran 1979, 314).

<sup>344</sup> "The attorneys rose to their feet and impetuously applauded the demise of their position while Adolfo Suárez clapped his hands whilst looking at the front row of seats." (Morán 1979, 315). "The object of the Law, although not exclusively, was to create a new procedure for constitutional reform that would be immediately applicable." (Hernandez-Gil 1982, 128). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>345</sup> "We assisted in an unusual spectacle: the most hard-line political sectors of Francoism were resigned to their sacrifice and the institutions of the regime permitted the emergence of the reformist sector, made up of the youngest and least involved members of the bureaucracy of the system." (Soto 1998, 42).



ratifying the decision. The members of Cortes had been forced to act against their personal interest due to the overriding rules of the institutional framework.<sup>346</sup>

The reform of the Cortes was a truly magnificent feat, one that comprised delicate political manoeuvring with external pressure. The sublime use of institutional constraints to endogenously shape reform left those within the institution with little choice but to react in the manner which institutionally constructed response allowed.<sup>347</sup> The support of external factors was felt posthumously with the ratification of the reform via referendum held on the 15 December 1976.<sup>348</sup> The re-ordering of preferences and the ability to formulate strategy based upon an awareness of the parameters of the game provided for a successful course of action. The coupling of a fundamental understanding of the issues, with a respect and consciousness of the institutional framework was sufficient to manipulate the existing order and super-impose from below a new democratically and open parliament upon an institution confined and secure in its own inherent power structure.

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<sup>346</sup> "And others believed without a doubt that the regime that they had served was best suited to pass into history facilitating a pacific solution than spearheading one final instance of numantine resistance." (Powell 2001, 171).

<sup>347</sup> In logic of appropriateness...behaviours (beliefs as well as actions) are intentional but not wilful. They involve fulfilling the obligations of a role in a situation, and so of trying to determine the imperatives of holding a position. Action stems from a conception of necessity, rather than preference. Within a logic of appropriateness, a sane person is one who is 'in touch with identity' in the sense of maintaining consistency between behaviour and a conception of self in a social role. Ambiguity or conflict in rules is typically resolved not by shifting to a logic of consequentiality and rational calculation, but by trying to clarify the rules, make distinctions, determine what the situation is and what definition 'fits'. (March and Olsen 1989, 160-1).

<sup>348</sup> "The result of the referendum for the political reform surprised the government once again...the favourable votes accounted for 94 per cent, as during the old days of Francoism, and the negative votes only 2.5 per cent. Abstentions and annulled votes made up a discreet 3 per cent." (Morán 1979, 316), (Fernández-Miranda, P. 1995), (Maravall 1984). "The object of the Law, although not exclusively, was to create a new procedure for constitutional reform that would be immediately applicable." (Hernández-Gil 1982, 128). (Translated from original by author).

## **Chapter 6**

### **The attempted military coup: Democracy held hostage**



The final event chosen for examination in this thesis is a crucial one that differs in many ways from those previously selected. 23 February (23-F) marked the culmination of the struggle for democratic reform and saw the Francoist establishment mounting an offensive to reclaim lost territory. Previous events had served to test the ingenuity and capabilities of the primary actors, but 23-F would also test their resolve. To claim that 23-F was a unique event in the Spanish transition, and one that occurred spontaneously is naïve and dramatically underestimates the underlying opposition to democracy and democratic reform that existed in Spain at this time. 23-F has been chosen for analysis due to the latent violence it demonstrated and the subsequent struggle for power this came to represent. The aftermath of 23-F will not be dealt with in this chapter, that is not to say that the manner in which the perpetrators were dealt with has no bearing on the democratic nature of the transition, simply that the motives and machinations that contributed to the event itself, and the manner in which they in turn were confronted and dealt with by the King is better suited for the overall analysis of this thesis. Previous events highlighted for examination have been from the perspective of the primary actors, namely Juan Carlos, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez, but this event requires a different approach to be employed. While the primary actors were still very much involved, the focus of analysis must shift to encompass those actors intrinsically linked with the attack on parliament itself. Even if they cannot all be named, it is possible to hypothesise potential outcomes based upon their factual existence.<sup>349</sup>

The nomination of Juan Carlos, the appointment of Adolfo Suárez and the reform of the Cortes had all been the result of structured, offensive action on the part of

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<sup>349</sup> "Rational choice involves two guesses, a guess about uncertain future consequences and a guess about uncertain future preferences." (March 1986, 142).

the primary actors.<sup>350</sup> Strategies had been constructed based upon rational analysis of the existing parameters and action had been taken to initiate change accordingly. In the case of 23-F the primary actors were reacting to circumstances and events as they arose rather than constructing strategy before the fact. This aspect of the event naturally affects the manner in which it is possible to construct an analysis field, but it does not prevent the determination of parameters to aid understanding, as has been done for the previous three events.<sup>351</sup> There is much regarding the event of 23-F that is still unknown and yet it is possible, through analysis of the scenario, to better understand the motivations and actions taken by the primary actors in response to the threat.<sup>352</sup>

The transitional process thus far had been far from smooth<sup>353</sup>, there had been points of doubt and uncertainty where the future seemed far from assured and yet, throughout, the impetus resided firmly with the primary actors. While the existence of a minutely constructed plan is perhaps somewhat far fetched, the sublime manipulation of events displayed by the elite actors is sufficient to indicate a measured level of authority and control. Natural energy levels within transitions alter depending upon the exact point in the process and are responsive to the general mood of the population. 23-F came at such a time when the exuberant levels of energy associated with the initial

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<sup>350</sup> "The key variable within political science would be 'power'. The capacity for one person or group to control the actions and choices of others – or, better yet, to secure its desired outcomes without regard to anyone else's actions or choices – is what politics is all about." (Goodin 1996, 15-6).

<sup>351</sup> "The apparent contradiction in rational choice institutionalism is resolved in practice, if for no other reason than that individuals realize that institutional rules also constrain their competitors in whatever game of maximization those competitors may believe themselves to be involved in." (Peters 1999, 45).

<sup>352</sup> "But how do we know what an actor's goals are? In general we deduce actors' goals from observing their prior behaviour...we then assume that actors will continue to pursue the goals we have deduced they pursued in the past. We fix actors' preferences and allow the information they have and the situation they face to change, creating variation in their actions." (Morrow 1994, 17).

<sup>353</sup> "By the autumn of 1980, an anxious Juan Carlos saw Suárez isolated from his cabinet, his party and the press. The working agreement with the PSOE had collapsed. Felipe González declared that the Prime Minister no longer had a meaningful contribution to make. Unemployment had risen to one and a half million. The government's policy on regional autonomies was bogged down. Ill feeling in Andalusia remained intense after the referendum fiasco. The slowness of the transfer of powers to the newly elected Basque and Catalan regional governments was both an embarrassment and a provocation." (Preston 2004, 444).



period of the transition had begun to wane.<sup>354</sup> The replacement of Arias Navarro with Adolfo Suárez and the reform of the Cortes had been achieved with little response from the Bunker despite both actions constituting a direct attack upon Francoist ideology. Perhaps therefore, it was simply a matter of time before those under attack, retaliated in an attempt to wrest control from the reformists and place it back in the hands of Franco's most ardent supporters.<sup>355</sup>

A basic analysis of the events at the time of 23-F allows for the construction of a control field. It is possible to demonstrate that the secondary actors in previously analysed events were becoming the leading actors in this situation. While it is indeed true that the reformists had experienced a surge in both popularity and power, the continued existence of both the military and Francoist sympathisers within and without the Armed Forces was a persistent threat to the fragile stability of democracy at this juncture. The country was newly democratised, lacked a comprehensive democratic political sphere, faced threats from regions demanding autonomy and was under siege by the ever-increasing spread of domestic terrorism.<sup>356</sup> There was no single contributing factor<sup>357</sup> that led to the coup taking place in 1981, rather a collection of events and circumstances that came to a head on 23-F. Much is still unknown of the

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<sup>354</sup> "After the logical expenditure of popular energy in favour of the re-establishment of democracy (1976-1977), came the absurd squandering of those same energies (1978-1981), brought about by assassinations, by the military who were heading for old times, and also by politicians afflicted by diverse types of immature practical-ideology, by the process of learning, by frivolity and by confusion." (Vilar 1986, 88). (Translated from original by author).

<sup>355</sup> "A regime change is precisely a change of the rules of the game and, logically, the game for changing rules cannot entirely be shaped by the incentives structured by the rules being changed. Some interactions among actors in a process of political change are therefore less constrained than those of actors in a stable political situation, whether this be a dictatorship or a constitutional, consolidated democracy." (Colomer 1995, 6).

<sup>356</sup> For a more comprehensive list of problems facing Spain at this time see Preston (2004, 444).

<sup>357</sup> "There was no single cause; there was in fact a confluence of causes, an intricate web of causes, although there was the tendency to group them under the common denominator of violence." (Vilar 1986, 89). (Translated from original by author).

circumstances under which the attempted coup took place and it is not the aim of this chapter to provide the answers to these questions, rather, to more accurately locate the events within a framework of analysis that will aid our understanding of the transition itself.

The relative strength of democratic reform had been reduced by certain events in the build up to the attempted coup. The resignation of Adolfo Suárez and the subsequent failure of the nomination of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo's to be ratified on the first attempt highlighted the cracks in the facade that had thus far protected reformist action. This in essence supports the claim of the importance of individual actors in the transition process. Adolfo Suárez had become intimately connected with democratic reform, he had been at the forefront of actions taken to implement change and his inability to successfully manage and hold together the UCD party<sup>358</sup> and construct a balanced and functioning government, was viewed as a tangible failure of the reform process. The very man chosen for the position by the King and ratified by the people of Spain had failed in his task. Suárez had played his role and played it well but his influence was waning, and with it, so was his relevance. No longer simply a personal matter, it became apparent that there were many who wanted Suárez removed from office<sup>359</sup> and a restructuring of the government to take place.

The reluctance of the system to accept Suárez and his inability to maintain the authority he had gained at the start of the transitional process led to the inevitable downfall of the man, and in turn, the general weakening of the political position of the

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<sup>358</sup> "The UCD was truly the party of the transition. Once the Constitution of 1978 had come into force and the first Cortes had been elected in 1979, the centripetal force that had kept the pieces of the UCD together had dissolved." (Ramón Arango 1985, 167).

<sup>359</sup> "Suárez remained public enemy number one, as much in the eyes of the parties of opposition as for his own party members. The press reflected these points of view. In addition, the campaigns organized by the journalists against the President of the Government were certainly a determining factor...in the tarnishing of the image and loss of credibility that affected the principal politician of the transition." (Vilar 1986, 90). (Translated from original by author).



government. It was exactly this weakening that Juan Carlos and the proponents of democratic reform could not allow. A delicate balance existed between the continuance of democracy and overt military involvement in political affairs. It became imperative for the establishment to construct a strategy that would enable them to maintain control.

The confines of a control field dictate that all angles must be considered and manipulated in order to prevent undue pressure and influence from outside factors. The necessity to defend the newly-constructed, and by definition, delicate power base was paramount. The primary actors were constrained by the realisation that should the government be without a strong leader, or be seen as outwardly weak and stagnant, as had been the case under Arias Navarro, the possibility for its removal by force would exist. Previous chapters have highlighted the success that the reformist faction enjoyed in removing both a prime minister and a government from office when they lacked the ability to adequately defend themselves. A rational analysis of the events would have provided the impetus to prevent this initiative from being turned against the democratic faction and thus benefiting the Bunker.

23-F is a useful event to analyse as it provides us with evidence that the reformists were capable of constructing a pre-emptive defensive strategy as well as an offensive one. The existence of the military was a very real problem which demanded attention. Despite the fact that the democratic process had experienced little in the way of actual opposition from the Armed Forces, the political climate of the time made this an increasingly viable reality. There exists evidence to suggest that the notion of a military conspiracy was a reality from 1980<sup>360</sup> and that the establishment were fully

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<sup>360</sup> "The military discontent had reached dangerous levels where anything was possible." (Calvo Sotelo 1990, 21). (Translated from original by author).

aware of this threat.<sup>361</sup> If this is indeed true then it is logical to assume that the necessary steps were being taken to avoid such an eventuality. The possibility that the primary actors had foreknowledge of a potential coup is an entirely feasible possibility. Given the nature of agenda setting and manipulation of variables that had constituted the underpinnings of the reformist strategy, it is logical to assume that the potential repercussions attached to actions analysed in previous chapters would also have been taken into account. What marks 23-F as different, compared to previous events examined, is the reality that the primary actors were not in control in the lead up to the event itself and were forced to regain control through action taken during the process. Previous events had been constructed in such a way as to allow the outcome to be predicted with a certain degree of accuracy, this would not be the case here. 23-F constitutes a very real need to defend the democratic regime and to further strengthen the power base in so doing.

The necessity to replace Adolfo Suárez cannot be wholly attributed to a desire to prevent the involvement of the military in political affairs but instead must also be viewed as a reality of political life. Institutional rules provides for the necessity that a government possess a leader and provisions exist to ensure an ineffectual leader can be replaced. This in itself need not be interpreted solely as a response to an external threat, but rather as a logical progression of political development. The true danger inherent in 23-F, existed in allowing the opponents of democracy to establish a foothold in the process. Complete control had to be maintained, or at the very least, the illusion of control. Given the apparent shortcomings of Suárez, his removal became more and more of a necessity for the political survival of the regime. His response to the

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<sup>361</sup> "In November 1980, the information services of the State created a document entitled 'Panoramic of operations underway', that consisted of a superficial description of the vast quantity of existing initiatives to bring about the fall of Adolfo Suárez as President of the Government. Three of these conspiracies were military and a fourth was mixed in nature, part political, and part military." (Prieto, J. & Harberia, J.L. 1991, 101). (Translated from original by author).



changing political climate and his inability to maintain the respect of those in the political arena coupled with his general inability to govern effectively led to a feeling of *desgobierno*, a complete lack of guidance and governance. This turn of events very much mirrored the position of Arias Navarro prior to his resignation and indicates a continuity of sorts. The removal of Adolfo Suárez became both a political necessity and a survival tactic aimed at ensuring the continuation of the democratic regime.

The relevance of the involvement of individuals is highlighted by the increased interaction between Juan Carlos and Adolfo Suárez during this period. Speculation exists as to the exact nature of their discussions but a rational analysis of events dictates that the prospect of a military coup and the available alternatives to counter this, must have featured on the agenda. Chief among these alternatives would have been the possible formation of a coalition government.<sup>362</sup> From the standpoint of a rational response to the potential threat of military involvement, this idea was not without merit and indeed, as subsequent events would show, would constitute the stalwart of the strategy in opposition to the existing government. Pre-empting violence with a moderated version would have created a potential solution, albeit not an ideal one.

What is clear from subsequent events is that the issue of Suárez's own position within the government must also have been discussed. One can hypothesise as to the exact nature of the debates surrounding this issue but given Suárez's reduction in power and influence, his removal was something of a foregone conclusion. Later events, including statements made by Suárez himself, lead us to believe that his resignation was voluntary. If this is indeed true then it demonstrates the intrinsic importance of individuals within a transition process, crucial to which is the nature of these individuals

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<sup>362</sup> "With democracy trapped in the inexorable pincer movement political nerves were stretched to breaking point. The idea of a strong all-party coalition to replace Suárez had been in the air since the summer of 1980." (Preston 2004, 447).

and their commitment to a common goal; if the resignation is forced then it provides evidence of the relevance of institutional continuation. The integrity of the office of prime minister was in need of protection, not the person of Adolfo Suárez. In either respect, the resignation of Suárez was necessary for the survival of the transition process. The official announcement of the resignation was to come in a television broadcast on 29 January and it marked the start of the next stage of the transition. News of Suárez's resignation was interpreted in varying manners; the army believed the King had forced the issue and took the decision as a positive factor for their future projects,<sup>363</sup> while those outside the military viewed his resignation as a response to the threat of military action and saw it as a necessary action to stall direct action by the army. In either respect, it highlights the importance that external factors play on the decision making of individuals. Interpretation of events, although naturally subjective, is crucial for our understanding of subsequent actions taken. The position and, to a certain extent nature, of the individuals involved must be taken into account as this will enable us to order a set of preferences based upon a rational analysis of predicted responses.

To attribute the resignation of Suárez solely as a direct response to the threat of military action is to miss the greater picture. Fundamental weaknesses had appeared in the UCD party and with Suárez's leadership and the continuation of the democratic regime took precedence over the desires of a single individual. Here we are able to see the importance of institutional structure in perpetuating the system. The office of prime minister and the stability of the government were more important to the transition process than was the person of Adolfo Suárez, despite his role thus far and his relevant importance to the transition as a whole.

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<sup>363</sup> For further information: (*El País*, 30 January 1981), (*El Alcázar*, 30 January 1981), (*Diario 16*, 30 January 1981), (Oneto 1981, 113,119,152), (Meliá 1981, 74-5), (Calvo Sotelo 1990, 24-32), (Prego 2000, 105-10), (Navarro 1995, 366-9).



The failure of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo to be ratified as the new prime minister was seen as an obvious weakness and failure of the democratic system by the opposition. A rational analysis of the situation would have led to the creation of a strategy to undermine the existing system and replace it with one more conducive to the ideology of the Bunker. This in itself was a tried and tested mechanism in the Spanish transition, having been successfully employed by the primary actors in previous events. Given the relative instability at the time and the lack of a comprehensively grounded democratic system, there was indeed scope for revisions to be introduced. The resignation of Suárez was the last pro-active decision by the primary actors as successive actions taken were reactive in nature and in response to the strategy employed by the opposition.

The military constructed their strategy based upon a preference ordering related to their position and status<sup>364</sup> and an analysis of the existing structure but failed to accurately predict the outcome due to the inability to control all the variables. The strategy employed was not without merit however; it was a two-pronged offensive incorporating both political negotiation<sup>365</sup> and a demonstration of military force. It is possible that the patterns of behaviour, learned under three decades of Francoist rule, affected the manner in which the military constructed their strategy. The arrogance of

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<sup>364</sup> "The logic of appropriateness is a perspective that sees human action as driven by rules of appropriate or exemplary behaviour, organized into institutions. Rules are followed because they are seen as natural, rightful, expected, and legitimate. Actors seek to fulfil the obligations encapsulated in a role, an identity, a membership in a political community or group, and the ethos, practices and expectations of its institutions. Embedded in a social collectivity, they do what they see as appropriate for themselves in a specific type of situation." (March and Olsen 2005, 1).

<sup>365</sup> "Armada also had meetings with Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Rodolfo Martín Villa, Jordi Pujol, Josep Tarradellas, Pío Cabanillas and others. He enjoyed particularly cordial relations with Tarradellas, who described himself as a friend of the general. On 23 December, Manuel Fraga wrote in his diary: 'I have received solid information that General Armada has said that he would be prepared to head a coalition government'." (Preston 2004, 447), (Fraga 1987, 226), (Pardo Zancada 1998, 105-6), (Ilenet 1992, 480-3).

assumed authority<sup>366</sup> prevented a fundamental understanding of existing parameters from taking place.<sup>367</sup> This reality is of vast importance for the transition as a process in Spain. The institutional constraints that existed, whether recognized by the actors at the time or not, were sufficient to dictate the outcome of events. The choices made by those involved in the attempted coup provide us with great insight into the nature of transitions. Given the decisions taken and the courses of action followed, it is plausible to claim an underlying coherency of design to the strategy; this is only apparent however, when not viewed in light of alternative actors. If we base our analysis of the coup solely as a reflection of the preferences of those involved then there is little with which to find fault. The climate for action was ripe, the situation called for a solution and they were in possession of the necessary tools to initiate change; the resultant failure becomes apparent when we introduce additional actors, namely those against whom the conspirators were acting. The inability to predict or even to consider the potential outcomes and actions of the reformists prevented a comprehensive strategy from being constructed.

When taken from the perspective of the opposition, the choice to attack the system, in an attempt to return Spain to a Francoist understanding of rule, was a viable strategy. The increase in domestic violence<sup>368</sup> and more importantly, the inability of the government to adequately deal with this<sup>369</sup> generated public support in favour of change. Coupled with a natural desire on the part of the opposition to control

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<sup>366</sup> "The defence of the realm involves a set of activities that contribute to the satisfaction of the goal - attainment functional requisite...The achievement of societal goals also involves the preservation of certain relationships." (Holt 1967, 93).

<sup>367</sup> "Path dependency suggests that the institutional legacies of the past limit the range of current possibilities and or options in institutional innovation." (Hausner 1995, 6).

<sup>368</sup> "ETA-M began a campaign of grenade attacks on Civil Guard posts and attempted to murder the editor of the *Diario de Navarra*." (Preston 2004, 444), *El Pais*, 22 June; *Cambio* 16, 13, 20 July, 24 August, 7 September 1980, (Rincón 1985, 63).

<sup>369</sup> "In the Basque Country, the government's delegate, José Saenz de Santamaría, complained that by dragging its feet, the government was generating support for ETA." (Preston 2004, 444).



proceedings and remove the dissident elements from Spanish politics, the presence of domestic violence was as a call to arms. The underlying reason behind the failure of the opposition in its attempted coup lay with the inability to foresee the repercussions of an overtly military response. Given the subsequent actions by the military and the conspirators, it appears that a favourable response was expected with the culmination of the attempted coup resulting in the clamouring of public support. There is very much the sense that the entire enterprise was not plotted to the point of end-game. The concept was far from redundant, especially when in light of the events at the time and the potential for active involvement on the part of the military and yet the manner in which it was executed leaves doubts as to the coherency of the design structure.

The collective memory of Spain<sup>370</sup> and the fear of overt military involvement in the political sphere, coupled with the newly found liberty of the Spanish people in the aftermath of Franco's death constituted a very powerful parameter to the game that was not taken into account by the conspirators. While their strategy made sense from a certain perspective, it was far from developed and was therefore fundamentally flawed in its construction. The steps taken by the conspirators were in line with a rational analysis of what was required but inattention to detail created a strategy lacking in the necessary tools to deal with any arising factors that would contravene the goal as laid out by their game.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> "Memories of previous, costly conflicts thus seems to have been important in convincing decision making elites that the creation of a stable democracy was vastly more important than revenge or the narrow pursuit of partisan interests." (Gunther 1992, 77).

<sup>371</sup> "A proper understanding of successful efforts to achieve elite consensus cannot ignore the basic values, historical memories, and behavioural styles of individual members of the political elite. Even though we must take care to avoid tautological arguments regarding these kind of variables, we can say in general that negotiations involving pragmatic leaders, whose historical memories lead them to perceive potential threats to stability and who place great value on achieving stable democracy, are more likely to lead to an elite settlement than negotiations among dogmatic individuals, who are unaware of the fragility of the system or who have no over-riding desire to establish a stable democracy." (Gunther 1992, 76).

A potential scenario for the restoration of a Francoist government indicates that paramount, would be the garnering of support for any action taken, both at the public level, and more importantly, at the highest levels of political existence. The resignation of Adolfo Suárez, and his obvious weakness in the preceding period created the optimum time for action. The foundations of the government were shaken and for a brief period, it was without a substantial leader, and therefore, without any real semblance of direction or guidance. The time was rife for a potential hostile takeover.<sup>372</sup> The manner in which the strategy manifested itself was initially very subtle in nature. Delicate pressure was placed upon Juan Carlos to consider a coalition government headed by a member of the military. General Armada enjoyed a personal relationship with the King and it was this that enabled rumours to become potent weapons in the hands of the conspirators. The suggestion of a coalition government was not a revolutionary one in nature and indeed constituted a viable option for Spain at this point.

To guarantee success to any degree, manipulation of the agenda setting was paramount for the conspirators. The government was weak and without a strong figurehead, public opinion was being swayed by increased domestic violence<sup>373</sup> and the foundation of reform appeared shaken. Despite all these factors, which were not insubstantial, the necessity to construct the actual place and time of action remained crucial. General Armada was ideally placed to develop relationships and set the scene for any eventual action that could subsequently occur. A rational analysis would dictate

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<sup>372</sup> "In the summer, Armada gave the King a report, drawn up by an unnamed constitutional lawyer, examining legal ways of resolving the situation with a coalition possibly headed by a soldier. The hint was unmistakable." (Preston 2004, 447).

<sup>373</sup> "The year to the end of October 1980 had seen 114 deaths as a result of terrorism, an average of one victim every three days, including 57 civilians and 27 Civil Guards, 11 Army Officers and nine policemen." (Preston 2004, 449), (Benegas 1984, 110-1), (Muñoz Alonso 1982, 229-31), *Cambio* 16, 10, 17, 24 November; *El País*, 11 November 1980.



that the support of additional Generals<sup>374</sup> and internal political figures would constitute the most prudent course of action. Given the nature of a two-pronged attack and based upon an understanding of the manner in which reform had been executed thus far, internal plus external support was needed. It is unclear to what extent the conspirators would have examined the manner in which the reform of the Cortes was achieved but the nature of the task before them dictated that a balanced support system would need to be in place. Herein exists a crucial failing on the part of the conspirators. While the primary actors had ensured in past events that they were well placed to call upon support from within an institution, 23-F was a demonstration of the inability to consider all the potential outcomes and to map out the entire game scenario. An integral part of the plan to overthrow the government lay with the tacit support of the King. This was never given and yet was wrongly assumed to have been and exploited as such. Perhaps the reason for failure lay with the expectance of success and this clouded the necessity to consider alternative outcomes as possibilities and to plan accordingly. Previous events of the transition had had a far less conclusive outcome and yet had triumphed.

The inability on the part of the conspirators to communicate created great difficulties and ultimately prevented a more successful outcome from being reached. It is true however, that Armada met with Captain-General Milans del Bosch on several occasions<sup>375</sup> and elicited support through insinuation and rumour as opposed to concrete

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<sup>374</sup> Captain-General Milans del Bosch, Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero, Lieutenant-Colonel Pedro Mas Oliver, General Carlos Iniesta Cano, General Manuel Cabeza Calahorra and General Luis Torres Rojas were among the more prominent members.

<sup>375</sup> "On 17 November, Armada visited the Captain-General of the Valencia Military Region, Jaime Milans del Bosch. Fervent monarchists, they had been friends since both serving on the Russian front with the *División Azul*. In the course of the discussion, Armada managed to insinuate that he was acting on the King's behalf. According to Milans, Armada told him that: 'The King is worried about the situation in Spain. Things are going badly. Terrorism is shedding the blood of the Armed Forces and the autonomous regions are destroying our national unity'....When he asked what could be done, Armada allegedly replied, 'Plenty, General, we can do plenty. I have been with His Majesty the last few times he has been in Baqueira Beret. Violent actions are feared and we must point them in another direction. His Majesty has discreetly confided his worries to me.'" (Preston 2004, 451), (Santiago & Merino 1983, 53-6), (Pardo Zancada 1998, 174-5).

evidence and factual grounding. This was sufficient to create impetus for action, but proved detrimental in the extreme for a desired outcome. Armada perpetuated the image that he had the ear of the King by cultivating a personal relationship with Juan Carlos and visiting him on several occasions, including on 18 December to discuss the forthcoming Christmas broadcast and on 3 January at Baqueira Beret to visit the royal family during their Christmas holidays. Armada's actions can be viewed as a subtle manipulation of actors within the game, one that remained successful as long as there was no communication between men such as Milans del Bosch and Juan Carlos. In an attempt to orchestrate a control-field, Armada relied on his ability to persuade and dictate the terms of the situation. Subsequent meetings between Armada and Milans del Bosch were designed to further cement the belief that the King had lent his support and that all was proceeding according to plan.<sup>376</sup> Given the nature of the final outcome, a rational analysis dictates that Armada was forcing the situation in order to limit the potential actions available to Juan Carlos. From a game theoretic approach, this was an intelligent manoeuvre and one that had been employed in previous events in the transition. If the control-field has been set to the extent whereby alternative courses of action are beyond comprehension and consideration, then the desired end-game will be achieved.

Armada's strategy did not rely simply upon his supposed influence on Juan Carlos, but instead demonstrated his ability to address various angles in succession. Suárez's resignation caused a temporary vacuum in the political arena and one that,

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<sup>376</sup> "On 10 January 1981, Armada again visited General Milans del Bosch. It was their second meeting in two months...Armada was able to announce that he came with a message from the King. However it would appear that he went far beyond anything that the King had said....Armada told Milans that he was about to take up a senior position in Madrid at the General Staff from which point he would direct the process, insinuating that the King approved. Thus, aware of Milans's inclination towards a violent coup, Armada was sounding him out, even subtly encouraging him to make the coup which he would eventually be in a position 'to redirect' to his own benefit." (Preston 2004, 453-4), (Segura & Merino 1983, 57-9, 77-8), (Urbano 1982, 58-61), (Pardo Zancada 1998, 175), (Reinlein 2002, 272-3).



increasingly as time passed, appeared would be filled with a coalition government. This represented not just the ideal solution for Armada but also a very real alternative for Juan Carlos and the democratic establishment. The demise of Suárez had greatly weakened both the power base and the integrity of the government and steps were needed to assure its authority was preserved. Various methods were used by Armada to generate support for his objective, including the solicitation of factions of the media.

An article, written by Emilio Romero, appeared in the Conservative paper, *ABC* forwarding the idea of a coalition government, headed by General Armada, as opposed to another politician.<sup>377</sup> There existed an established connection between Armada and Romero and the article must be viewed with this in mind. Much in the same way as Suárez had used the media to manipulate public opinion, in the period leading to the introduction of the reform bill, Armada was doing likewise. Armada's strategy aimed at gaining the support of Juan Carlos incorporated a mixture of personal negotiation and external populist pressure,<sup>378</sup> to this he would now add strength. The tactics demonstrated by Armada are very similar in nature to those of the primary actors, analysed in previous chapters. The strategy demonstrates evidence of fore planning and realisation of the importance of manipulation of variables and setting of the control-field.

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<sup>377</sup> Story told in greater detail in (Preston 2004, 458), ('*Las tertulias de Madrid*', *ABC*, 31 January 1981).

<sup>378</sup> "In addition to the article published by *ABC*, *El Alcázar*, an extreme right-wing publication, published three such articles from mid-December 1980 to February 1981 that represented all but open appeals for a military coup. The first article referred to a 'divorce between the government and the ranks of the military' and of 'the urgent need for a corrective solution to permit the regeneration of the Spanish situation.' ('*Análisis político del momento militar*', *El Alcázar*, 17 December 1980). The second declared that 'the democratic experiment has failed' and 'the constitution as it stands does not work' and suggested that the incapacity of the government meant it was time to turn to other institutions, namely the King and the Armed Forces, in order for progress to be made. ('*La hora de las otras instituciones*', *El Alcázar*, 22 January 1981). The third article was the most outspoken of all, published the day after Romero's article, and stated that 'we are at the critical point, the countdown has begun. Political irresponsibility has culminated in a sad process in which the crown is inescapably obliged to intervene...the crown finds itself with the historical opportunity to initiate a substantial change of direction, the oft-mentioned touch on the rudder would permit the formation of a government of national regeneration, enjoying all the authority needed in the exceptional circumstances in which we live.'" ('*La decisión del Manco Supremo*', *El Alcázar*, 1 February 1981).

Herein lies another difference to the events analysed in previous chapters; the publishing of 'suggestions' placed a certain element of the parameters of the game into the public arena and provided not only the reformists, but also those unconnected with the process itself namely the Spanish people, with an insight into that which could occur. If this was done to engender support for the initiative then it was a bold and ill-considered move, the reality of making public such suggestions as those released by *ABC*, enabled a counter-strategy to be established based upon a logical outcome prediction. The parameters were, in many ways, ideally suited for a coup and yet the attempt failed. The arrogance of the men involved, born of traditional understanding of their role in Spanish life<sup>379</sup>, coupled with the mistake of underestimating the resolve of Juan Carlos resulted in disaster for the conspirators.<sup>380</sup>

The actual details of the attempted coup are of less relevance for this chapter than the material discussed above. The plan was to storm the Cortes and seize control of the political structure and wait for the appropriate authority to arrive and take charge. This initiative would be supported by the activation of the military factions in Spain and the implementation of Marshall Law until such time as full control was obtained. Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero<sup>381</sup> was responsible for the storming of the Cortes and even as this took place, Armada was still negotiating with Juan Carlos for political legitimacy. Armada, denied the opportunity to be present at La Zarzuela by Juan Carlos, lobbied for the opportunity to go to Cortes to negotiate with Tejero. The failure of the military

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<sup>379</sup> "To explain why military regimes are more susceptible to internal disintegration, I focus here on rivalries and relationships within the ruling entity of an authoritarian government: the officer corps, single party, clique surrounding the ruler, or some amalgam of two or more of these three." (Geddes 1999, 122).

<sup>380</sup> "Where empirical observation to some extent contradicts Armada's apparent appraisal of the situation is regarding the order of preference of King Juan Carlos. The King's former tutor sees in him a sincere wish for constitutionalism, from which one might deduce that his first preference is that neither he nor his captain-generals stage a coup at all. However, Armada imagines that Juan Carlos would prefer to agree with his generals than risk confrontation with them, even to the extent of unwillingly supporting a coup which was not of his own making. Such an order of preference on the part of the King is conceivable if one considers the fear he might understandably be experiencing of having the throne wrested from him by the military." (Colomer 1995, 111).

<sup>381</sup> Refer to footnote 125 for additional information on this.



opposition lay in the lack of cohesion amongst its members. It became evident as events of 23-F developed, that Armada's strategy had been constructed without the direct approval of Juan Carlos<sup>382</sup> and that his agenda did not necessarily correspond to that of the initial concept behind the coup. Lack of integrity and adherence to a coherent structure prevented any real success.

The inability, on the part of the conspirators to cooperate and communicate prevented their strategy from fully reaching its potential. Arguably, 23-F could well have succeeded had those involved mounted a unified front, one based upon mutual understanding and common objectives. A rational analysis would grant the upper hand to the conspirators and yet the democratic system achieved a comprehensive victory in the fact of overwhelming odds. There are many factors that when examined from a rational perspective, would lead one to posit a positive outcome for the conspirators. They were in possession of some powerful weapons, high-ranking military officials, the ability to allude to the friendship and support of Juan Carlos in certain areas, the increasing deterioration of the political system, the increasing levels of violence, public desire for change and the historical tradition of military rule in the country. How then did they fail? Armada's design was not for a military take over so much as he was concerned with assuming power himself. The diagrams below outline the fundamental error made by Armada in regards to preference ordering and demonstrate the necessity to fully calculate the potential outcomes from all perspectives.

Armada constructed his strategy based upon a misinformed calculation of the preferences of Juan Carlos. As has been mentioned above, the necessity to address all elements of the equation, and not simply those over which one has full control, is

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<sup>382</sup> "Juan Carlos had been informed of the probable involvement of General Armada in a conspiracy, so when the latter now asked permission to visit him in the Zarzuela Palace, he was refused point-blank. Later it transpired that Armada's failure to gain admittance to the palace had been a decisive factor in the collapse of the coup." (Gibson 1992, 61).

critical. The institutional nature of those involved in the Bunker, prevented full analysis from taking place and ultimately cost success. In previous chapters, it has been clearly demonstrated that the reformists took into account the preferences and potential actions of the establishment and constructed a strategy that would guarantee results when, applied to the formal ordering of institutional boundaries that constrained their opponents. Such analysis was not present here as the true resolve of Juan Carlos was either not believed, or not given true credibility. Those involved in the attempted coup failed to take into account the change in the young monarch and viewed him as they had at the time of his nomination, an inexperienced and easily manipulated puppet. The reality would prove their downfall and highlight the importance of individual actors in transitional processes.

Fig. 6.1 demonstrates the game played from Armada's perspective and clearly demonstrates the relevance that must be attached to the identity of the person constructing the game. Decisions are made based upon a rational interpretation of events but the issue of 'rational' is naturally subjective to the individual's interpretation of events and outcomes and is determined, in turn, by their understanding of their own position and that of others in the game. There is no single definition of 'rational' if we are able to conclude that the actions of individuals, is simply that, individual, and while there will exist similarities and patterns of common action, the nature of the particular actor involved, dictates the constructs and parameters of the game. Taken from this perspective, the misinformed game, as perpetrated by Armada, is only misinformed from our perspective and must be regarded as a rational, if ill-advised, strategy on his part.

Fig 6.2 demonstrates the game according to Juan Carlos, and in reality, according to what hindsight would determine as a rational perspective. In this game we



are able to see the de facto power distribution and given our understanding of Juan Carlos' position, it is possible to accurately plot the outcome of a game that was doomed to fail from the outset, as a result of the inability of Armada to consider the motivations and actions of all concerned, as opposed to his own view of the desired outcome.

**FIG 6.1:**

**ARMADA’S GAME - MISINFORMED**

For the purpose of this game, we assume that Armada is in control and that he acts accordingly. He believes himself able to overrule both the Captain-Generals and Juan Carlos. The game is being played under misinformed conditions as not all players are fully aware of the parameters of the game and are not privy to all the available information.

Armada is in possession of a dominant strategy, namely that of pursuing the coup as this will give him access to the power structure. We assume for this game that Armada believes Juan Carlos to be weak and that he will therefore adhere to the parameters of the game, as constructed and produce the desired end game.

S1 represents the successful attempt of the coup  
S2 represents the failed attempt of the coup

The numbers shown in the left-hand side of the boxes corresponds to Armada and the numbers in the right-hand correspond to Juan Carlos

		JUAN CARLOS	
		S1	S2
ARMADA	S 1	1, 0	1, -1
	S 2	-1, 0	-1, 0

We can see from the game above that Armada wins when he chooses to pursue a coup, as shown in the first row but he loses when the ultimate decision is to avoid a coup. Juan Carlos cannot be considered a winner under any circumstances of the game as the best that he can hope for is to neither gain nor lose from an outcome and he remains either equal to, or below Armada in all four occasions.



**FIG 6.2:**

**JUAN CARLOS' GAME**

In this game we see Juan Carlos occupying a position of relative strength in that he is able to dictate the outcome and is confident in his ability to produce the desired end game. He is in a position to force the decision one way or the other and therefore represents the dominant player.

S1 represents the decision to attempt a coup  
S2 represents the decision to avoid a coup

The numbers shown in the left-hand side of the boxes correspond to the Army and those in the right-hand side of the boxes correspond to Juan Carlos.

		JUAN CARLOS	
		S1	S2
ARMY	S 1	1, 1	0, 1
	S 2	0, 0	1, 1

As we can see from the game above, Juan Carlos possess a dominant strategy if he opts against a coup, as demonstrated in the first row and the second column. Irrespective of the decision taken by the Army, if Juan Carlos votes against a coup, he will achieve his aim and the Army will lose.

The interesting thing to note, from Fig. 20, is that if both players oppose the coup, a balance is reached; Juan Carlos remains in control and the Army preserves their position. There is also a balance achieved should both players opt to support the coup. United, Juan Carlos and the Army would have stood a very real chance of success and yet this would have come at the expense of democracy and so interestingly, Juan Carlos would have both won and lost. Given the lessons learnt from Alfonso XIII and Constantine of Greece, it is realistic to assume that Juan Carlos would not have risked an uncertain future based on an uneasy alliance with the Armed Forces.

A strategy that encompassed a greater military backing and therefore possessing a far greater capacity to generate results may well have been more successful. A central problem to the strategy of Armada<sup>383</sup> was that he failed to take into account Juan Carlos's commitment to the democratic process and more importantly, drastically underestimated the obedience and loyalty the King commanded from the Armed Forces. Juan Carlos was instrumental in thwarting the attempted coup, able as he was to gain control of the situation quickly and effectively, rally his supporters, reassure the population at large and prevent a military coup almost by force of will alone.

The paradox of the Spanish case rests upon the position of Juan Carlos and the office which he had come to represent. The transition period had seen him successfully come to embody the power and authority of Franco in more than name only. He had achieved recognition and was recognized as the ruler of Spain. The allegiance expressed towards him by the Armed Forces was not a result of his democratic stance, but rather due to his position as Commander-in-Chief. Juan Carlos was able to avert the coup because of military control and position rather than in the name of democracy itself. This was evident by his very appearance on the night in question. Juan Carlos did not appear as a defender of democracy or even as a man, but rather as the office of Commander-in-Chief. The simple act of appearing wearing his military uniform was sufficient to reassert his position as leader of the military<sup>384</sup>. From this point on,

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<sup>383</sup> "Behind Armada's behaviour was a strange mixture of hubris and paternalism which led him to believe that he could both interpret the unspoken wishes of Juan Carlos and then present himself to his brother officers as the King's spokesman." (Martínez Inglés, A. 2001, 191-7), (Preston 2004, 479).

<sup>384</sup> "The military obeyed me, not only because I was one of them, but also, and above all, because I was the Supreme Chief of the Armed Forces. Who would have taken me seriously if I had not been able to put on the uniform of Captain-General and address them in front of the television cameras?" (Vilallonga 1993, 200). (Translated from original by author).



subsequent demonstrations of obedience on the part of the military were to the office itself as opposed to the individual wearing the uniform.<sup>385</sup>

The ultimate collapse of the attempted coup was resultant from the failure to understand the relevance of institutional constraints. Despite the reforms that had been implemented, the political system in Spain remained just that. Mechanisms existed to prevent abuse and to ensure the survival of the system. The removal of Adolfo Suárez was a necessary and constitutionally protected course of action, just as had been the removal of Arias Navarro. The weakening of support for the government in light of domestic violence and inaction was perhaps an inevitable result of the underlying problems within Spain, problems that had been present before the reform process truly began. Those who sought to overthrow the existing system and implement one of old, did not take into account the inherent strength of the system as an institution and attempted to exogenously implement change without crucial endogenous support. In addition, the failure to accurately assess their own position within the system and recognise the constraints that this position created, prevented an exact determination of their relative power distribution; and this in turn ultimately resulted in their defeat at their own hands.<sup>386</sup>

The coup was brought about by adherence to the ideology of Franco and in that sense, was undertaken in his name and yet it was he who had appointed Juan Carlos to

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<sup>385</sup> "The experience of mass societies confirms that at least large aggregates of members do not usually respond to ideas and ideologies in and of themselves. To collect and focus the support of large numbers of members and to link their feelings to other objects requires some way of concretizing their attachments. Typically, this has been achieved in part by the emergence of vigorous and trusted leaders who, the members and followers are led to believe, in some way embody the ideals and stand for the promise of fulfilment. They are the personal bridges acting as ties to the new norms and structures of authority." (Easton 1967, 305).

<sup>386</sup> "At no point during the transition was the military permitted to enter into real negotiations regarding the course of important political developments. At most, they were merely 'informed' by Suárez of his intentions, and much of the time found themselves reacting to *faits accomplis*. Through his own behaviour and that of Vice-President General Gutiérrez-Mellado, this restricted the role for the military was institutionalised." (Gunther 1992, 74).



the position of Commander-in-Chief.<sup>387</sup> The conspirators were attempting to deconstruct a system that they had helped to build, and one that was firmly grounded in Francoist ideological constructs itself.<sup>388</sup> The existence of a strong leader was a familiar concept and one that was clearly too potent to overthrow.<sup>389</sup> Attempts to override institutions are largely met with opposition as the institution recognises the attack and relies upon the governing rules and protective structure to prevent such an action. "Thus, political institutions define the framework within which politics takes place."<sup>390</sup>

The necessity for rational analysis on the part of individuals is essential but it must be reinforced with the ability of an individual to physically initiate the process of change, as clearly demonstrated by previous events in the transition process. The ideological must be connected to the actual in order for progress to be made, but this by itself will not guarantee a successful outcome. The ultimate need to adhere to the institutionally protected framework of existing constraints<sup>391</sup> and shape change from within an organization prevented a successful outcome to the attempted coup of 23-F.

<sup>387</sup> "All are loyal, above all else, to the supreme head of the Armed Forces, King Juan Carlos. Like so many other high-ranking military officers, a great number of captain-generals see Juan Carlos as 'successor to the Caudillo', regard his training at the military academies positively, and consider obedience to him above and beyond observance of the Constitution." (Colomer 1995, 110).

<sup>388</sup> "The institutional variants of the approach focus attention on the importance of institutions as mechanisms for channelling and constraining individual behaviour. The basic argument of the rational choice approaches is that utility maximization can and will remain the primary motivation of individuals, but those individuals may realize that their goals can be achieved most effectively through institutional action, and find that their behaviour is shaped by the institutions. Thus, in this view, individuals rationally choose to be to some extent constrained by their membership in institutions, whether that membership is voluntary or not." (Peters 1999, 44).

<sup>389</sup> "If political leaders, for various reasons, are understood to be the founders of democracy, then they also often function, after that initial breakthrough, as its sustainers or its underminers. Thus, for example, they design political institutions (which affect the quality and, perhaps, the very survival of democracy); they decide to be more or less constrained by the rules of the democratic game (which affects quality and sustainability); and in periods of political and/or economic difficulties, they can use their power to either protect democracy or destroy it." (Bunce 2000, 709).

<sup>390</sup> (March & Olsen 1989, 18).

<sup>391</sup> "Without denying the importance of both the social context of politics and the motives of individual actors, therefore, institutional analysis posits a more independent role for political institutions. The state is not only affected by society but also affects it...Political democracy depends not only on economic and social conditions but also on the design of political institutions. Bureaucratic agencies, legislative committees, and appellate courts are arenas for contending social forces, but they are also collections of standard operating procedures and structures that define and defend values, norms, interests, identities, and beliefs." (March & Olsen 1989, 17).



The role of individuals is important as highlighted by the involvement of Armada and ultimately by Juan Carlos and yet, without the institutional backing of his position as Commander-in-Chief, Juan Carlos would have been unable to halt the coup in the manner in which he did, and potentially, would have failed altogether from preventing a dramatic increase in domestic violence and civil unrest. In this respect, the role of individuals is important, but only becomes critically significant when supported by the fundamental recognition of a structured institutional framework.

## Conclusion



The prevalent thought regarding the role of individuals within political processes is perhaps best outlined thus, "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me."<sup>392</sup> There is very little room for manoeuvre as the system will override individual preference and perpetuate action according to established traditions and norms. It can be argued that those who operate from within the political sphere do so for personal gain and that little will be done to initiate change as it is neither easy to achieve nor beneficial to try. The conception that political inertia will triumph over personal involvement is plausible and therefore, to a certain extent true. What this thesis has attempted to demonstrate is the capabilities afforded to motivated and dedicated individuals and the relative power and influence they are able to exert in given situations.

I set out, in this thesis, to prove that single actors were capable of influencing political processes and that the course of a transition to democracy was directly linked to those involved in the shaping of it. While I do not wish to argue that single actors are responsible for the entirety of political action and that they remain untouched by external pressure or influence, this thesis was designed to highlight the relative importance and latent potential of individuals in relation to those constraints that inexorably direct the course of history. The notion that actors are completely subordinate to institutions and can play no part in shaping the structure of politics is one that contradicts the issue of free will and rational choice to a certain extent. If individuals are powerless to act, then all political processes would be shaped according to the given parameters and a simple analysis of the data would provide us with an

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<sup>392</sup>*The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* edited by Roy P. Basler, Volume VII, "Letter to Albert G. Hodges" (April 4, 1864), p. 281.

accurate predictive capability.<sup>393</sup> Reality is much more complex and any sophisticated investigation of political processes must, at the very least, take into account the role played by single actors.

The focus of this thesis, while centred on that of individuals does not rest there alone. The content of this work was designed to not simply illustrate the role played by specific individuals, in this case a group of three specific men, but to contextualise this role by situating it within the wider sphere of institutional constraints. I have attempted to provide a link between the behaviour of individuals and the structure within which this behaviour is permitted to operate. No decisions are made in a vacuum and the motivations behind, and the implications of these decisions, must be taken into account. Analysis of specific decisions must be grounded by the awareness of the parameters governing action. Attention must be paid to the nature of the system and the historical and cultural constraints that exist.<sup>394</sup> For this purpose, I included an historical account of Spain up to and including the period under investigation. It is important to understand the shape of that under analysis in order to accurately interpret actions taken.

I chose Spain for several reasons. The transition to democracy experienced in this country is remarkable and provides great insight into the general process of transitions. Within the incredibly short period of 7 years from 1975 to 1982, Spain was transformed from the dictatorship of Franco to the socialist democratic government of

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<sup>393</sup> "For some scholars, democracy is understood to be a by-product of elite actions, which are understood in turn to be a by-product of larger social forces. From this perspective, elites are seen as summarizers of long-term developments and as well-positioned representatives of larger forces. For other analysts, elite action in the here and now – and deliberate action in highly contingent circumstances at that – is what is understood to matter in the rise of democracy." (Bunce 2000, 708).

<sup>394</sup> "The peculiar historical contribution to institutionalism, old or new, lies in history's fixation upon the past. If in social scientific terms each discipline 'owns' one particular variable, time is history's. Insofar as it has social scientific aspirations, history is just the study of the way in which the past shapes the present and the future. Or, in less Whiggish mode, we might say that history just amounts to the telling to stories about the past which we internalize as our own and which, in the telling and retelling, shape us and our future actions." (Goodin 1996, 3).



Felipe González. This transition was no accident and nor can it be attributed to a natural progression of events as dictated by structural parameters. Countries such as Greece and Portugal experienced similar contributing factors such as military dictatorships and a shared cultural and ethnic background and yet failed to achieve the same level of success enjoyed by Spain.<sup>395</sup> This thesis has demonstrated that the initiative and capabilities of the individuals involved in the transition in Spain were fundamental in engineering change and without their direct involvement, the end result would have been greatly different.<sup>396</sup>

The role of institutions is one that is equally important and was to play a decisive role in the Spanish case. This thesis has included analysis of the structure of institutions, the role they played within the process and the constraints that they placed upon the autonomy of individuals. Unlike previous analysis of the Spanish case, the connection between the two elements; actors and institutions, has been established. I have demonstrated the manner in which the two are connected and the possibilities that still existed for unilateral action to be adopted, providing the rules were adhered to. In order for this to happen, it is of course necessary for the actors to be fully conscious of the system within which they are operating and to conform, to a certain extent, to the parameters that exist. What makes the Spanish case interesting is that the actors

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<sup>395</sup> "Spain and Brazil were the prototypical cases of change from above, and the Spanish case in particular became the model for subsequent democratizations in Latin America and Eastern Europe. In 1988 and 1989, for instance, Hungarian leaders consulted extensively with Spanish leaders on how to introduce democracy and in April 1989 a Spanish delegation went to Budapest to offer advice." (Huntington 1991/2, 593).

<sup>396</sup> "A different series of events would have transpired if the ultraconservative prime minister (and close friend of Franco) Luis Carrero Blanco had not been assassinated in 1973; if the term of the president of the Cortes and of the Council of the Realm had not expired at the time of Franco's death (enabling Juan Carlos to appoint to those key posts his former tutor and close collaborator, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda); if Adolfo Suárez had not replaced as prime minister the less flexible Carlos Arias Navarro...if it had been Juan Carlos who had been accidentally shot and killed by his brother, rather than the other way around; or if King Juan Carlos had behaved like his grandfather, Alfonso XIII. Implicit in this analysis is the observation that elite settlements are highly contingent events, requiring the right circumstances and the right people in the right place at the right time. This is to say that settlements are eminently political events." (Gunter 1992, 78).

involved, not only conformed to the rules but also subverted them to suit their needs and aims. This subversion was made possible thanks to a fundamental understanding and appreciation of their own limits coupled with an awareness of the nature of the structural limitations of the system itself. The four events that were chosen for this thesis were done so to highlight not only key elements of the transition itself, but also to provide the opportunity to analyse the data from different perspectives thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the transition as a whole.

## **The Nomination of Juan Carlos**

The nomination of Juan Carlos at the hands of Francisco Franco is instrumental in illustrating the direct influence of individuals. Decisions taken by the Caudillo were largely his and his alone. Advice was received from counsellors but for the most part, Franco acted in a unilateral manner. One could argue that the transition to democracy in Spain would not have taken place without the direct involvement of Juan Carlos, and indeed hindsight would support this claim. Juan Carlos has been called the 'pilot', or 'motor' of the transition and is largely understood as having been directly responsible for the successful establishment of democracy in Spain. This understanding extends to claims that he was in possession of a master-plan for the transition prior to the death of Franco. This is a difficult assertion to prove and while I do not believe that Juan Carlos foresaw every possibility and angle from the outset, I do believe that there existed an idea of the direction in which he wanted Spain to move. This is evident from speeches and interviews, detailed in the chapter above, he gave during the last few years of Franco's death where he asserted his desire for reform and democratic progress.



While the evidence does not support the existence of a master plan, I do not believe that Juan Carlos was as ill-prepared as many thought at the time. The moniker 'Juan Carlos the brief' was wrong and the assumption that he was a political incompetent was gravely misplaced. The actions analysed in the first event chapter illustrate his inexperience and his naivety but do not support claims that he was politically incapable or the mere puppet many expected him to become. The relationship Juan Carlos enjoyed with Franco was far from straightforward and evidence exists demonstrating the young prince's awareness of his role as a pawn in the game Franco was playing with Don Juan. The decision by Juan Carlos to accept the nomination demonstrates an awareness of the parameters set in place by Franco, the institution at the time. There was no other way for Juan Carlos to gain power, no other method for him to begin the process of change, but to align himself with the existing order, manifested in the person of Franco. This represented a rational decision by the young prince and one that we can safely claim was in his best interest. If power was the only goal, that would be obtained with the title of monarch; and if change was the objective, that could also only be achieved thus. Demonstrating an appreciation of the structure of power and the limitations present in his own position, Juan Carlos opted to succumb to the criticism and alienation at the hand of his father, the jokes surrounding his political acumen and the whims of Franco in order to progress to the next stage of the process.

The nomination of Juan Carlos represents a relatively straightforward event to analyse as it largely deals with the motivations and actions of two actors, in relation to each other. The level of communication was an important factor as Juan Carlos was not directly privy to the thoughts of Franco. This realisation determined the need to analyse events and determine the best course of action accordingly. The issue of

communication and dialogue between actors is one that this thesis has attempted to bring to the fore. When complete communication does not exist, what remains to the actors is rational decision making based upon a hypothesised preference ordering of themselves and the other party, or parties, involved in the game. In the case of the nomination of Juan Carlos, incomplete information did not prevent a successful outcome for Juan Carlos, rather, it taught him some valuable lessons about the nature of constraints, the mindset of the Francoist Bunker and ultimately, the tremendous importance attached to power and its distribution.

The connection between that of individual capacity and institutional structural governance is one that is prevalent throughout and evident in this event, despite the restricted number of individuals involved. Franco represented the institution and Juan Carlos the individual. Franco acted as predicted; he chose a successor based upon an analysis of what was needed to perpetuate the regime. Juan Carlos had been groomed for the role and Franco clearly believed that he would continue in the vein intended. The institutional structure was very much in existence, as represented by both the Fundamental Laws and the Cortes. Juan Carlos acted in the only way possible, by adhering to the nature of the institution. In hindsight, this represented both, the only possible option available to him, and the one most closely suited to his goals.

## **The Nomination of Adolfo Suárez**

The nomination of Adolfo Suárez represents the first proactive decision on the part of Juan Carlos and is an event that overwhelmingly highlights the relevance of individuals to political processes. Were actors completely subordinate to institutional



constraints, there would have been no need to remove Arias Navarro from office and replace him with someone more suited to the goals of democratic reform. Arias Navarro was every inch a Francoist, was firmly entrenched in the ways of the old regime and he resented Juan Carlos as an upstart beneath his contempt. The very fact that he was removed demonstrates the importance of the involvement of the 'right people at the right time', and the manner in which he was removed is an ideal representation of the connection between the actions of individuals and the structure of the institution.

The evidence shows that Juan Carlos did not associate Arias Navarro with democratic progress and, as detailed in the chapter above, the continued existence of Arias Navarro as prime minister, not only stalled the transition but also had a negative effect through the alienation of certain political groups. The inability of Arias Navarro to adapt to the changing political arena and his intimate connection to the Bunker signified his downfall. The importance of individuals rests with the manner in which they are viewed by others. A great deal of politics is perception and given the task before Juan Carlos, the continued presence of Arias Navarro as premier was counter productive. The decision to remove Arias Navarro was perhaps an obvious one and yet given the nature of power distribution at this point in the transition, Juan Carlos was not permitted to act unilaterally, nor even appear to be doing so.

While Juan Carlos had inherited his position from Franco he did not at this point in the transition possess the Caudillo's force of will and individual capability. Given that Juan Carlos was attempting to construct a democratic state from the existing foundations of a dictatorship, he was subordinate to structural parameters that had not existed for Franco. The reality of a democratic transition is that of an evolving

organism. Rules that existed and constrained previous regimes play a certain role, but with every decision made and every action taken, the rules are rewritten and a new set of constraints are introduced and placed upon the actors. Juan Carlos was not permitted to act in the same manner as had Franco, given the very different nature of his end goal. The necessity to base democracy upon the rule of law and open and accountable government creates institutional parameters that must be addressed and adhered to. The nomination of Adolfo Suárez represents one such occasion.

The selection of Adolfo Suárez was met with disbelief at the time and yet hindsight demonstrates his suitability for the role and is bolstered by his portrayal as the face of Spain's democratic transition. The importance of individuals is clearly demonstrated by the involvement of Adolfo Suárez as he was a very visible figure who initiated change, sometimes through political connections, and sometimes through force of will and charisma alone. The manner in which Arias Navarro was removed shows a strict adherence to the institutional mechanisms in place. As detailed in the chapter above, the method employed by Juan Carlos and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda was legal and open. The ability to subvert and change the existing system was made possible by an in depth knowledge of the workings of the process of selection and the crucial placement of key personnel, namely Fernández-Miranda, to ensure that the correct course of action was executed. At no point did this represent an abuse of power, merely compliance to institutional structure and form.

The nomination of Adolfo Suárez differs from the nomination of Juan Carlos as more than two actors were directly involved. Any rational analysis, at the time, had to take into account the actions of more than one opponent. The strategy constructed by Juan Carlos and Fernández-Miranda was based upon the legal requirements set in place



for the replacement of a premier. The inclusion of Adolfo Suárez's name on the list of possible candidates was seen as a waste of an entry, not as a subversion of the process; and the actual selection of Adolfo Suárez by Juan Carlos was permitted and protected by law. The absolute necessity for individual actors to operate within institutional constraints is clearly shown with this example, as is the importance of motivated and dedicated individuals. The connection between these two elements, institutional constraints and motivated individuals, was critical for the successful conclusion of Spain's transition to democracy.

## **The Reform of the Cortes**

The reform of the Cortes was chosen for inclusion in this thesis for several reasons; it represents the turning point in the transition after which the remnants of Francoism were seen to truly have lost their power base, and it constitutes an ideal example of the connection between individuals and institutions. The sheer enormity of reforming any system of government is significant and the task of producing this change with the wholehearted agreement of the institution itself is difficult to fathom. As has been mentioned above, the parameters that constrained the actions of the elite actors had not existed to constrain Franco. Unilateral action was not possible and would have been viewed by all involved, those in favour of democracy included, as a break from the spirit of the transition. The successful nomination and election of Adolfo Suárez as prime minister had clearly demonstrated the possibilities for change to be executed, providing the existing system of rules was strictly adhered to. Internal development could be achieved providing certain factors could be controlled and key personnel employed where needed. Herein lies an important element of the Spanish transition;

namely the ability of the elite actors to learn from prior events and to be sufficiently aware of the parameters as to make correct decisions at the correct times.

The Cortes represented a traditional institution in Spanish political life, not simply as a souvenir of Francoism but as the foundation of government and law. To initiate external reform would have resulted in disaster and prevented further progress. Rational analysis and an acute awareness and knowledge of the inner workings of the political system were crucial for the reform process. The established members of the Cortes, for the most part Francoist ministers conditioned to a limited amount of personal freedom in decision making under Franco, were no match for the intricate and highly sophisticated machinations of Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez. Bearing this in mind, the absolute necessity of a fundamental understanding of the situation at hand, based upon expert knowledge and preparation transition becomes apparent. When one is capable of implementing change through force alone, it will largely be due to the nature of the system as well as the relative power one can be said to possess. The system must support change of this nature and be conditioned to operate within these parameters. The elite actors involved in the democratic transition did not enjoy this luxury and therefore substituted outright power and force for attention to detail and action based on rational analysis.

The manner in which reform was achieved is a demonstration of the communication that existed between various actors and the ability to determine the responses of others. A key element of the Spanish transition was the aptitude displayed by men such as Juan Carlos, Torcuato Fernández-Miranda and Adolfo Suárez to manipulate the existing variables and ensure a successful outcome. Very little was left to chance in the actions taken by the elite actors. An awareness of the parameters



enabled them to construct a strategy based upon a rational ordering of the preferences of others. With the existence of institutions comes a set of established responses and expectations and this allows for the possibility of reform. Internal reform is a natural part of the institutional structure and providing any action taken remains within this structure, there is very little that can be done to prevent it. In many ways, the traditional members of the Cortes, those sufficiently aware that is, would have been able to see the reform before it actually took place and yet there was nothing that could be done to prevent it. The beauty of the transition process in Spain was the deconstruction and reform of the system by its own hand.

The internal manipulation of the Cortes was a result of extensive planning and preparation, an intrinsic understanding of what would be necessary for reform to take place, the ability to develop a rational analysis into a successful course of action and the relative power and influence to engineer all of the above. The existence of institutions alone would not have provoked such a change; the involvement of individuals was required to produce the end result. The existence of individuals alone however, would not have resulted in the desired change as a greater degree of external force would have been necessary and the resultant effect would have been interpreted as a unilateral attack upon the government of a country as opposed to a demonstration of required and necessary internal reform.

## **The Attempted Military Coup**

The attempted military coup d'état represents the end of the period analysed in this thesis and as with the previous events, its selection was based on several factors. The attempted coup is significant because of the manner in which it was executed, the ease with which it was defused and the implications of these two actions. Prior events,

outlined above, were the result of proactive decisions on the part of the elite actors whereas the events of 23-F constituted the first real defence of democracy. This in itself is relevant as it indicates that by 1981 there existed something to defend, something that members of the traditionally Francoist establishment perceived as a real threat. 23-F demonstrates that there had been a definite redistribution of power in the political arena and one that had been felt by all. No longer were men like Juan Carlos merely puppets or young pretenders to be ignored; no longer was democracy a fad to be ignored, the establishment had firmly lost its stranglehold on Spanish politics.

The elite actors, outlined in the previous chapters above, were forced to react during the attempted coup as opposed to acting on their own initiative. Those involved in the attempted coup failed largely due to lack of communication and incomplete information. There was no cohesion to the actions of the conspirators as had existed in the previous events examined. The necessity for information to be shared and used accordingly had been essential thus far and its absence in this case resulted in failure. The conspirators had failed to learn from past experiences and reform from within, but had instead attempted to halt change by the threat of force alone. This in itself represents an expected response from an institutional perspective. Those involved in the attempted coup were heavily attached to the establishment and the Francoist regime; with this came a learned and shared understanding of the manner in which action could be taken.<sup>397</sup> Viewed from the perspective of the elite reformists, the action of the conspirators was both predictable and expected. Where the conspirators failed was in

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<sup>397</sup> "There is a tendency for large, powerful actors to be able to specify their environments, thus forcing other actors to adapt to them. Dominant groups create environments to which others must respond, without themselves attending to the others... The ability to ignore others can lead to long-term failure. Powerful institutions and individuals in them find it less important to monitor and learn from experience and thus become less competent at doing so. Such an apparent disability may not hurt, but there is some chance that a powerful institution will become dependent on its capability to enact its own environment and consequently be unable to cope with a world in which it does not have arbitrary control." (March and Olsen 1989, 47).



their inability to manipulate variables and in their fundamental misunderstanding of the preferences and motivations of the other actors involved in the game. Communication is paramount to a successful completion of an activity of this nature.

23-F highlights not only the absolute relevance of individuals, but also the necessity of a structural framework to guide and order possible actions. What is interesting about this event in particular is the manner in which it effortlessly connects the two. The human face of institutions is important; Juan Carlos had inherited his title and power from Franco and yet it was not until this point in the transition that he truly embodied them. Juan Carlos was successful in preventing the attempted coup precisely because he represented the establishment that the conspirators and the military respected and belonged to. The coup was presumably conceived as an attempt to halt change and return power to the hands of the military, but it resulted in an external attack upon the very system it was attempting to rescue. Juan Carlos' ability to represent the institution of authority provided him with the necessary support and influence to halt the events of 23-F. In previous events, elite actors had manipulated the system from within and had shied away from direct and external action; this then was a fundamental flaw in the strategy adopted by the conspirators.

What is relevant is the shape that institutions take as a result of the connection between structural constraints and human free will. Juan Carlos had become the institution and in so doing, had shaped it in his own image. The respect and obedience he enjoyed was due to his title, not to his persona and yet this was manipulated accordingly. Through the internal development of the system and the subtle increase in Juan Carlos' relative power base, he became both the face of democracy and the successor of Franco. The connection between institution and individual is undeniable,

the transformation sublime. During the transition period, the elite actors were forced to deal with parameters that had existed during Franco's regime and yet by 23-F, they were dealing with parameters of their own creation. The system had evolved under the careful manipulation of individuals dedicated and prepared to initiate change.

## Summary

One can not fail to recognize the importance of individuals within the Spanish transition to democracy. This thesis has attempted to highlight the role played by men such as Juan Carlos, Adolfo Suárez and Torcuato Fernández-Miranda in order to demonstrate "that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."<sup>398</sup> The essence of this thesis is in the reality that actions of motivated and dedicated individuals must be situated within the confines of institutional and structural constraints. The very nature of an institutional framework provides the setting within which action can be initiated and change engineered. Awareness of the parameters that exist, analysis of the possible outcomes and a comprehensive manipulation of the variables are all elements of the process of transition. The framework that overrides individual activity does not do so to curtail liberty but rather exists to provide order and control to a potentially volatile situation. Understanding of this enables actors to reform and develop the system using rational analysis and the confines of the structure itself. The Spanish transition to democracy is a perfect example of the undeniable connection between individual freedom to act, and institutional constraint to shape these actions.

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<sup>398</sup> (Margaret Mead).



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