



Democratic Socialism or Social Democracy?

The Influence of the British Labour Party and the Parti Socialiste Français in the Ideological Transformation of the Partido Socialista Português and the Partido Socialista Obrero Español in the mid-1970s

Alan Granadino

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization of the European University Institute

Florence, 16 May 2016.

European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the link between the ideological transformations experienced by the Spanish and Portuguese Socialist Parties (PSOE and PS) in the mid-1970s and the relations of these parties with the British Labour Party (BLP) and the French Socialist Party (PSF). The PSOE and the PS underwent similar ideological transformations. They went from advocating Socialism in freedom, rupture with capitalism, international neutralism, self-management and closer relations with the Communists, to practically accepting liberal democracy and the placement of their countries in the West as well as rejecting collaboration with the Communist parties. These transformations happened in the context of the Iberian transitions to democracy in which the main international actors concerned with maintaining Cold War détente got involved. The aim of this thesis is to determine to what extent and how the BLP and the PSF, both representatives of different ideological tendencies within the Western European Socialism, influenced the ideological transformation of the PSOE and the PS.

Adopting a transnational and comparative approach and using the theory of cultural transfers, this thesis traces and identifies the circulation of ideas, concepts and practices between the Iberian Socialist parties and their European counterparts, thus examining the relations that the PSOE and the PS maintained with the BLP and the PSF.

This thesis argues that both the PSOE and the PS were deeply influenced by the French Socialists and their ideas on the rupture with Capitalism, self-management and the union between Socialists and Communists. This was a cause of concern for the main European Social Democrat parties (the BLP and the German SPD), who made an effort to counterbalance the French influence on the Iberian Socialists, especially regarding the issue of the union of the Left. This turned the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula into a battlefield for two different conceptions of democratic Socialism. As a result, the PSOE and the PS received, adopted, rejected and adapted ideas and practices from these two European tendencies that they applied to their own social, political, cultural and historical realities. If at the beginning of the 1970s both parties were more in tune with the French Socialists than with the European Social Democracy, at the end of the transitions to democracy both of them moved closer to the Western European Social Democrat parties, without completely abandoning the ideas, concepts and rhetoric borrowed from the French.

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Abbreviations

ASA	Asociación Socialista de Andalucía
ASO	Alianza Sindical Obrera
ASP	Associação Socialista Portuguesa
BLP	British Labour Party
CCOO	Comisiones Obreras
CD	Coordinación Democrática
CDE	Comissões Democráticas Eleitorais
CDS	Centro Democrático Social
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CERES	Centre d'études, de recherches et d'éducation socialiste
CGT	Confederation générale du travail
CFDT	Confédération française démocratique du travail
COPCON	Comando Operacional do Continente
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSI	Conferencia Socialista Ibérica
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FPI	Fundación Pablo Iglesias
FPS	Federación de Partidos Socialistas
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSP	Frente Socialista Popular
Frelimo	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IISH	International Institute of Social History
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWA	International Workingmen's Association
JSN	Junta de Salvação Nacional
MDP	Movimento Democrático Português
MFA	Movimento das Forças Armadas
MP	Member of Parliament
MRPP	Movimento Revolucionário para o Partido do Proletariado
MSC	Moviment Socialista de Catalunya
MSP	Movimento Socialista Popular
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Association

NEC	National Executive Committee
PAIGC	Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde
PASOK	Panellínio Sosialistikó Kínima
PCE	Partido Comunista Español
PCF	Parti Comuniste Française
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano
PCP	Partido Comunista Português
PPD	Partido Popular Democrático
PRC	People's Republic of China
PS	Partido Socialista
PSB	Parti Socialiste Belge
PSDI	Partito Social Democrata Italiano
PSG	Partido Socialista Galego
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano
PSi	Partido Socialista del interior
PSF	Parti Socialiste Français
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español
PSOE(h)	Partido Socialista Obrero Español histórico
PSOE(r)	Partido Socialista Obrero Español renovado
PSU	Parti Socialiste Unifié
PSV	Partit Socialista Valencià
PTE	Partido del Trabajo de España
PUS	Permanent Under Secretariat
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid
SAP	Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti
SDDC	Spanish Democrats' Defence Committee
SEK	Swedish Krona
SI	Socialist International
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SPÖ	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs
TGWU	Transport and General Workers' Union
TUC	Trade Union Congress
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UDM	Union Democrática Popular
UGT	Unión General de los Trabajadores
UK	United Kingdom
UKNA	United Kingdom National Archives
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USO	Unión Sindical Obrera
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Introduction

Objectives of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to perform a comparative analysis of the ideological transformation of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS) by examining their relations with the British Labour Party (BLP) and the French Socialist Party (PSF) within the context of the transitions to democracy in the Iberian Peninsula (1974-1977).

In the 1970s, the PSOE and the PS underwent similar transformations. The PSOE went from a left-oriented, anti-capitalist, Marxist class-party to a virtually Social Democrat, catch-all party in favour of scarcely regulated capitalism, situated at the centre/centre-left of the Spanish political spectrum. During the same years, the newborn PS experienced a similar ideological and political transformation. By 1974, it was a Socialist party in favour of grassroots democracy and self-management, against capitalism, and it took theoretical inspiration from Marxism. In about five years, however, it became a Social Democrat catch-all party in favour of neo-liberal economic policies. At a national level, these transformations occurred within the context of the transition to democracy in Spain and a failed revolution in Portugal. Authoritarian regimes were dismantled and democracy restored in both Iberian countries, and the PSOE and the PS played a central role in these processes. At an international level, these transformations occurred within the context of the economic crisis that hit the capitalist economies of the countries of the Western bloc (especially in 1973 and 1979), and the political period of détente in the Cold War between the Eastern and the Western blocs. These national and international environments affected each other, determining the outcome of the Iberian transitions to democracy as well as the evolutions of the Spanish and Portuguese Socialist parties.

I will investigate the history of both parties because I consider them to be part of a wider phenomenon: the ideological uncertainty, reflection, and transformation of the democratic Left in the 1970s and 1980s. During these decades, the recurring crises of the capitalist economies, which implied the crisis of the Social Democrat model based on the redistribution of the wealth provided by capitalist growth, as well as the disenfranchisement of the Socialist model of the Soviet Union, and the challenge posed by Eurocommunism on the one hand and neoliberalism on the other hand, obliged the European democratic Left to reflect on its own

identity, on the idea of Socialism and how to achieve it. The Spanish and Portuguese Socialist parties were part of this debate and general reflection, especially because Portugal (and to a lesser extent Spain) experienced transitions to democracy that offered the opportunity to test some of the various ideas existing in Europe on Socialism. Therefore, studying the history of the PS and the PSOE in tandem enriches our knowledge of the history of Socialism by providing the perspective of two Socialist parties during the specific context of regime change. Furthermore, although it is not the main objective of the thesis, studying the Iberian Socialist parties together will further understanding of the process by which the European Socialists supported their Spanish and Portuguese counterparts.

The shared context of regime change in Spain and Portugal justifies the comparison of the two parties. Therefore, in addition to the abovementioned approach, I will identify the similarities and differences in the evolution and transformation of both parties, in order to challenge the common traditional assumptions in Spanish and Portuguese narratives. Each party has constructed a history in which the party's ideological transformation and political behaviour is explained mainly by emphasising a sense of political responsibility and commitment to democracy (understood as liberal democracy). Whenever scholars have questioned this 'official' approach, they have done it by adopting a social approach or by adding international context to the analysis. However, the international perspective, while promising, is a trend that has emerged quite recently; there is still a degree of generalisation in the literature regarding the international support of the PSOE and the PS that has to be tested through more in-depth research and comparison.

These two approaches—examining the parties in parallel and comparatively—will be determined by the relations that the PSOE and the PS maintained with other European Socialist parties, specifically the PSF and the BLP, during the transition years (1974-1979). This international/transnational perspective is useful, and even necessary, for studying the ideological and political renovation, development, and transformation of the Iberian parties, because these processes depended on the international support provided by the counterparts of the PSOE and the PS in the Socialist International (SI). The relatively new field within international relations that deals with international political party assistance acknowledges that the “international political party assistance seeks to reform and strengthen political parties

to promote multiparty democracy in transition and post-conflict societies”.¹ Within the context of a regime change such as the one that occurred in the Iberian Peninsula in the 1970s, it can be assumed that the international assistance provided by the European political parties to the PSOE and the PS sought to strengthen and influence their political and ideological orientation. It therefore seems appropriate to affirm that in order to understand the ideological and behavioural transformation of the PSOE and the PS, studying their relations with their European counterparts is essential. This is confirmed in the theorising of other analysts of international party assistance, such as Leni Wild, Marta Foresti and Pilar Domingo. They maintain that “other structural features that shape party development include [...] the informal rules of the game, [...] as well as wider geo-political histories and regional politics”.²

If we combine the theoretical assumptions of the above-mentioned political scientists with the empirical evidence provided by historians who have researched the PSOE and the PS during the Iberian transitions to democracy, it is reasonable to reach the following assumption: in order to understand the ideological transformation and the political development of the PSOE and the PS in the mid-1970s, it is important to attend to their relations with the main European Socialist parties, including the PFS and the BLP.

The second objective of this thesis is to explore how these two European parties perceived and interpreted the Iberian transitions to democracy, and how they consequently acted. Although very recent publications have shed some light on the responses of the British Labour movement to the transitions to democracy in Spain and Portugal,³ this is a topic still worth examining, as this thesis demonstrates by covering how British Labour responded to both the Spanish and Portuguese transitions. Regarding the French Socialists, there is almost no information on how they saw and reacted to the Iberian transitions, and how they engaged with the Iberian Socialist parties.⁴ A secondary aim of this thesis, therefore, is to contribute to this scarcely researched aspect of the history of the BLP and the PSF.

¹ Krishna Kumar, “International Political Party Assistance. An Overview and Analysis,” Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, Conflict Research Unit, Working Paper 33 (October 2004): ix.

² Leni Wild, Marta Foresti and Pilar Domingo, “International assistance to political party and party system development,” Overseas Development Institute (January 2011): v.

³ David Castaño, “‘A practical test in détente’: International support for the Socialist Party in the Portuguese Revolution,” *Cold War History*, 15:1 (2015): 1-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2014.932349>; Sotiris Rizas, *The rise of the Left in Southern Europe* (London and Vermont: Pickering & Chatto, 2012); António Simões do Paço, “El gobierno Wilson 1974-1976. Europa y la Revolución Portuguesa,” *Ayer. Revista de Historia Contemporánea* 99 (2015): 101-122.

⁴ Only the pioneering work of Pilar Ortuño Anaya has shed some light on the relations between the French and the Spanish Socialists. With respect to Portugal, the work of Fadi Kassem is still a solitary, although valuable,

I have chosen the French and British parties for two reasons. Firstly, because according to the existing literature, they were (together with the German SPD)⁵ the main supporters of the PS and the PSOE before, during, and after the regime changes in Portugal and Spain. Secondly, because they are representatives of two different ideological tendencies within the SI that were attractive to the PS and the PSOE during these years, namely Southern European Socialism⁶ and Social Democracy. I have chosen the BLP as a representative of European Social Democracy because it was one of the largest Social Democrat parties in Europe, and because it was in power between 1974 and 1979. Besides, the relations between the other large European Social Democrat party—the SPD—and the Portuguese and Spanish parties are already reasonably well known, thanks to the recent work of Antonio Muñoz and Ana Mónica Fonseca.⁷ Furthermore, the fact that the BLP was the party governing Great Britain—traditionally one of the most influential foreign powers in Portugal and Spain—makes it especially relevant because this position enabled the party to exert influence over its Iberian counterparts at both the party and governmental levels. Finally, the selection of the PSF is justified by the fact that it was one of the most dynamic European Socialist parties regarding ideological production in the 1970s, even if it was not as large as the BLP or the SPD. Moreover, the PSF shared some characteristics and problems with the PS and the PSOE, such as having to compete with a powerful Communist party. This makes the relationship and the exchange of ideas and debates between the PSF and the Iberian parties especially interesting. Furthermore, the French Socialists had maintained close relations with the Spanish and Portuguese Socialists long before the Iberian transitions—the Spanish and Portuguese Socialist leaders were exiled in France for a long time and they came to know and be influenced by the French Socialists and their process of renovation in the early 1970s.

example of the relevance that the Portuguese Revolution had for the PSF. See: Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *Los socialistas europeos y la transición española (1959-1977)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2005); Fadi Kassem, “Choosing a foreign policy for French Socialists. The case of the democratic revolution in Portugal (1974–1981),” *Zeitgeschichte* 2, vol. 40 (March/April 2013): 87-106.

⁵ There are no full-length studies about it, but it seems that other European parties directly involved in the Spanish and Portuguese transitions through the PSOE and the PS were the Swedish SAP, the Austrian SPÖ, and the Dutch PvdA, and the Italian PSI.

⁶ A loosely defined trend within Socialism that has also been called Eurosocijalism. See: Bernard E. Brown, ed., *Eurocommunism & Eurosocijalism. The Left Confronts Modernity* (New York and London: Cyrco Press, 1979); also see: Tom Gallagher and Allan M. Williams, *Southern European socialism: parties, elections, and the challenge of government* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989); James Petras, “The Rise and Decline of Southern European Socialism,” *New Left Review* 146 (July/August 1984): 37-52.

⁷ Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, *El amigo alemán. El SPD y el PSOE de la dictadura a la democracia* (Barcelona: RBA Libros, 2012); Ana Mónica Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!» A Social-democracia alemã e a transição para a Democracia em Portugal (1974-1976)” (PhD diss., ISCTE – University Institute Lisbon, 2012).

Methodology and Sources

The above-mentioned combination of approaches means that this thesis interlinks and brings together topics and analytical strategies used in the disciplines of international and transnational history, cultural history, and comparative history. The topics chosen and the perspective adopted, namely the analysis of the transformation of two political parties (the PS and the PSOE), and connecting this investigation to the international activities of two non-governmental actors (the PSF and the BLP) and a governmental actor (the Labour government in the UK),⁸ affords this thesis a marked transnational dimension.⁹ Therefore, my analysis will be framed within, as well as beyond, the boundaries of the nation-state. However, since one of the aims of this thesis is to trace, identify and reflect on the circulation of ideas, concepts and practices between these parties, the theory of cultural transfers also provides an inspiring guideline for this investigation. This methodology will be helpful in tracing how the PSOE and the PS assimilated, adapted and/or rejected certain conceptual and ideological transfers from the European parties.

This implies that I will approach the topic from a theoretical and methodological perspective that has not yet been undertaken. I will consider the exchange of ideas between the Iberian Socialists and their European counterparts as a double-sided process of reinterpretation and re-signification, in which the constantly evolving context of both the donors and the receivers of the transfers is a determining factor.¹⁰

Following this method, I will reconstruct and analyse the bilateral relations of the Iberian Socialist parties with the PSF and the BLP, with attention to the contexts in which these four parties operated. I will consider the bilateral relations at a governmental level in the periods when these parties were in government (the BLP between 1974 and 1977,¹¹ and the PS intermittently between 1974 and 1975). The governmental level is very important because it

⁸ The BLP is a non-governmental actor in the international relations, but in this chronological framework, the governmental side is crucial to this thesis, as it was the party in power in the UK from 1974 to 1979.

⁹ Karen Heard-Lauréote, "Transnational Networks. Informal Governance in the European Political Space" in *Transnational European Union. Towards a Common Political Space*, ed. Wolfram Kaiser and Peter Staire (London: Routledge, 2005), 36-60.

¹⁰ Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999); Christiane Eisemberg, "Cultural Transfer as Historical Process: Research Questions, Steps of Analysis, Methods" in *Metamorphosis structures of cultural transformations*, Real Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature, vol. 20, ed. Jürgen Schlaeger (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag Tübingen, 2004), 99-113; Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, "Conceptual History and Conceptual Transfer: the Case of 'Nation' in Revolutionary France and Germany", in *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Iain Hampsher-Monk, Karin Tilmans and Frank Vree (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), 115-128.

¹¹ The BLP was in the government of the UK until 1979, but the time period analysed in this thesis ends in 1977.

was intertwined with the party level, in the sense that the government consciously used the party to make their policies more effective. It is also very important because the governmental level clearly shows the connection between the European activities and the political behaviour of the Iberian parties. This approach involves an almost exclusive focus on the relations between the leaders of the parties, with less discussion of the rank and file.

I will combine the analysis of bilateral relations with the analysis of programmes, declarations of principles, theoretical articles, and articles of opinion produced in the PSOE and the PS between 1972 and 1977. The ideological products of the Iberian parties will be compared to the programmes, party manifestos and theoretical articles produced by the BLP and the PSF in the same years. This combination of methods will be helpful for tracing transfers from the European parties to the PSOE and the PS. It will also serve to delineate how the Iberian parties used or rejected certain conceptual and ideological transfers from the PSF and the BLP during these years.

I will also take into account the asymmetry that existed between all the parties I study here, as the PSOE and the PS were in such a weak position before the beginning of the transitions to democracy that they were very open to receiving the support and influence of the stronger and better established European parties. However, as we advance along the timeline, the asymmetry between these parties will undergo variations, as the political and organisational situation of the Iberian parties in their respective countries changed. When the asymmetry between the Iberian and the European parties shifted, the BLP's and the PSF's capacities for influence were also altered.

The significance of these ideological transfers will be determined by the way I will use the concept ideology. I will consider this rich and contested concept in a broad and eclectic sense. Ideology will be considered as both the symbolic expression of the interests of a given group, and as the symbolic reflection of the social and political conflicts that took place in the Iberian Left during the transitions to democracy.¹²

This methodology has implications for the kind of sources that I use in my thesis.¹³ I mainly use primary sources and published sources, which will be complemented occasionally by oral sources. The primary sources are the documents of the international departments of the BLP

¹² This eclectic use of the polysemic concept ideology has been inspired by: Terry Eagleton, *Ideología, una introducción* (Barcelona: Paidós, 2006); Teun A. Van Dijk, *Ideología y discurso. Una introducción multidisciplinaria* (Barcelona: Ariel, 2003).

¹³ For the complete list of sources used in this thesis, see the section *Sources* at the end.

and PSF located in the historical archives of these parties (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester and Fondation Jean-Jaurés, Paris). I also use diplomatic sources located in the archives of the Foreign offices of Portugal and Great Britain to examine the relations between the Portuguese Socialists and British Labour at the specific moments when they were both in power.¹⁴ These archival sources will be the base for building this thesis, due to the difficulties in accessing the documents of the Iberian parties during this research. Notwithstanding this problem, the British and Portuguese archival sources will be supplemented with documentation from the historical archive of the UGT (Fundación Largo Caballero), as well as the PSOE (Fundación Pablo Iglesias), which only permitted access to the documents of the transition in May 2015. They will also be complemented by the documents of the PS placed in the Fundação Mario Soares, as the historical archives of the PS are closed to researchers. To these sources I will add the documents placed in the historical archive of the Socialist International in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

The published sources that I use are articles that appeared in the newspapers of these parties and in other related journals, proceedings of party congresses, declarations of principles, and programmes. Finally, the use of oral sources will be secondary, because they are not as relevant as the published texts for analysing ideology and discourse, and because of the practical difficulties involved in organising and carrying out interviews in several different cities in Portugal, Spain, France and the UK.

State of the Art

The rapid transformations of the PSOE and the PS in the mid-1970s have been explained in Spanish and Portuguese historiographies with respect to national and, to a lesser extent, international factors. The literature on both parties, and on the transitions to democracy in Spain and Portugal, generally stresses the same national factors to explain their transformations, including the change from being clandestine to legitimate, the socio-economic changes in both Spanish and Portuguese societies, the change in the sociological profile of the militants in the PSOE and the PS, their electoral interests, the constraints of

¹⁴ The documentation found in the archive of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office is so abundant and rich that it determines the narrative of big parts of the thesis. See the section: *Structure of the thesis*.

being in power, and the personality and strategic behaviour of both leaders.¹⁵ The international factors have also been taken into account when explaining the transformation of the PSOE and the PS, but only very recently.

The historiography that has focused on the international dimension of the PS and the PSOE in the 1970s has built on studies of transitions to democracy in Spain and Portugal. This is a field that has been widely researched in the last decades by political scientists. The pioneering works of Geoffrey Pridham and Laurence Whitehead opened the way for the historiography and initially shaped its analytical focus. Both social scientists and historians centred their investigations on the international economic conditions and on the pressures that Spain and Portugal faced from the main Western countries (the US, France, Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany).¹⁶ Being afraid that an uncontrolled change of regime in either

¹⁵ For the Spanish case: Santos Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española, 1879-1982* (Madrid: Taurus, 1997); Santos Juliá, "The ideological conversion of the leaders of the PSOE, 1976-1979," in *Élites and Power in Twentieth-Century Spain*, ed. Frances Lannon and Paul Preston (New York: Clarendon Press-Oxford, 1990), 269-285; Richard Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party. A History of Factionalism* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1989); Mónica Fernández Amador, "La militancia socialista en la Transición. La Agrupación Local de Almería", (paper presented at the II Congreso Internacional La España del Presente de la Dictadura a la Democracia, Madrid and Melilla, 2005); José Félix Tezanos, "Continuismo y Cambio en el Socialismo Español: El PSOE durante la transición democrática," in *La transición democrática española*, ed. José Félix Tezanos, Ramón Cotarelo and Andrés de Blas (Madrid: Editorial Sistema, 1989), 433-493; Abdón Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco. Continuidad y renovación del socialismo español, 1953-74* (Madrid: EPI, 1993); Juan Antonio Andrade Blanco, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición. La evolución ideológica de la izquierda durante el proceso de cambio político* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2012); Juan Antonio Andrade Blanco, "Renuncias y abandonos en la evolución ideológica durante la transición a la democracia: una propuesta para el estudio del IX Congreso del PCE y del Congreso Extraordinario del PSOE" *HAOL* 8 (2005): 43-50. For the Portuguese case: George C. Kyrtos, "The Attitudes and Policies of European Socialists regarding Spain, Portugal and Greece, since 1967" (PhD diss., London School of Economics, 1980); Diego Palacios Cerezales, *O Poder Caiu na Rua. Crise de Estado e Acções Colectivas na Revolução Portuguesa* (Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2003); Ronald H. Chilcote, *The Portuguese Revolution. State and Class in the Transition to Democracy* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010); Mario Del Pero, Víctor Gavín, Fernando Guirao and Antonio Varsori, *Democrazie. L'Europa Meridionale e la Fine delle Dittature* (Milano: Le Monnier, 2010); Kenneth Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Martin Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Portugal* (London: Merlin Press, 1987); Jose Medeiros Ferreira, *Portugal em Transe (1974-1985)*. História de Portugal vol. 8, ed. José Mattoso (Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1994).

¹⁶ Charles Powell, "International Aspects of Democratization: The Case of Spain," in *The International Dimensions of Democratization. Europe and the Americas*, ed. Lawrence Whitehead (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 285-314; Alfred Toviás, "The International Context of Democratic Transition" in *The New Mediterranean Democracies. Regime transition in Spain, Greece and Portugal*, ed. Geoffrey Pridham (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1984); Walter C. Opello, "Portugal: a Case Study of International Determinants of Régime Transition," in *Encouraging, democracy: the international context of regime transition in Southern Europe*, ed. Geoffrey Pridham (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), 84-102; Jonathan Story and Benny Pollack, "Spain's Transition: Domestic and External Linkages," in *Encouraging, democracy: the international context of regime transition in Southern Europe*, ed. Geoffrey Pridham (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), 125-158; Geoffrey Pridham, *The Dynamics of democratisation, a comparative approach* (London: Continuum, 2000); Damián A. González Madrid, "Actores y factores internacionales en el cambio político español. Una Mirada a la historiografía", in *Claves Internacionales en la Transición Española*, ed. Óscar José Martín García and Manuel Ortiz Heras (Madrid: Catarata, 2010), 39-64; Tiago Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos na Revolução Portuguesa (1974-1976)* (Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 2004); Encarnación Lemus, *En Hamelin... La Transición española más allá de la frontera* (Oviedo: Septem, 2001); Encarnación Lemus, *Estados Unidos y la Transición*

of the countries of the Iberian Peninsula could have put at risk the whole process of détente between the two blocs of the Cold War, these countries tried to promote a moderate and controlled transition to democracy. Related to this, the investigations of scholars have focused on the influence that the dynamics of European integration had in Spain and Portugal,¹⁷ and on the transnational activities of the West European Socialist parties who promoted democracy in the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁸

The works that put the focus on these transnational activities are the most relevant for this thesis, and the ones with which I will engage. This literature has focused specifically on the influence exerted by the West European Socialist parties on the PSOE and the PS, and it has shown the important support given by the European Socialist parties to their Iberian counterparts. The German SPD, the BLP and the PSF, individually and working together in the Socialist International (SI) and in the Socialist Group of the European Parliament, are considered to be the main supporters of the PSOE and the PS during the Spanish and Portuguese transitions to democracy.

In the case of the PSOE, the magnitude of the support given by the SPD and the reasons that moved the German party to get involved in the Spanish transition are already known.¹⁹ The SPD supported the Spanish party materially, economically, financially, politically, and morally, and the main reason for doing so was to promote a peaceful and controlled transition

española. Entre la Revolución de los Claveles y la Marcha Verde (Madrid: Sílex, 2011).

¹⁷ Geoffrey Pridham, “The Politics of the European Community, Transnational Networks and Democratic Transition in Southern Europe,” in *Encouraging, democracy: the international context of regime transition in Southern Europe*, ed. Geoffrey Pridham (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), 212-245; Geoffrey Pridham, “European integration and democratic consolidation in southern Europe”, in *Southern Europe and the making of the European Union, 1945-1980s*, ed. António Costa Pinto and Nuno Severiano Teixeira (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 183-208; António Costa Pinto and Nuno Severiano Teixeira, “From Africa to Europe: Portugal and European Integration,” in *Southern Europe and the making of the European Union, 1945-1980s*, ed. António Costa Pinto and Nuno Severiano Teixeira (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 3-40; Francisco Castro, “A CEE e o PREC”, in *Penélope. Revista de História y Ciências Sociais* 26 (2002): 123-157; Julio Crespo Maclellan, *España en Europa, 1945-2000. Del Ostracismo a la Modernidad* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2004); Robert M. Fishman, “Moldar a democracia: a União Europeia en as transformações políticas pós-autoritarias da Espanha e de Portugal” in *Portugal, Espanha e a Integração Europeia*, ed. Sebastián Royo (Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais, 2005); Marina Costa Lobo and Pedro C. Magalhães, “Da terceira vaga à terceira via. Europa e os socialistas portugueses” in *O partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2005), 205-218.

¹⁸ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*; Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*; Kyrtosos, “The attitudes and Policies”; Juliet Antunes Sablosky, *O PS e a transição para a democracia. Relações com os partidos socialistas europeus* (Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 2000); Juliet Antunes Sablosky, “A actividade partidária transnacional e as relações de Portugal com a Comunidade Europeia,” *Análise Social* 31 (138) (1996): 1007-1020; Rui Mateus, *Contos Proibidos. Memórias de um PS Desconhecido* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1996); Thomas C. Bruneau, “As dimensões internacionais da Revolução Portuguesa: apoios e constrangimentos no estabelecimento da democracia,” *Análise Social*, 28 (72-73-74) (1982): 885-896; Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»”

¹⁹ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*.

in Spain, where the PSOE would be the major force in the Left, thus minimising the importance—and the destabilising power—of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE). This would avoid any potential situation that could put the process of détente in Europe at risk, which was an essential factor for the foreign policy promoted by the SPD in Western Germany. This was based on the principle that détente was the best way for Germany to work towards its unification. It is also known that the PSF as well as the BLP supported the PSOE during the Spanish transition. As in the case of the SPD, their support was based on economic (although to a lesser extent than in the German case), moral, material, and political aid.²⁰

However, apart from Socialist solidarity, we do not know the precise motivation that moved the PSF and the BLP to support the PSOE, nor how this support happened, nor what was the real impact it made on the Spanish party. There are three reasons for this: firstly, the historical narrative on the relations between the PSOE, the BLP and the PSF has been constructed with the implicit intention of enriching our understanding of the Spanish transition to democracy. Therefore, the PSOE's reception and assimilation of European support has never been taken into account. Secondly, most of the research has focused on the late 1960s and the early 1970s, with little space devoted to the period of the Transition. Finally, and directly related to the previous reason, the documents produced by the PSOE during the transition were not available for researchers before May 2015.

Although all of this literature implies that the European Socialist parties influenced the political behaviour of the PSOE, it has not attempted to explain to what extent, at what level, or how and why this happened. This is mainly due to the approach used in all these works, which, in essence, could be compared to the diplomatic approach in the discipline of international history, with the main difference being that instead of focusing on the bilateral relations among nation-states, they have focused on political parties. As a result, the relations between all of these parties have been reconstructed without analysing, or even taking into account, how the support was received and assimilated by the PSOE. Therefore, the mutual influences and exchanges between these parties, and the reception, assimilation, and adaptation of the European transfers by the PSOE, have been missed.

The same kind of problems can be found in the literature on the PS. In the Portuguese case, it

²⁰ Ortuño, *Los socialistas*; Kyrtos, "The Attitudes and Policies."

is also known that the international actors,²¹ and among them the European Socialists²²—especially the SPD, the BLP, the SAP and the PSF—played an important role during and after the Carnation Revolution. Academic works and political memoirs went so far as to state that without the support of the European Socialist parties, the result of the Revolution would have been totally different (meaning that Portugal would have ended up under some kind of authoritarian regime, whether Communist or Fascist).²³ Furthermore, whenever the European Socialist parties have been included in the study of the Portuguese Revolution, or in the study of the PS, concepts such as “European socialists” or “Europeans” have been used as uniform analytical categories, which has furthered the tendency to consider them as a homogeneous force.²⁴ This has overshadowed the differences among them, as well as some episodes of political and ideological struggle that happened between European Socialists regarding Portugal. Finally, in these works, the PS has been considered as merely a channel through which the European parties could intervene in Portuguese politics. Therefore, it has not been taken into account how the party was affected by its relations with the Europeans, or how it assimilated the support received. Thus, investigating how the PS received, adopted or rejected, and adapted the support of the European Socialists is crucial for understanding the political behaviour of the PS during the first years of Revolution on the one hand, and the ideological transformation of the party on the other—two questions that are closely linked.

In addition, the transformations of the PSOE and the PS have not been approached in the broader context of the intellectual/ideological— and to an important extent political—crisis and transformation of the European Left that started at the beginning of the 1970s. In other

²¹ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*; Mario Del Pero, “A European solution for a European Crisis. The international implications of Portugal’s Revolution,” *Journal of European Integration History*, Volume 15, 1 (2009): 15-34; Mario Del Pero, ““Which Chile, Allende?” Kissinger and the Portuguese Revolution,” *Cold War History* 4 (2011): 625-657; Moreira de Sá, *Os americanos*.

²² Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*; Juliet Antunes Sablosky, “A actividade partidária transnacional e as relações de Portugal com a Comunidade Europeia,” *Análise Social* 31 (138) (1996): 1007-1020; Kyrtos, “The Attitudes and Policies”; Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»”; Ana Monica Rôla da Fonseca, “The Federal Republic of Germany and the Portuguese Transition to Democracy (1974–1976),” *Journal of European Integration History* Vol. 15 1 (2009): 35-56; Ana Monica Rôla da Fonseca, “Apoio da social-democracia alemã à democratização portuguesa (1974-1975),” *Transição Democrática em Portugal. Leer Historia* 63 (2012): 93-108.

²³ Rui, *Contos Proibidos*.

²⁴ For instance see: Susana Martins, “A fundação do Partido Socialista em 1973” in *O partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2005), 29-50; James May, “Co-operation Between Socialist Parties” in *Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe*, ed. William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas (London: Billing & Sons Ltd, 1977). António Simões do Paço, “Friends in high places – O Partido Socialista e a ‘Europa conosco’”, in *Revolução ou Transição? História e memória da Revolução dos Cravos*, ed. Raquel Varela (Lisboa: Bertrand, 2012), 117-138. Juliet Anunes Sablosky has pointed out in her works quoted above the different ideological models that the European Socialists offered to the PS (the Social Democrat model and the French model of Socialism) but she does not go into detail about it.

words, their ideological transformations and political performances have been analysed not taking into account one of their contexts, which is that of the family of the democratic European Left to which they both belonged.²⁵ Analysis of the two parties' transformations in this context is necessary and useful for two reasons; the Iberian parties represent cases that can illustrate how the European Left faced this crisis and adapted and responded to it, and the crisis of the Left can add precious insights to our understanding of the history of the PSOE and PS by providing a wider framework that sets the limits of the ideological and political evolution of the Iberian Socialists.

These are the historiographical gaps that need to be addressed in order to reassess and understand the connection between the transformation of the PSOE, and the PS and the European support that they received between 1974 and 1977, which is the main objective of this thesis. Additionally, reflecting on these questions will also shed some light on responses to the ideological and political crisis of the European democratic Left since the early 1970s.

Hypotheses

The main hypothesis of this thesis is that in order to understand the political behaviour and the ideological transformation of the PSOE and the PS in the mid-1970s, it is essential to look at their relations with other European Socialist parties. Furthermore, I consider that the contradictions between the ideological development and the political behaviour in both Iberian parties during these years has to be understood, at least in part, as a response to the diverse influences and stimuli that they received from different European Socialist parties.

The fact that at the beginning of the 1970s there were two ideological trends confronted within the SI²⁶—the one represented by the PSF (anti-Capitalist, in favour of workers' self-management and eager for a pact with the Communists), and the one represented by the main Social Democrat parties, the German SPD, the BLP, the Austrian SPÖ and the Swedish SAP (in favour of managed Capitalism and against the alliance between Socialists and

²⁵ This shortcoming has started to be tackled very recently with regards to the PSOE. See: Abdón Mateos, "La Transición del PSOE en perspectiva Europea: socialismo y modelos de partido en el sur de Europa" in *Transición y democracia. Los socialistas en España y Portugal*, ed. Abdón Mateos and Antonio Muñoz Sánchez (Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesias, 2015), 27-45.

²⁶ Hugues Portelli, *L'Internationale Socialiste* (Paris: Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1983); Christelle Flandre, *Socialisme ou social-démocratie? Regards criosos français allemands, 1971-1981* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006).

Communists)—suggests that the influences received by the PSOE and the PS from their European counterparts were not homogeneous.

Thus a more refined hypothesis appears.. In the first half of the 1970s, the PSOE and the PS, despite their differences, were attracted and influenced in the ideological realm by the French Socialists; simultaneously, both Iberian parties faced political pressures, incentives, and influences from the Social Democratic parties and governments of the UK and the FRG (and other international actors such as the US, NATO, and the EEC) that pushed them in a different direction. This created a dialectic that, together with other factors,²⁷ conditioned and determined the evolution and the ideological construction of the PSOE and the PS.

This means that the European Socialist parties could not impose their own models as solutions for the Iberian Socialists, because they were part of an intricate, multilevel network that did not allow this to happen. Actors involved in this network included governments, international organisations, political parties, and even party factions, which were affected by factors such as history, political culture and the ever-evolving political and socioeconomic contexts.

Chronological frame, and structure of the thesis

The chronological frame of this thesis is from 1972 to 1977. These years were significant in the history of the PS and the PSOE for several reasons. The PSOE was renovated between 1972 and 1974, and the PS was created in 1973. The Carnation Revolution began in 1974 and the Spanish transition in 1975. In addition, 1974 is the exact moment when the international actors started to intervene decisively in Portugal and Spain via the PS and the PSOE respectively. The closing year of 1977 was chosen with the aim of restricting the period of research to the process of political transition in the Iberian Peninsula. I concluded my research on the PS at the end of 1975, when the Carnation Revolution is considered to be over, and on the PSOE in June 1977, when the first democratic elections in Spain were celebrated.

I have chosen such a restricted timeline because I consider that the special circumstances that made the PSOE and the PS very receptive to external influences ended when they were institutionalised. Moreover, the frequency and the significance of the contacts between the

²⁷ These factors, equally important, are the specific political, economic, social and cultural contexts within which these parties had to operate, and the specific historical experiences of each party.

Iberian and the European Socialist parties decreased once democracy was established in Spain and Portugal.

The thesis consists of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter is about the PS; it presents the historical antecedents of the party, the international context of the Carnation Revolution, and the relations that the PS had with the BLP and the PSF. The section on the relations between the PS and the BLP provides a more international approach, as it is mainly based on documentation from the British Foreign Office and the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The section on the relations between the PS and the PSF concentrates more on ideology, as the PSF was not in government, and therefore the available sources were less focused on issues of international politics, and more on party affairs and ideological exchanges. The second chapter deals with the PSOE, and is structured similarly to the previous chapter. The third chapter returns to the relations between the PS, the BLP and the PSF. It focuses on the year 1975, when the Carnation Revolution attracted more international attention. Finally, the fourth chapter is about the relations that the PSOE maintained with the British and French parties from 1975 to the Spanish elections of 1977. The last part of this thesis is a section of conclusions.

1. The Portuguese Socialist Party: From Creation to Carnation Revolution

This chapter deals with the Portuguese Socialist Party from its creation in April 1973 until the end of 1974, when the Carnation Revolution in Portugal started to become radicalised due to social pressures and demands for better working and living conditions, as well as increasing control of the state apparatus by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP). In addition, at the end of 1974, the PS held its first legal Congress in Portugal, updating its programme and its organisation. During this year and a half, the PS went from being an illegal group that could hardly be called a party—according to Thomas C. Bruneau it would be more appropriate to call it a cadre calling themselves Socialists²⁸—to a relatively well-organised party with a defined ideology and programme and clear potential to reach power.

This evolution occurred within the context of the collapse of the *Estado Novo* and the beginning of a revolutionary process in Portugal that attracted international attention. The international community was concerned about the consequences that the Portuguese Revolution could have for the international equilibrium between the West and the East at a moment of Cold War détente, as well as the fact that the Portuguese Revolution put an end to the Colonial Wars, opening an uncertain process of decolonisation in Africa. The Eastern and Western powers became involved and tried to influence the Portuguese situation. The former did so by supporting the PCP, and the latter by supporting the PS as a way of preventing the possibility of a Communist Portugal that would be outside the Western sphere of influence. The most important international and transnational actors involved in this crisis were the Socialist and Social Democrat parties of Western Europe members of the Socialist International (SI), especially the German Social Democrat party, the British Labour party and the French Socialist Party.

At the same time, the Carnation Revolution happened in a context of increasing globalisation, the international Capitalist economic crisis, and a crisis in post-war political culture. All of these put pressure on the traditional European Socialist parties that had to come out with ideological and political responses to these new challenges. For them, the revolution in

²⁸ Thomas C. Bruneau, “The Left and the Emergence of the Portuguese Democracy” in *Eurocommunism & Eurosocialism. The Left Confronts Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York and London: Cyrco Press, Inc. Publishers, 1979), 161.

Portugal opened up an interesting scenario where they could see their models of society and their theoretical ideas on how to achieve democracy and Socialism implemented. This somehow converted the Carnation Revolution into an ideological battlefield on which each party sought to see its ideas validated.

The objective of this chapter is thus to set out the international context in which the Carnation Revolution took place, in order to understand the nature of the European Socialist involvement in the Portuguese situation through the PS, as well as the reasons behind it. This, in turn, will help us to understand the European influence on the rapid ideological evolution and the political behaviour of the PS during the first stages of the Revolution.

The chapter is divided into four parts. The first is devoted to the historical antecedents of the PS, and identifies the main features of the international environment at the beginning of the 1970s. In the second part, I use primary sources to reconstruct the relations between the PS and the BLP, and I analyse the nature and the characteristics of these relations. In the third part, I analyse the relations and connections between the PS and the PSF. Finally, I analyse the ideological production of the PS, culminating in its first Congress held in Portugal in December 1974.

The main argument of this chapter is that international support during this period was essential for the Portuguese party. Before the Portuguese Revolution started, the PS established contacts with the BLP and the PSF that were very important for making it the main option for the European Social Democracy to support in Portugal. However, these European parties influenced the PS in different and sometimes contradictory ways. The BLP and other Western Social Democrat Parties tried to prevent the Communist seizure of power in Portugal by supporting the PS. They considered that the Portuguese party was their best option, and worked towards strengthening it, which pushed the PS towards moderation, as the private statements of Mário Soares demonstrate. On the other hand, the PSF exerted a very strong ideological influence on the PS when it was created. This influence was against the moderating tendency promoted by the BLP, making the PS one of the ideologically most radical parties in the SI by 1974.

1.1. The antecedents of the PS and the international context at the beginning of the 1970s

1.1.1. The history of the PS

Socialism in Portugal has a long and troubled history. The first Socialist groups appeared in Portugal in the 1850s, and the *Partido Socialista* was created in 1875, with the encouragement of an initiative of the First International.²⁹ This historic *Partido Socialista* was not formally linked to the PS, despite the fact that both parties shared the same name—the historic *Partido Socialista* was outlawed in 1933 under António de Oliveira Salazar’s regime, while the new PS was created in 1973. However, by taking this name in 1973, the PS wanted to link itself with the long Portuguese Socialist tradition, and tried to present the new organisation as its legitimate heir, and thereby as the main Socialist party of the country.³⁰

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Socialist party was never strong, and its support among the Portuguese working class was scant. This was mainly because of the specificities of the Portuguese socio-economic structure at that time; it was characterised by low industrial development and weak class-consciousness among the proletariat. This socio-economic reality, together with the ideological influences that arrived from Europe, determined the evolution and the organisational and ideological characteristics of the PS during its existence. The party was composed of very few militants, and mostly comprised intellectuals and qualified workers from Lisbon and Porto. From a very early stage, it experienced numerous splits and internal ruptures influenced by the international ideological debates and struggles between Marxists and possibilists. This was reflected in the ideological line of the party, which was eclectic and often confusing. The Socialists in Portugal combined the ideas of Saint Simon, Fourier, Blanc, Proudhon, Bakunin, and Marx, and added their own contributions to this ideological amalgam. The result was that they advocated a non-revolutionary Socialism that was against the pernicious effects of Capitalism, but did not want to destroy it. Instead, the first Socialists in Portugal aimed to establish a decentralised society

²⁹ For more on the origins of the Portuguese Socialist movement, see: Maria Filomena Mónica, *O movimento socialista em Portugal (1875-1934)*, (Lisboa: Instituto de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento, 1985), and César Oliveira, *O Socialismo em Portugal em 1805-1900 (Contribuição para o Estudo da Filosofia Política do Socialismo em Portugal na Segunda Metade do Século XIX)*, (Porto: Afrontamento, 1973).

³⁰ This idea is implicit in Mário Soares’s, “Relatório do Secretário-Geral”, *Portugal Socialista*, 19, 19 December 1974, 7.

based on communities of small producers living in a fraternal harmony. In these communities there would be social justice and individual freedom would be respected.³¹

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Socialists had to compete with other discourses that appealed to the Portuguese workers—Republicanism, Anarcho-Syndicalism, and Communism. The parties and unions linked to these ideologies further eroded the influence of the PS on the Portuguese working class, and the Socialists opted for moderation and for a reformist political way to advance towards Socialism. They collaborated with the Republican *Partido Democrático*, and gained a place in the parliament and later in the government during the Portuguese First Republic (1910-1926). The social and economic crisis in Portugal from 1914 to 1926, and the unpopular participation of the country in the First World War, (which was officially supported by the Socialists), weakened the institutions of both the Republic and the PS, which lost its grip on the working class and on the trade union movement.³² During this period, the reactionary forces of the Right organised several military coups that initially failed. The PS fought against the rise of the Right, participating in the Leftist alliances *Comité das Esquerdas Sociais* and *Bloco de Defesa Social*, but on the 28th of May in 1926, a military coup d'état definitively put an end to the Republic.

In 1933, a military dictatorship took effect, based on counter-revolutionary authoritarian and conservative ideas. The *Estado Novo*, the long dictatorship of António Oliveira de Salazar, began with the approval of a new Constitution in 1933. It was characterised by corporatism, authoritarianism, anti-Liberalism, anti-Communism, the existence of a single party (*União Nacional*), an interventionist economic system, and the lack of basic freedoms. During that same year, the new regime outlawed the PS.

Despite the ban on the political parties, there were various uncoordinated efforts to keep the Socialist ideal alive in Portugal. However, none of these efforts were able to develop a political organisation of significance. Certain Socialist groups appeared in the 1940s and 1950s in Portugal,³³ but they did not attain any relevance in the political life of the country. Before the 1960s, the Socialists were not able to create a major Socialist political force, and

³¹ Filomena, *O movimento socialista em Portugal*, 158-59.

³² Until the 1920s and 1930s, the trade unionist movement in Portugal was independent from the political parties, and influenced by Anarcho-Syndicalism. However, in those decades it began to be controlled by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP). See: José Barreto, "O PS e o movimento sindical", in *O Partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta, 2005), 254-271.

³³ *União Socialista* (1942); *Partido Socialista Independente* (1943); *Partido Trabalhista Português* (1945); *Partido Social Operário* (1947).

the individuals ideologically close to Socialism gravitated either towards the Republican opposition or towards the PCP.³⁴

The situation of the Socialists in these decades was demoralising as the beginning of the Cold War meant that the Anglo-American support for Salazar³⁵ damaged the potential of the Portuguese opposition to overthrow the regime. In the 1950s, the Socialists almost disappeared, while the Communists, who had a centralised organisation that was better prepared than other parties for clandestine opposition, became the main political force opposed to the regime. Indeed, political opposition to the *Estado Novo* was almost completely monopolised by the PCP, a fact that Salazar's regime successfully exploited in the international context of Cold War. The PCP was an orthodox Communist party that followed the ideological line set by Moscow. Due to the hierarchy of its structure and its internal discipline, it had survived during the toughest years of the dictatorship. Its leader was Alvaro Cunhal, a renowned anti-Fascist, who would become very popular for escaping from prison in 1960. The real predominance of the Communists in the Portuguese opposition, which was exaggerated by the regime, made it crucial for the Socialists to make the Western Europeans and the Americans aware that Portugal had a Socialist opposition that was attached to freedom and democracy.

At the beginning of the 1960s, the *Estado Novo* faced a crisis. This was due to the lack of social support, which became evident during the campaign for the Presidential elections in 1958, as well as the beginning of the Colonial Wars. In this context, the regime exacerbated the repression of the opposition, which in turn facilitated the closeness between the Communists, radical Leftists, Republicans and Socialists.³⁶ The opposition realised that the regime was weak, but also realised that they were not able to take advantage of this weakness and overthrow it. In 1962, therefore, several groups called for the creation of an anti-Fascist front, an organisation to include all opposition to the regime. This attempt at an anti-Fascist union did not succeed, but it showed the need to unite the opposition.

The Socialists tried to revitalise their organization in 1964 by creating the immediate predecessor of the PS, the *Acção Socialista Portuguesa* (ASP). At that time, as well as the crisis of the regime, the Portuguese Communists were experiencing a troubled period due to

³⁴ Kyrtsos, "The Attitudes and Policies," 26.

³⁵ Portugal asked to be admitted in the UN in 1946 with the support of the US and the UK, but its entrance was vetoed by the USSR. In 1949, Portugal was one of the founding members of NATO.

³⁶ At that time the Socialists were organized in an heterogeneous group called *Resistência Republicana*.

the increase of police repression and the internal split of the pro-Chinese group *Frente de Acção Popular* (FAP). In 1964, therefore, the Socialists saw the opportunity to try to consolidate the non-Communist Left, and to show the international community the existence of democratic opposition to Salazar. The Socialists were aware of the need of united action against the regime, but they also wanted to raise their own individual voice, and let the Portuguese and the world know that they existed.

The ASP was not a political party but an association essentially formed by a group of friends, which did not have a clear organic structure or grassroots support.³⁷ However, its ambitions were clear; as its founders put it, this was the organisation “of the Portuguese Socialists who fight for democratic Socialism”.³⁸ The ASP was created in exile (in Geneva) in 1964, and made the most of a favourable international conjuncture—the electoral victory of the BLP in the UK, and the fact that there were Socialists in power in many countries of Western Europe,³⁹ which could be helpful for their consolidation and for the achievement of their political aims. From the very beginning, therefore, the Portuguese Socialists relied on international solidarity as a guarantee of survival and a way of prospering. This reliance on international support, and the lack of grassroots support, made the Portuguese Socialists very dependent on their European counterparts before the beginning of the Carnation Revolution, but also beyond it.

The founders of the ASP were Mario Soares, Francisco Ramos da Costa and Manuel Tito de Morais. All of them were renowned opponents to Salazar’s regime, middle class intellectuals who did not have connections with the working class which they claimed to represent. When the ASP was created, Mario Soares was a thirty-nine-year-old lawyer, who also had a degree in philosophy. He was the son of a former Minister of Education in the First Portuguese Republic, and he was one of the main personalities in the Portuguese opposition to the Salazar regime. In his youth, he had flirted with Communism, although he soon became a Social Democrat. In 1945, he was already a founding member of the youth branch of the Democratic Unity Movement, which was mainly composed of university students, who included other future Socialist leaders such as Salgado Zenha. Soares started to gain a reputation thanks to his work as lawyer defending political prisoners, especially after his defence of the family of

³⁷ Susana Martins, *Socialistas na Oposição ao Estado Novo* (Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 2005), 98.

³⁸ Declaração da Comissão Directiva Provisória da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.), definindo objectivos e estratégia de acção, NOV.1964 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 0524,000, im. 83).

³⁹ Acta da reunião de fundação da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.), manuscrito de Mário Soares, 22.NOV.1964 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 0524,000, im. 34).

General Humberto Delgado, the assassinated candidate to the Presidency of the Republic and opponent to Salazar.⁴⁰ Soares's reputation as an opponent of the regime increased in 1961 when he wrote and signed a Programme for the Democratisation of the Republic, which demanded the restoration of a democratic order in Portugal that would guarantee basic freedoms.⁴¹

Soares's views on Socialism and the future of Portugal before the outbreak of the Revolution of the Carnations were as follows:

I desire, naturally, the existence of a classless society, in which the exploitation of the man by the man will end, where the means of production will be at the service of the collective through the socialist planning of the economy with the participation, at every level, of the workers (self-management). Therefore, I am against capitalism, I wish to see it destroyed and not only reformed [...]. However, I do not ignore that it is not easy to transform Portugal into a socialist country. The process leading to socialism is long and complex and, to a great extent, it will be determined by the path [taken by] other Western European countries. And, according to the current state of world politics, everything leads to think that [the Portuguese way to socialism] will follow a democratic way.⁴²

Another co-founder of the ASP was Francisco Ramos da Costa, a fifty-one-year-old lawyer who was exiled in Paris. His origins were humble; he worked as a messenger boy when he was eleven years old. He was able to study economics at university, and he began his political trajectory in the Communist Party, which he abandoned in 1951 due to strategic disagreements. Ramos da Costa started to collaborate with Mário Soares in 1953, and he was an active supporter of the candidacy of Humberto Delgado in 1958. After the defeat of Delgado in the manipulated elections of that year, Ramos da Costa conspired to overthrow the regime. The unsuccessful attempt of the so-called *golpe da sé* was the reason why he was exiled in 1959. He established himself in Paris, where he was very active in establishing relations with the European Social Democrat parties and providing them with information about the existence of Socialists in Portugal.

The third co-founder of the ASP, Manuel Tito de Morais, was a fifty-four-year-old engineer who had been exiled in Algeria and Brazil. Tito de Morais had experienced police

⁴⁰ Maria João Avelaz, *Soares: ditadura e revolução* (Lisboa: Publico, 1996).

⁴¹ *Programa para a Democratização da República*, 31/01/1961; available at https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B8qf4EMOIMBkNjZjZjY1YzktOTE5OC00ZmNhLWFINGMtZmQ3ZWVjY2UxNGRk/edit?hl=pt_PT&pli=1

⁴² Mário Soares, "Resposta ao inquerito do Expresso", Mário Soares Foundation, Arquivo Mário Soares, (s.d.), "Diversos de OUT.66 a FEV.74", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_93356 (2015-10-10). The underlined appears in the original document.

aggressions, several arrests, and exile during the Salazar regime, and he was the most left-leaning of the three founders of the ASP. Nevertheless, he came from a well-off family. His father was the Republican soldier and politician Tito Augusto de Morais, and his mother came from a wealthy noble family. He obtained his engineering degree from Ghent University (Belgium), and he spoke several languages besides Portuguese. Thus, the three founders of the ASP were intellectuals from middle class or even upper-middle class families without direct connections to the working class. They had been politicised by the opposition to Salazar, which was characterised by the predominance of Communists, and by ideological heterogeneity among the non-Communist Left.

The social composition of the ASP, which basically remained the same when it was transformed into the PS, was characterised by the presence of middle and upper-middle class intellectuals and liberal professionals. The numbers of the association varied between approximately 200 and 500. The links between the ASP and the workers were very weak, and this was a problem that the Portuguese Socialists carried with them for many years. The leadership of the association was informal, and the responsibilities of each member were not clearly defined. However, the core of the ASP, which was made up of approximately twenty people was the same group that took control of the PS after the 25th of April 1974.⁴³ It was implicitly agreed among them that Mário Soares was their leader.⁴⁴

According to its founders, the main objective of the ASP was to overthrow the Portuguese Fascist regime and advance towards a democratic Socialism. In order to reach this goal, the ASP was open to including all democrat Socialists, regardless of their ideological tendencies, and willing to form a united front by collaborating with other Portuguese anti-fascist forces, meaning the Communists.⁴⁵ Although the ASP called itself Socialist, its ideological basis was not very well defined. The members of the association deliberately wanted “to avoid any ideological alignment”, because in their opinion this would lead to debates and divisions that would weaken the efficacy of the organisation.⁴⁶ On the one hand, this theoretical vagueness and openness meant that they were open to cooperating with ideologically diverse groups and attracting members from different ideological and social backgrounds. On the other hand, it

⁴³ Martins, *Socialistas na oposição*, 142-165.

⁴⁴ Susana Martins, “A fundação do Partido Socialista,” 31.

⁴⁵ Declaração da Comissão Directiva Provisória da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.), definindo objectivos e estratégia de acção, NOV.1964 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 0524,000, im. 83).

⁴⁶ Declaração da Comissão Directiva Provisória da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.), definindo objectivos e estratégia de acção, NOV.1964 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 0524,000, im. 83).

meant that by aggregating the leftist non-Communist opposition, they sought to become an alternative to the PCP.⁴⁷

However, the ASP was never able to consolidate the moderate leftist opposition as it pretended to do, and during its existence, it remained a small group of middle-class people without any influence over the Portuguese workers. The most remarkable achievements of the association in the second half of the 1960s were the establishment of international contacts with the West European Socialists, and founding the newspaper *Portugal Socialista* in 1967. In the 1960s, the exiled Ramos da Costa and Tito de Morais were the most active members of the ASP at making international contacts were. Tito de Morais began to publish the *Portugal Socialista* in Rome with the support of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI); in the 1970s, it would become the official newspaper of the Socialist Party.

The ASP acquired a reputation for being reformist and Social Democrat at the end of the 1960s in Portugal, after Marcelo Caetano replaced Salazar as Portuguese Prime Minister in 1968.⁴⁸ This was because Caetano timidly opened new ways of participating in Portuguese politics, and the ASP was willing to establish a dialogue with the government, displaying a conciliatory disposition in *A Nação*, a manifesto published in December 1968. This moderate and collaborationist attitude provoked bitter critiques of the ASP from the rest of the Portuguese opposition⁴⁹ who accused them of being bourgeois and liberal, and even “Rightist opportunists” as Alvaro Cunhal put it.⁵⁰ In the context of a conservative dictatorship under which most of the Portuguese opposition was radical Leftist or Communist, these accusations damaged the association’s image and credibility.⁵¹

As a result, the ideological vagueness of the ASP was clarified in 1970, in order to clean up its moderate reformist image, and inspire grassroots support in rural areas and among the working class. The association tried to solve these problems by writing a declaration of principles that situated the ASP more clearly to the Left than previously, and by invigorating its activities in Portugal.

⁴⁷ Martins, *Socialistas na oposição*, 96.

⁴⁸ In 1968 Salazar suffered a domestic accident that forced him to retire.

⁴⁹ Besides the Communists, several small leftist groups were created in the late 1960s. Ideologically, they ranged from neo-Marxism to progressive Catholicism. These groups moved forward to the Left after 1969, when they verified the incapacity of the regime to evolve after the holding of manipulated elections. This left the moderate political alternatives inside and outside the regime, empty.

⁵⁰ Alvaro Cunhal, *O radicalismo pequeno-burguês de fachada socialista* (Lisboa: Edições Avante, 1971).

⁵¹ See Martins, *Socialistas na oposição*; also Martins, “A fundação do Partido Socialista,” 29-49.

According to the declaration of principles, the new aim of the ASP was to establish a society without classes, and with equal opportunities for everyone. The association recognised Marxism as their main analytic tool, although in a non-dogmatic way; they emphasised their demarcation from neo-capitalism and Social Democracy, and they proposed the nationalisation of key sectors of the Portuguese economy (banks, transports, communications, and primary industries). Linking their programme to the tradition of Portuguese socialism, and to the new theoretical developments of the Socialists in France, the ASP proposed the development of co-operativism and self-management (*autogestão*), and accepted the existence of private initiative in the economy. The new programme was ambiguous regarding international policy. It was in favour of neutrality for Portugal in the international arena, repudiating the existence of political and military “aggressive” blocs, and at the same time, the ASP stated that it would not despise Portugal’s traditional alliances—which were with the UK and NATO.⁵² This was ambiguous, because keeping the traditional alliances contradicted the pursuit of neutrality. However, the programme left the issue open to several interpretations and was therefore suitable for adapting to almost any kind of situation in the future. Regarding the Portuguese colonial problem, the ASP was in favour of ending the colonial wars, but it did not mention anything about the colonies’ right to independence.⁵³

As for the revitalisation of their activities, the ASP tried to use a legal gap that allowed them to create cultural cooperatives, which they used to promote activities of education and information, although the initiative could not be considered successful. Additionally, they bought the newspaper *República*, through which they could legally express some of their opinions and ideas. This was very important in order to gain visibility in Portuguese society, as the official newspaper of the ASP, *Portugal Socialista*, was illegal and in practice only reached the members of the association.

In 1970, Caetano’s government shifted to the right, pressed by the most conservative sectors of the regime, and Mário Soares, the leader of the ASP, was forced into exile. He established himself in France, and from that year to the beginning of the Carnation Revolution, Soares developed international contacts that would be of crucial importance to the future of his group. He was also very active in criticising the Portuguese regime and the situation in the Portuguese colonies, which made him internationally known. In these years, Soares

⁵² Portugal was one of the founding members of the Atlantic Alliance in 1949.

⁵³ Acta da Convenção Nacional da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.), 06.DEZ.1970 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 0531,004, im. 29).

established relations with several European Socialists, especially the French—he attended the PSF congresses of renovation, and from 1971 onwards, he attended the meetings of the French party⁵⁴ and British Labour. As well as Soares, other members of the ASP were exiled in France, UK, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland, and also established contacts with the Socialist parties of those countries. The co-founders of the ASP, Manuel Tito de Morais and Francisco Ramos da Costa, were exiled in Rome and Paris respectively, and they implemented a strategy of informing the Europeans of the existence and activities of the ASP, as well as the Portuguese situation.⁵⁵ Rui Mateus, the future secretary of international affairs of the PS, was exiled in Sweden, where he established contacts with the Swedish Social Democrats.⁵⁶ Thus the Europeans became aware that there was a Socialist democratic alternative within the Portuguese opposition. Moreover, this entailed that the renovation of Portuguese Socialism, and the initiative to transform the ASP into a political party would come from abroad.

The ASP had very few resources, and they expected political recognition and economic support from the European Socialist parties. In this period, before the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution, the European parties gave limited help to the ASP—for example, the SPD paid for the tickets of some ASP members to attend international meetings, the PSF and the BLP provided venues in their headquarters where the Portuguese could meet, and the PSI offered technical assistance to the ASP to print the newspaper *Portugal Socialista*—but this help was fundamental for the survival and the evolution of the organization.⁵⁷ The establishment of cordial relations with other European Socialist parties culminated in the acceptance of the ASP in the Socialist International (SI) in 1972. The International created the Portugal Committee in order to make solidarity activities systematic and effective,⁵⁸ but the acceptance of the Portuguese into the SI did not imply the immediate increase of European assistance to the ASP. In fact, before 1974 the Portuguese organisation was not among the priorities of the SI.⁵⁹ As we will see, it was after the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution on 25th April 1974 that the SI and its party members really strengthened their collaboration with the Portuguese Socialists.

⁵⁴ Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*, 30.

⁵⁵ Ramos da Costa established the first contacts with the SPD already in 1966. See: Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 64.

⁵⁶ Rui, *Contos proibidos*.

⁵⁷ Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*, 30.

⁵⁸ Kyrtsos, “The Attitudes and Policies,” 132.

⁵⁹ Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, “La Socialdemocracia alemana y el Estado Novo (1961-1974),” *Portuguese Studies Review* 13 (1-2) (2005): 477-503.

After the ASP's entry into the SI, several members of the association thought that it should be transformed into a political party. This would increase its presence, its credibility, and its activities inside and outside Portugal, and would also convince its European counterparts to support the group more decisively. Thus, on 19th April 1973, at a Congress organised with the support of the Friedrich-Ebert foundation in Bad Münstereifel, Mário Soares proposed the transformation of the association into a political party to the directive of the ASP.⁶⁰ The majority of the directive, which was formed of 27 members, approved the proposition, and the *Partido Socialista* was founded with Mário Soares elected as Secretary General.

The party kept the Directive Council of the ASP, which included the Executive Secretariat divided into two parts, one inside Portugal and the other one abroad. There was no a clearly defined hierarchy between these Secretariats. The members of the internal secretariat were António Macedo, Salgado Zenha, Jaime Gama, Mário Cal Brandão, Fernando Vale, Gustavo Soromenho, José Luís Nunes, José Magalhães Godinho, António Arnaut, Raúl Rego, António Campos, Maria Barroso, Sottomayor Cardia, Pedro Coelho, Arons de Carvalho, Catanho de Menezes, Carlos Carvalho, Herculano Pires, Marcelo Curto, and António Reis. The external secretariat comprised Mário Soares, Tito de Morais, Ramos da Costa, Jorge Campinos and Fernando Loureiro.

These Secretariats were in charge of preparing a new programme and a declaration of principles. Mário Soares was primarily responsible for this, but the interventions of Tito de Morais, Ramos da Costa, Jorge Campinos, António Reis, Bernardino Gomes, Marcelo Curto, Sottomayor Cardia, and some outsiders like the Major Melo Antunes, were also important. They represented the two general ideological tendencies that existed in the PS. One of them was historic Portuguese Socialism—the legacy of the former PS—that was concerned with the synthesis of values such as freedom and social justice. Members who followed this tendency were Jaime Gama and Jorge Campinos. This tendency was linked to a tradition of liberal republicanism that emphasised values such as political freedom and plural representative democracy (in this trend some Social Democrat personalities such as Sottomayor Cardia could be included). The other tendency was neo-Marxist. This trend took its ideological inspiration from the more humanist works of the young Marx and the works of Rosa Luxemburg, Antonio Gramsci, and Herbert Marcuse. This trend went against the

⁶⁰ The Congress was organized in the headquarters of the *Friedrich-Ebert foundation*, which was closely linked to the SPD.

Marxist interpretations of Lenin and Stalin, and emphasised the potential capacities of the democratic regime. This means that democracy was envisaged in all the realms of social and economic life, which was condensed in the concept of *autogestão*. Therefore, the programme was a compromise between these two tendencies. However, the neo-Marxist tendency was slightly more influential in the elaboration of the program. According to António Reis, one of the members of the Council Directive of the PS involved in the creation of the programme, “it could be said, with no margin for error, that this was the current that predominantly influenced the elaboration of the Declaration of Principles and the First Programme of the PS [...] with the help of some heirs of the Portuguese Socialist tradition, suddenly influenced by neo-Marxism.”⁶¹

The result of this work was the ideological renovation of the party. The PS created an organisation, a basic programme and a strategy of action. From an organisational point of view, the PS was created as a cadre party because due to the clandestine context, their members considered it better to have a restricted number of prestigious militants who could safely work under police repression in Portugal. However, since the party existed in two different realities—in a repressive Portugal, and in less restricted exile abroad—it was willing to recruit militants in exile,⁶² where the party planned to open headquarters if the number of members required it.⁶³ This kind of organisation entailed internal democratic problems because it favoured the concentration of power in very few hands, which implied the party’s excessive reliance on the leader. This style of organisation, as well as the fact that the monopoly of the international relations of the party was in the hands of Mário Soares and Tito de Morais, together with the new ways of propaganda based on the image of the leader that emerged during the Revolution, would condition the development of the PS during the first years of the Portuguese democracy, as we will see in the following chapters.

The ideological position of the PS, it recognised—for instance in the declaration of principles of the ASP in 1970—that Marxism was its inspiration in the pursuit of a society without classes, although it was “a theoretical inspiration permanently reconsidered as a guide to

⁶¹ António Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução, no poder e na oposição. Da dialéctica com o projecto nacional-militar à dialéctica com o eanismo” in *O Partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta, 2005), 97.

⁶² By 1973 more than the 15% of the Portuguese workers, potential future militants of the PS, had emigrated.

⁶³ Construir uma Nova Vida, Destruir o Sistema. Por um Partido Socialista forte, combativo e eficaz, relatório de Mário Soares ao Congresso da Acção Socialista Portuguesa (A.S.P.) de 19.ABR.1973. Texto programático impresso pelas edições Portugal Socialista (Itália), AGO.1973 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 4385,001, im. 2)

action in a non-dogmatic way.”⁶⁴ The PS also found inspiration in the progressive Christians that looked for Socialism. The PS considered itself the heir to a democratic Socialist tradition that had fought against Capitalism during the twentieth century in order to implant a Socialist society in freedom. This meant that the PS aimed to establish a Socialist society where there would be political and ideological pluralism. It was in favour of implanting a system in Portugal that would combine representative democracy and grassroots democracy, which would build an original Portuguese road to Socialism.

This originality had two kinds of implications. Firstly, although they had been inspired by the Socialist experiences that occurred in the world during the twentieth century, the PS wanted to promote a new way to reach Socialism that had not been tried before. In order to do so, the PS was “very attentive to the theoretical innovations of the New Left and to the Communist parties that respected freedom.”⁶⁵ The second implication was that the party wanted to establish its own political space in Portugal that would be distinct from the one occupied by the PCP, and all the other anti-Fascist forces. By establishing their own political space, the Socialists wanted to become an alternative to the Communists in the Left, but at the same time they opened the possibility to cooperate with the PCP, even if it was a competitive cooperation, without being absorbed by them. In accordance with the statement quoted above, the PS repudiated Capitalism, as well as the bureaucratic and totalitarian Socialist experiences of Eastern Europe. Moreover, the PS rejected Social Democracy for having accepted the basic structures of Capitalism. All of this situated the party within the ideological milieu occupied by the South European Socialism that the French Socialists were promoting at that time.

Based on this eclectic Socialist ideology, the PS presented its first programme,⁶⁶ which was considered provisional due to the difficulty of analysing the national situation using the information provided by the regime. The programme’s main objective was to represent a point of reference that could orient the actions of party members. At the same time, it was a starting point for further ideological discussion, reflection, and development. It focused on the way to attain the kind of democratic Socialist society that the PS had in mind for Portugal.

⁶⁴ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, edições Textos Portugal Socialista (Itália), SET.1973. Documento do Arquivo Histórico do Partido Socialista (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 4385,002, im. 2).

⁶⁵ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, edições Textos Portugal Socialista (Itália), SET.1973. Documento do Arquivo Histórico do Partido Socialista (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 4385,002, im. 2).

⁶⁶ The source for the following paragraphs is the Programa do Partido Socialista, 22.AGO.1973 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 2249,001, im. 156).

The concept of Socialist society, which was the final aim of the PS, was understood as “a society without classes in which exploitation of men by other men would not exist, a free society.” To reach this kind of society, a revolution that would suddenly change Fascism into Socialism was not necessary; what was necessary was the extension of political and economic democracy.

The PS believed that *autogestão* (self-management), “understood in all its senses,” was the central objective of a Socialist society. The PS proposed a phased process for reaching Socialism, in which the first step would be the destruction of Fascism and the implantation of a political democracy that would bring about the end of the colonial wars and the recognition of independence of the colonies. The second step would consist of the destruction of Fascist corporatism and the extension of economic democracy, and take place via planning, nationalizing and *autogestão*. In the third phase, a democratic way to Socialism would be decided, “considering the most accurate for Portugal the ones praised by the Chilean Popular Union or the French Union of the Left.”⁶⁷ According to this long-term strategy, the PS recognised that there were urgent issues that had to be tackled immediately. Propelled by the urgent necessities of the Portuguese people, they proposed the following immediate objectives that had to be attained as soon as possible: to overthrow Fascism in Portugal, raise the standard of living of the working classes, end the colonial wars, and restore the international prestige of Portugal.

Aware of its own weakness when it came to carrying out such an important transformation, the PS called for the union of all anti-fascist forces, proposing the creation of a common programme to all the forces of the Left. As I pointed out above, the most immediate inspiration for the PS strategy was to be found in France and Chile. The French Socialists had successfully achieved the Union of the Left, signing a common programme with the Communists and Left Radicals in 1972. This had increased the chances the Left had to reach power in the Gaullist Fifth Republic. At the same time, it had committed the French Communists to respecting the rules of the game of a liberal, pluralist democratic system. In Chile, the Socialist Salvador Allende reached power in 1970, becoming the first Marxist president in the West to take the position through democratic general elections. He achieved this success with the support of a popular front of all the forces of the Left, including Socialists, Communists, Left Radicals and progressive Christians, who gathered in the

⁶⁷ Relatório de Mário Soares ao Congresso da Acção Socialista Portuguesa, Construir uma Nova Vida, Destruir o Sistema (1973), 44-45.

Unidad Popular. This strategy had permitted the Chileans to develop a Chilean way to Socialism that was peaceful and respectful of constitutional legality.

These experiences in which the Socialists had a pact with the Communists, compelling them to accept democratic freedoms, improved the chances of the Left of achieving power through legal means, and they became very attractive for the Portuguese Socialists. The PS also had to fight against Fascism, while at the same time it had to deal with an orthodox, strong Communist Party. Thus, they viewed the French and the Chilean models as an inspiration. They showed that the Left could achieve power through peaceful democratic means, without falling into the moderate reformism of the Social Democracy. However, it has to be noted that the program of the PS was written in the summer of 1973, which was before the coup d'état of the Chilean reactionary forces that put an end to the Socialist experience in Chile in September 1973. The outcome of the Chilean experience, as we will see later, shaped the tactics and the strategy of the PS during the Carnation Revolution.

To summarise, this description of the historical antecedents of the PS shows that before the outbreak of the Portuguese Revolution it was a very small party—there is no consensus on the amount of members it had by April 1974, but there were between 600 and 3000.⁶⁸ It was ideologically heterogeneous, but there were three tendencies were dominant among its members: traditional Portuguese Socialism which was more humanist than scientific; the Social Democratic background of some of its leaders, which was repudiated by all of them at the beginning of the 1970s, and the neo-Marxist currents that developed in France in the late 1960s. Its organisation was not very well defined, but as a cadre party it relied very much on a small group of leaders, among whom Mário Soares was the dominant personality. Since many of the leaders of the party were exiled, before the outbreak of the revolution they had established contacts with several Socialist and Social Democrat parties in Western Europe, especially with the BLP, the PSF, the SPD, the PSI and the SAP. These contacts, as well as the fact that not having any links to the working class made the base of the party weak, favoured the party's openness to adopting influences coming from abroad.

⁶⁸ Maria José Stock, "O PS de 1973 a 1983. Trajectória de uma década" in *O Partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta, 2005), 129-168.

1.1.2. The international context at the beginning of the Carnation Revolution

After describing the antecedents and the origin of the PS, I will now focus on the international context in which the PS emerged and the Carnation Revolution in Portugal began. This international context is necessary for explaining the motivations of the several international agents that attempted to influence the Revolution, and the reasoning and interests at stake behind these. These agents included states such as the US, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, and the USSR, as well as international and supranational organisations such as NATO and the EEC, and transnational actors such as political parties, foundations and the SI.

The above-mentioned states played major roles in international relations, and existed in a period of international détente from the mid-1960s to the beginning of the 1970s that had considerably softened the tensions of the Cold War between the West and the East. Furthermore, all of these actors were involved in a process of increasing international interdependence and interconnectedness or globalization⁶⁹—in which the Iberian Peninsula was also taking part—that limited their freedom to act independently and thereby impose their own solutions onto the international problems. Without diminishing the importance of the superpowers in the international arena, at the beginning of the 1970s this new multilateralism made greater collaboration and negotiation necessary among all the relevant international actors.

Détente reached its peak between 1969 and 1975. In those years, the president of the US Richard M. Nixon, together with his National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, who became his Secretary of State in 1973, implemented a foreign policy that would reduce political tensions with the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc through negotiations and agreements. For the American administration, the final aim of détente was to promote international stability, and preserve the existing status quo in a context of growing multipolarity in which the US power was in relative decline.⁷⁰ At the same time, the Soviet leaders were interested in

⁶⁹ According to Daniel J. Sargent this process could be better explained using the concept “globalization” than “interdependence”. He suggests, rather persuasively, that the concept “globalization”, commonly embraced after 1991, is appropriate to describe the situation in the 1970s, as the countries in the international system were not only restricted by others’ policy choices, but they were experiencing a trend that gripped them collectively. See: Daniel J. Sargent, “The United States and Globalization in the 1970s”, in *The Shock of the Global. The 1970s in Perspective*, ed. Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez, Manela and Daniel J., Sargent (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2010), 49-64.

⁷⁰ Robert D. Schulzinger, “Détente in the Nixon–Ford years, 1969–1976”, in *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Vol II, Crises and Détente*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge

détente because it would confirm political and military parity between the two superpowers, which would allow the Soviets to pursue their international interests, especially in the Third World, more freely.⁷¹

The first concrete results of superpower détente were the bilateral talks on the issue of armament control that led to the signature of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks Agreement (SALT) in 1972. A year afterwards, in 1973, the member States of NATO and the Warsaw Pact started negotiations to reduce their military forces in Central and Western Europe⁷² within the frame of the Mutual and Balanced Forces Reductions (MBFR) meetings. These were landmarks for easing tensions between the West and the East. They were accompanied by more obviously political agreements that complemented them. In 1973 both superpowers signed the Prevention of Nuclear War (PNW) agreement, and both accepted the organisation of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) between 1973 and 1975, which involved thirty-three European States (including Portugal and Spain) in addition to the US and Canada. Finally, détente also brought about agreements between the superpowers for collaboration in the fields of medicine, science, technology, the environment, and space exploration. The maintenance of this relatively relaxed situation became an objective for the two blocs during the 1970s, because all of the actors involved—Western Europe and the US in the West and the Eastern Europe and the USSR in the East—profited in one way or another from this situation.

This was the general international context at the moment of the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution in 1974. This period of Cold War relaxation coincided with a period of relative decline for the US, as it diminished involvement in the international affairs. This was mainly due to two factors, the first being: involvement in the Vietnam War, which had finished in 1973 with a result that was considered an American debacle, and seriously damaged the image, prestige, and credibility of the US internationally and at home. The second factor was the domestic scandal of Watergate at the beginning of the 1970s, which obliged President Nixon to resign in August 1974. He was replaced by Gerald Ford. This scandal was relevant to international relations because it opened a period during which the US Congress increased

University Press, 2010), 373-394; Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation. American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994).

⁷¹ Svetlana Savranskaya and William Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy, 1962–1975, in *The Cambridge History of Cold War, Vol II, Crises and Détente*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 134-157.

⁷² Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

its role regarding the funding of foreign policy operations, which diminished the powers and the autonomy of the President and the Secretary of State.

However, this does not mean that the US abandoned their international compromises; in fact, in the 1970s the US became involved in several international conflicts which were putting the abovementioned process of détente at risk. One of the areas that captured American attention during this decade was the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean area of the Middle East and Southern Europe became a region of primary concern for the US in 1967, when the Arab-Israeli war increased Soviet influence in the area. In addition, the northern flank of the Mediterranean was a potential source of concern for the US, since all of its South European allies—Turkey, Greece, Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal—were experiencing internal unrest at the beginning of the 1970s.⁷³ In the south of Europe, the situation of the Iberian Peninsula was considered delicate, because in those years it was expected that the Spanish and Portuguese long-standing Fascist-inspired dictatorships would soon collapse. Considering that in France and Italy had the two biggest Communist parties in Western Europe, the Americans feared that the end of the Iberian regimes could bring about increasing Communist influence in the Latin European countries, and threaten the status quo in Europe.

In this light, Portugal became a significant country for the US during the 1960s, and especially in the 1970s. This was due to Portugal's valuable geo-strategic position, the fact that it was a NATO member, and its extensive colonial empire. Since the beginning of the 1960s, the colonial dimension of Portugal became a concern for the main international actors because the Iberian country became involved in a war against the independence of its colonies. The Portuguese Colonial wars began in 1961 in Angola when the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) and the *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA)⁷⁴ started attacking Portuguese interests, and extended to Portuguese Guinea in 1963 and Mozambique in 1964. In Portuguese Guinea, the war against Portugal was led by the Marxist *Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC), and in Mozambique by the Marxist-Leninist *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO). Since the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies tended to be Marxist, the Western Alliance did not hesitate to offer political, economic, and even military assistance to Salazar's

⁷³ Ennio Di Nolfo, "The Cold War and the transformation of the Mediterranean, 1960-1975" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II. Crises and Détente*, ed. Melvin P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 238-257.

⁷⁴ In 1961 it was called the *União das Populações de Angola* (UPA), but it changed its name to FNLA in 1962.

Portugal. However, as the years passed and the war extended and worsened, international hostility towards the Portuguese regime increased, which entailed the relative isolation of Portugal and eventually its international condemnation. Portugal was criticised in all of the international forums for its resistance towards recognising the independence of its colonies, which was a transgression of a constitutional principle of the international law; only the US, due to its geo-strategic interests, covertly supported the Portuguese regime.⁷⁵

The collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire was feared in the US and in Western Europe, (although it also created expectations for the possible opening of new markets), because it could have destabilising effects on the international equilibrium established in the Cold War. Thus, the US and the USSR as superpowers, as well as Great Britain and France as the main ex-colonial powers, were especially concerned with the result of the Portuguese colonial problem. The US supported the Portuguese regime as a response to several events that threatened its own hegemony, as well as the risk that the Portuguese colonial wars posed to the international détente. One of the menaces to American hegemony was the USSR's attempt from late 1960s onwards to expand its influential area to the Afro-Asiatic regions. The Soviets, and more directly Cuba, supported the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies in Africa, and the US tried to contain Soviet influence in the area by helping Portugal.⁷⁶

The American support for Salazar's Portugal had the objective of preventing Communist influence in southern Africa, but it was also a way of strengthening the Luso-American partnership. This relationship was becoming increasingly important for the US at the beginning of the 1970s, due to the fact that the significant military base of Lajes was on the Portuguese soil of the Azores Islands. The maintenance of this base was an important objective for the US because as was proved during the Yom Kippur war, it was the perfect bridge between America and the Middle East for American air forces. The geo-strategic importance of Lajes was because it was relatively close to America, Europe and Africa. Even more important, however, was the fact that at a moment when the European allies of the US

⁷⁵ Witney W. Schneidam, *Engaging Africa: Washington and the Fall of Portugal's Colonial Empire* (Oxford: University Press of America, 2004); António Costa Pinto, *O Fim do Império Português* (Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 2001).

⁷⁶ Savaranskaya and Taubman, "Soviet foreign policy," 134-157; Vladislav M. Zubok, "Soviet foreign policy from détente to Gorbachev, 1975–1985" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume III. Endings*, ed. Melvin P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 89-111; Odd A. Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 207-249.

were increasingly critical and restrictive regarding the use of American bases in their soils, the Portuguese allowed the US to use Lajes.⁷⁷

Notwithstanding all of this, when the Carnation Revolution started on 25th April 1974, triggered by the unresolved colonial wars, the US were caught by surprise and responded quite slowly. The extent and importance of the involvement of the US in the Portuguese revolution and democratisation is a debatable question.⁷⁸ However, the information provided in the most recent literature shows that there were two alternative approaches for the US response to the Revolution, which affected the indecisive actions of the Americans. The first approach was promoted by Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford, who took a hard line that considered the Portuguese Revolution to be a lost battle against Communism. Thus the actions taken were condemning and threatening Revolutionary Portugal both in bilateral contact and within the frame of NATO. The second approach was taken by Frank Carlucci, the American ambassador in Lisbon. This was a softer line, very close to the strategies followed by the Europeans, which consisted in supporting the moderate sectors of the Portuguese politics, such as Mário Soares and the PS, and the moderate military, to counterbalance the influence of the Communists over the revolutionary process. Both approaches, however, had the same objective—to prevent the triumph of the Communists in Portugal and to keep the Iberian country within the Atlantic Alliance.

The Soviet Union was also very interested in maintaining the atmosphere of international détente. The Americans had started to approach the People's Republic of China (PRC), trying to exploit the split between the Communist powers (the USSR and the PRC) occurred at the beginning of the 1960s. As the Soviets were experiencing problems on their Eastern frontier due to their conflict with China, they were interested in easing the tension and promoting

⁷⁷ Schneidman, *Engaging Africa*.

⁷⁸ On the one hand it has been considered that the US delegated the main responsibility in the Western Europeans, see: João Hall Themido, *Dez anos em Washington: 1971-1981* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1995). On the other hand, it has been argued that the US greatly contributed to the Portuguese democratisation, through a double strategy based on incentives and on pressures and menaces, see: Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos na Revolução Portuguesa*; Bernardino Gomes and Tiago Moreira de Sá, *Carlucci versus Kissinger. The US and the Portuguese Revolution* (Lanham and Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011). Finally, there is a third interpretative line, complementary to the second one, that says that the influence of the US in the Portuguese transition has to be linked to the close collaboration between the Americans and their West Europeans partners in the Iberian Peninsula, see: Encarnación Lemus López, “Las reacciones de la Administración Ford ante el 25 de Abril” in *El fin de las dictaduras ibéricas (1974-1978)*, ed. Encarnación Lemus, Fernando Rosas and Raquel Varela (Sevilla and Lisboa: Fundación Pública Andaluza Centro de Estudios Andaluces, Consejería de la Presidencia, Junta de Andalucía, Edições Pluma, 2010), 41-62; Encarnación Lemus López, “Con la vista en Portugal y mirando a España: EE.UU. y el cambio político peninsular,” *Hispania. Revista española de historia* vol. LXXII 242 (September-December 2012): 723-754; Del Pero et al., *Democrazie. L'Europa Meridionale*; Castaño, ““A practical test in the détente””; Rizas, *The Rise of the Left in Southern Europe*.

détente in the West. Despite this, the Soviet Union also wanted to profit from American international failures and expand its sphere of influence, especially in Africa and Asia. The USSR did not find keeping détente alive to be incompatible with simultaneously extending its area of influence in the Third World.⁷⁹ This ambition directly affected the Portuguese colonies, especially Angola. However, when the Carnation Revolution started, the USSR did not see Portugal as an international objective. Since the implantation of the Brezhnev Doctrine in 1968,⁸⁰ the USSR reciprocally recognised the right of the Western bloc to independently resolve its own business in the West. Thus, in theory, the Portuguese Revolution was not the primary concern of the USSR. The Soviets were far more interested in strengthening international détente than in helping to establish a Communist regime in Portugal. In fact, in those years, their efforts in Europe were focused on the fulfilment of the CSCE and on promoting European autonomy with respect to the US. However, although Soviet involvement in the Portuguese Revolution is an area of research yet to be carried out, there are several works that suggest that the USSR, in collaboration with the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Czechoslovakia, supported the PCP throughout the Revolution.⁸¹ This created extra tension in Portugal, which had the effect of increasing the level of Western involvement in the Iberian country.

The superpower détente left some room for the West Europeans to manoeuvre around the international arena with greater autonomy than previously. The general international relaxation provoked centrifugal tendencies within the Cold War alliances, and states such as the Federal Republic of Germany and France began to pursue an independent foreign policy based on an understanding of détente that differed from that of the superpowers.

Among the European states, the FRG was the most committed to détente. When the SPD reached power in Germany in 1969, it implemented a new foreign policy, named *Ostpolitik*, which was drafted by the Social Democrat Chancellor Willy Brandt. It consisted of the

⁷⁹ Vladislav Zubok, “The Soviet Union and Détente in the 1970s,” *Cold War History* 8:4 (2007): 427-447.

⁸⁰ The Brezhnev Doctrine established the Soviet Union’s foreign policy within its sphere of influence based on the right to intervene in other Socialist States if Socialism was threatened by Capitalism. For this reason, the USSR initially was not interested in intervening in the internal affairs of a country that was a NATO member, such as Portugal.

⁸¹ Carlos A. Cunha, *The Portuguese Communist Party’s Strategy for Power 1921-1986* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1992); Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»”; Raquel Varela, *História do Partido Comunista Português na Revolução dos Cravos* (Lisboa: Bertrand, 2011).

acceptance of the existing status quo with respect to the East-West relations,⁸² and the principle that economic, technical and socio-cultural cooperation between the West and the East was the best way to stimulate transformations in the Communist countries. It was believed that this would lead to political changes in the East, which could facilitate the unification of the two Germanies in the long term.⁸³ Simultaneously to the *Ostpolitik*, the Germans strengthened their *Westpolitik*, which consisted in reinforcing the links with their American and European Western allies and corroborating the German commitment to the EEC and NATO. In fact, especially after the accession of the UK, Denmark and Ireland, the Germans wanted to strengthen the role of the EEC in world affairs, involving its countries in the strengthening of détente. This could make the EEC a political and economic model that, in the future, could be attractive for the countries of Eastern Europe.⁸⁴

The principle on which the *Ostpolitik* was based was equally valid for the Southern European countries of Spain, Portugal and Greece that were still under dictatorships at the beginning of the 1970s. Thus, the German government on the one hand, and the SPD and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on the other hand, started to collaborate with the authoritarian regimes of the Iberian Peninsula, and at the same time support several moderate forces opposed to these regimes, with the aim of promoting controlled liberalisation and democratisation in Portugal and Spain.⁸⁵

Despite being an essential element of détente, *Ostpolitik* was viewed with concern in Washington, Paris, and London. For France, the main fear related to German policy towards the East was that it could imply the distancing of Germany from the process of European integration. Besides, the French felt uncomfortable about the possibility of a future reunified Germany, especially if it happened on Eastern terms. Notwithstanding this fact, the international interests of France and Germany coincided in several respects. The French were also interested in the reinforcement of the EEC—and keeping a leading role in the process of integration—but they had the objective of ensuring greater autonomy for France in international relations and in NATO.

⁸² ‘On German terms’ meant the Federal Republic’s acceptance of the German Democratic Republic, and the acceptance of the Oder–Neisse line.

⁸³ Gottfried Niedhart, “Ostpolitik: Phases, Short Term objectives and Grand Design,” *German Historical Institute Bulletin Supplement: American Détente and German Ostpolitik, 1969-1972*, 1 (2003): 118-136.

⁸⁴ Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: the Long Road West. Volume 2: 1933-1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁸⁵ For the Spanish case see: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*. For the Portuguese case see: Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!».”

The case of France was paradigmatic of the relative autonomy enjoyed by the Europeans in the context of détente, as France started to pursue an independent foreign policy at the beginning of the 1960s which was based on the improvement of East-West relations. The main objective of the Gaullist foreign policy was to overcome the Cold War status quo, an international order that, according to the French, would only be perpetuated by superpower détente. To oppose this, France sought to promote a European détente. This meant that Europe should emancipate itself from US control and pursue better relations with the East, starting a dialectical process in which reciprocal cooperation would lead to a complete transformation of East-West relations in Europe, eventually leading to a pan-European settlement that would put an end to the division of the continent.⁸⁶

This grand strategy led France to withdraw all of its armed forces from NATO's integrated military command in 1966, and to intensify its relations with the East. Moreover, with the ambition of regaining an influential position in the international arena, France developed its own atomic weaponry, the *force de frappe*, in the early 1960s. In Western Europe, France pursued the strengthening of the Franco-German relationship, and the imposition of its own vision of the European integration process, which was based on true European independence from the US and greater intergovernmentalism at the expense of supranationalism. In 1973, when the UK, Ireland, and Denmark joined the EEC after several French vetoes in the 1960s, France sought to restore equilibrium in the Community by enlarging it towards the South, as the EEC was leaning geopolitically and economically excessively to the North.⁸⁷

Regarding the Mediterranean region, one of the main French concerns was that the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 brought about a greater involvement of the superpowers in the region, which was a crucial area of French influence. From that moment on, France's role and influence there depended increasingly on its capacity to affect superpower relations in the region, which led the French to improve their bilateral ties with the Western Mediterranean states. After the 1973 Yom-Kippur war, the Soviet Union seemed to increase its influence in the Mediterranean, pressuring France and Western Europe on their eastern and southern flanks. Thus, in the mid-1970s, containing Soviet power became the major French

⁸⁶ Frédéric Bozo, "France, «Gaullism», and the Cold War", in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II. Crises and Détente*, ed. Melvin P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 171.

⁸⁷ Mark Gilbert, *European Integration. A Concise History* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012).

preoccupation in the Mediterranean,⁸⁸ something that they tried to do by fomenting cordial relations with Spain and Portugal, and together with Germany, becoming the main partner of the Iberian regimes in Europe.

Finally, the UK was the other big European power to be interested in détente. Since the 1960s, the British had tried to maintain a world role for Great Britain, while suffering economic problems associated with speculation on the value of the sterling pound and a deficit in the balance of payments. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1970s, the Commonwealth became a source of problems for the UK, aggravating an already existing feeling of faded grandeur.⁸⁹ This limited their capacity for action within the international arena. In order to keep a world role, the UK needed political stability between the two Cold War blocs and integration in the EEC. Thus, although the UK did not play a significant role in the improvement of East-West relations, the British commitment to preserving détente was total.⁹⁰ At the same time, the British perceived the Common Market to be an economic success, while the Commonwealth was turning into a “nuisance,”⁹¹ diminishing its economic and political significance since the 1960s. Therefore, the British applied for membership several times in the 1960s, and were vetoed by Gaullist France. It was in 1973, after the disappearance of the French veto, that the UK entered the EEC. The UK was interested in taking advantage of European integration to strengthen its international independence, as well as the economic profit that joining could involve. However, this issue did not reach a consensus and there were voices—mainly within the British Labour Party—that clamoured for British withdrawal from the EEC.

However, the British shift towards Europe took place, and it had important implications for Portugal, since the UK was its major commercial partner. The *Estado Novo* was very dependent on the UK politically and economically, and British entrance into the EEC meant that Portugal had to seek an agreement with the EEC to replace the loss that the British switch from EFTA to the EEC implied. The government of Marcello Caetano managed this, and Portugal signed a preferential trade agreement with the EEC in 1972, which made the country

⁸⁸ Edward A. Kolodziej, *French International Policy Under de Gaulle and Pompidou. The Politics of Grandeur* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974), 517.

⁸⁹ Brian Harrison, *Finding a Role? The United Kingdom 1970-1990. The New Oxford History of England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 38-48.

⁹⁰ Klaus Larres, “Britain and the Cold War, 1945-1990”, in *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War*, ed. Richard H. Immerman and Petra Goedde (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 141-157.

⁹¹ John Callaghan, *The Labour Party and Foreign Policy. A history* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2007), 269.

more economically dependent on Europe than before. This was very relevant during the Carnation Revolution, since the loss of the colonies led to an economic crisis for Portugal that only could be resolved in Europe.

Moreover, as I demonstrate in this thesis, the British had been concerned with the Portuguese Colonial wars since the 1960s. This was for several reasons, but the most relevant is that the Portuguese presence in Angola and Mozambique was damaging British policy in their ex-colony Rhodesia. Since the Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965, which was considered illegal, the establishment of a racist regime there caused many problems for the UK—especially in the Commonwealth—but also in terms of public opinion at home. The British and the United Nations were imposing economic and commercial sanctions on the former colony, but Rhodesia could avoid them thanks to collaboration with the Portuguese dictatorship via Angola and Mozambique. When the Portuguese regime fell, it opened the possibility of the decolonisation of the Portuguese territories, something that concerned the British. Because of the racial, economic and ideological implications that it could have, they wanted to promote a quick but quiet, ordered and peaceful decolonization that could change the political and racial map of southern Africa. This would be an extra pressure on Rhodesia, and it could strengthen the position of the UK in the area and within the Commonwealth.

Furthermore, the beginning of the Portuguese Revolution coincided with the BLP government in the UK. The Labour Party gained power in February 1974 with a narrow margin, and with important internal divisions between the Right and the Left factions of the party. There were internal disagreements on economic and foreign policy—especially regarding British European integration⁹²—and the leadership of the party, which was in the hands of the rightist faction, was constrained by, and had to come to terms with, the Leftist faction. Thus, the Labour Party Manifesto for the general elections of February 1974 had emphasised the little agreements on foreign policy existing within the Party. It said that in government, the BLP would “oppose all forms of racial discrimination and colonialism. This will mean support for the liberation movements of Southern Africa and a disengagement from Britain’s unhealthy involvement with apartheid. We shall intensify the policy of sanctions against Rhodesia and agree to no settlement which does not have the whole hearted consent of the African

⁹² See: Oliver J. Daddow, ed., *Harold Wilson and European Integration. Britain’s second Application to join the EEC* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2003); Andrew Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); John Callahan, *British Labour Party and International Relations in the 20th Century: Socialism and War* (London: Routledge, 2004).

majority.”⁹³ This commitment was not only used to appease the Left faction of the party, it was also a change towards a more social and humanitarian foreign policy than that followed by the Conservative government. Additionally, it was a way of gaining credibility among the African states of the Commonwealth, who were critical of the British lack of resolution in South Africa and Rhodesia. The ultimate decision of the Labour party leadership was that taking a more active role against apartheid could serve the British economic interests in Southern Africa better.⁹⁴

All of these interlinked interests and concerns made the Portuguese Revolution a central issue within international relations during 1974 and 1975, as it could potentially destabilise the international détente in which all the big powers were interested. Thus, when the Portuguese regime was overthrown in the coup d'état on the 25th of April 1974, all the concerns shared by the Western powers about the Portuguese situation putting geopolitical international equilibrium at risk were realised. As a result, they played a prominent role in the evolution and outcome of the Portuguese Revolution.

1.1.3. The West European Left at the beginning of the 1970s

At this point I will sketch the context of the European Left at the beginning of the 1970s. I will provide the interconnected ideological and political framework in which the Iberian Socialist party lived when the changes of regime occurred in Portugal and Spain. In addition, I will explain the interests, problems, and issues at stake that led the European Socialists and Social Democrats to intervene in the Iberian Peninsula.

The international context outlined above influenced the evolution of the West European Left between the 1960s and the early 1970s. In these years, several factors provoked the rupture of the ideological unity of the Socialists/Social Democrats, as well as the unity of the Communists.

On the Communist side, in the 1960s, the international prestige of the Soviet model decreased. The emergence of new models of Communist parties, and new experiences of how to advance towards Socialism, such as the ones implemented in the People's Republic of

⁹³ “The Labour Party Manifesto 1974”, in *Labour Party General Election Manifestos, 1900-1997*, ed. Iain Dale (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 191.

⁹⁴ Brian Harrison, *Finding a Role? The United Kingdom 1970-1990* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 39.

China and in Cuba, made the Soviet model less attractive internationally than before. The failure of Khrushchev and Brezhnev in proposing and implementing an alternative to Stalinism that would put an end to the bureaucratic tendencies of the Soviet system contributed to this decline in attractiveness, as did the fact that these failures became known abroad, thanks to the open criticism of some Russian intellectuals. Even more significant for the Soviet loss of prestige, however, was the intervention of the Soviet Union in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The use of the tanks of the Warsaw Pact in August 1968 to crush the Czechoslovakian attempt to liberalise their regime and build a kind of Socialism with human face was a blow to the reputation of the USSR abroad. This action was severely condemned in the West, but most importantly, it broke the unity of the worldwide Communist movement. Within the countries of the Warsaw Pact, Romania did not support the intervention in Czechoslovakia, and outside them, the Communist parties of Spain and Italy denounced the occupation, and the Communist Party of France (PCF) publically stated its “*réprobation*”, later softened to the word “*déssapprobation*”.⁹⁵ This was an important international setback for Soviet Communism, as the Italian and the French Communist parties were the largest PCs in Western Europe.

These factors, together with the wider international relaxation brought about by détente, facilitated the increasing independence of some Communist parties in Western Europe—especially in Italy, France, and Spain—which developed their own theoretical ways towards Socialism independently from Moscow. At the beginning of the 1960s, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) led by Palmiro Togliatti realised that every country should follow its own specific way to Socialism, taking into account their own particularities. This principle was further developed in the Italian party, and in 1973, under the leadership of Enrico Berlinguer, the PCI defined its own national way to Socialism based on a wide alliance of classes and on the respect to pluralism and democracy, which led the party to propose the *compromesso storico* to Christian Democracy.⁹⁶ The Spanish PCE, led by Santiago Carrillo, also evolved independently from Moscow by defending a pacific and parliamentary way to Socialism and proposing a new strategy based on the policy of *reconciliación nacional*, as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Two. Finally, the PCF, more influenced by the CPSU than the PCI and

⁹⁵ See: Valentine Lomellini, *Les relations dangereuses. French Socialists, Communists and the Human Rights Issue in the Soviet Bloc* (Brussels: PIE Peter Lang, 2012).

⁹⁶ The *compromesso storico* was a proposal that the PCI made to the Christian Democracy to collaborate together in the government. The aim of this proposition was to strengthen Italian democracy at a moment when the danger of authoritarian regression was present, especially after the terrorist attacks by neo-Fascist groups that implemented a strategy of tension.

the PCE, also changed its strategy in the mid- 1960s. It realised that Socialism in France should be pacific, in alliance with other social classes and political forces, and consist in the establishment of an advanced democracy. The ideological independence of these parties and their common ideological features—respect for parliamentary democracy, freedom and human rights—would lead to the creation of the concept of Eurocommunism in the mid-1970s to define this new trend.⁹⁷

In parallel to the evolution of the Communist parties of Western Europe, the West European Socialist parties also experienced important transformations during these decades. This evolution was determined by two factors. Firstly, the international context of Cold War relaxation, and the ideological development of some Communist parties linked to it, reopened the possibility for dialogue between Socialists and Communists in Europe. The second factor was the relative disenchantment with the experiences of the reformist Social Democracy in government, which had renounced Socialism, being content with managing Capitalism.

While it is true that in the history of democratic Socialism there was never the same ideological uniformity as in the Communist parties, anti-Communism became a unifying force among the European Socialists in the 1950s. The Socialist International (SI) was reconstituted on this basis in 1951. However, the liberalisation of the Southern European Communist Parties in the 1960s, and the fact that they were bigger and electorally stronger parties than the Socialist parties in Latin Europe, facilitated the different ideological evolutions of the Socialist parties in the North of Europe in the South⁹⁸ from the mid-1960s onwards.

In the North of Europe, the Social Democrat parties did not have to compete with important PCs, but they kept a strong anti-Communist line determined by the context of the Cold War. During the 1950s and 1960s, the rejection of Communism, together with the good economic performance of the Western Capitalist countries, brought about an ideological revision in most of the Social Democratic parties. Between the late 1950s and early 1960s—the paradigm being the congress of the SPD in Bad Godesberg in 1959—the Social Democratic parties of Western Europe dropped Marxism and the hostility to Capitalism, which had long been at the

⁹⁷ The previous paragraphs are based on Jacques Droz's *Histoire Général du Socialisme. Tome IV: De 1945 à nous jours* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1978).

⁹⁸ For analytical purposes, I am considering France as part of Southern Europe, something that in geographic terms might not be correct. I am also using the concept North of Europe in a flexible way, including not only the Scandinavian countries, but also Central and Western European countries such as the UK, the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria and the Netherlands.

core of their ideology. Instead of advocating nationalisation and public ownership, the Social Democrats assimilated Keynesian economic theories, as they represented the possibility of regulating Capitalism for social ends, and renounced the establishment of Socialism in their countries. Furthermore, as the Social Democratic parties fully accepted the liberal democratic system, they sought to move beyond their old working class base to include the full spectrum of potential voters, and appeal to the middle class.

At the beginning of the 1970s, several Social Democratic parties reached power in Western Europe—in Austria, Denmark, Sweden, the UK, the FRG, and Norway—which determined European politics. However, paradoxically, the period of political hegemony of the Social Democracy in government corresponded with the beginning of a crisis in Social Democratic politics. This was mainly due to the fact that from 1973, the great Capitalist growth on which the Social Democracy had based its redistributive policies and the construction of the welfare state came to an end. The international economic crisis unleashed in 1973 with the rise of the price of oil after the Yom Kippur war opened a new period of economic recession and monetary instability that affected all Western European economies. Thus, the traditional expansive Social Democratic policies of the 1950s and 1960s confronted a new phase of low economic growth that had significant consequences for the social and economic model that had been hegemonic during the post-war period.⁹⁹

The different Socialist and Social Democrat parties of Western Europe responded differently to the several challenges imposed by the Communist parties, the economic crisis, and the cultural alienation of the new generations that also appeared at the end of the 1960s. I will focus on the responses of the BLP as it is a party central to my thesis.

The BLP was a protagonist in British politics after the Second World War. It was in government between 1945 and 1950, and later between 1964 and 1970, and it was key to building a welfare state in the post-war UK. However, in the 1960s, the party entered a period of ideological revisionism that led to a change of methods and objectives. If in the 1950s it had been in favour of nationalising companies and creating of a welfare state, its priorities in

⁹⁹ See: Stephen Padget and William E. Paterson, *A History of Social Democracy in Postwar Europe* (London and New York: Longman, 1991); Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London: William Heinemann, 2005); Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The Western European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996); Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy. The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Droz, *Histoire Général du Socialisme*.

the 1960s were to maintain previous social achievements by modernising the productive structures of the UK and increasing productivity.¹⁰⁰

This change created internal tension in the BLP between the Left wing of the party, which was in favour of the extension of the nationalised economy, and the Right wing, which favoured the managed economy and was less keen than the Left to transform the conditions of production. The control of the party was in the hands of the Right wing, and it was in the 1970s, after the electoral defeat of 1970, that the party went through a period of reflection. The debate in the party was not only at the centre of deciding which concrete policies to implement if they were in government again, but also the ideological basis that underpinned the policies of the party. The key issue was that “if socialism was all about an egalitarian distribution of the surplus produced by a growing capitalism, what had it to say or to do in a situation in which capitalism was manifestly in trouble?”¹⁰¹

The debate about this big question had two kinds of consequences for the BLP. The first was the increasing tension between the different factions of the party, and the second was the party’s leftward swing. There were two the factions within the BLP at the beginning of the 1970s: the Right wing, which was composed of the leadership of the party and of the majority of the parliamentary group, and the Left wing, which had many supporters in the extra-parliamentary party and among the trade unionists. After 1970, the Left wing was predominant in the National Executive Committee (NEC).¹⁰² The differences between these two broad factions widened during the years of internal debate in which the Labour Left imposed their ideas, although the Right wing of the party kept control of the parliamentary group, which meant that the leadership of the BLP remained in right wing hands during this process of ideological redefinition. Harold Wilson remained the leader of the party with Roy Jenkins, James Callaghan as and Denis Healey completing the key places. Thus, when the Labour Party reached power in February 1974, despite their programme being influenced by the Left faction, the party was controlled by the Right faction, which also controlled the government.

¹⁰⁰ Droz, *Histoire Général du Socialisme*.

¹⁰¹ Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party*, 211-218.

¹⁰² The NEC was the governing body of the BLP that was prominent in the party when it was in the opposition, but not as much when it was in office.

The foreign policy of the BLP was also a battlefield between the two factions of the party. The foreign policy of the last Labour government under Harold Wilson was a general disappointment among the party's Left. Before achieving power in 1964, Wilson had created expectations by using radical rhetoric on matters of defence and foreign policy. However, once in power, he disappointed the most progressive sectors of the party. The Labour leadership centralised the decision-making process. They made decisions outside the Cabinet, sometimes without consulting it, they did not break with the basic lines of the Conservative foreign policy—Wilson's government remained committed to the British world role in partnership with the US and to the maintenance of NATO—and they were criticised for following unethical foreign policy on Rhodesia and Vietnam. During this period, the leaders of the BLP established some foreign policy priorities which continued to be highly relevant for understanding the involvement of the Labour government in the Iberian Peninsula in the mid-1970s. In 1964, among all the international commitments and concerns of the UK, the Labour government considered that their most important commitment was to the political cohesion of Western Europe.¹⁰³

The BLP, as we have seen above, reached power in the UK in February 1974, with a very narrow margin over the Conservative Party—although in the new elections in October it achieved a wider victory—and with the most Leftist programme of the last thirty years. However, prominent members of the Social Democratic Right side of the BLP dominated the cabinet. It was formed with Harold Wilson as Prime Minister, Denis Healey as Chancellor, James Callaghan as Foreign Secretary, Roy Jenkins as Home Secretary, and Anthony Crosland as Secretary of State for the Environment. The Left of the party was also represented in the Cabinet, but they occupied less relevant positions regarding foreign policy than the Right. Tony Benn was appointed Secretary of State for Industry and Michael Foot became Employment Secretary. The Left faction of the BLP took control of the National Executive Committee (NEC), but although the NEC was the governing body of the BLP, it was prominent in the party only when it was in the opposition, and not when it was in office.¹⁰⁴ Thus, despite the radical programme and the leftist takeover of the NEC, the Right dominated the cabinet and the parliamentary group of the party. Therefore, the international policies carried out by the government were in the hands of the most conservative members of the Labour Party.

¹⁰³ Callaghan, *The Labour Party*, 251-257.

¹⁰⁴ Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party*, 211-218

In the South of Europe, the situation of the Socialist parties was different, as they were overshadowed by the PCs, which were stronger than the PSs electorally as well as in the trade unions. Moreover, the Southern European Socialist parties practically did not have experience in government after the World War II.¹⁰⁵ This different reality in France and Italy led the Socialist parties to seek to establish relations with the Communist parties, especially from the second half of the 1960s onwards. This provoked the rupture of the ideological unity and political strategy of the Socialists/Social Democrats in Western Europe that had been established at the beginning of the Cold War.

It was in France where democratic Socialism experienced a greater autonomous evolution. The establishment of the Fifth Republic in 1958 brought about a semi-presidential system that entailed the transfer of power from the parliament to the government and the presidency. The two-round system established to elect the president of the Republic made very difficult for the Left, divided as they were between Socialists and Communists, to beat the Right, which was unified behind Charles de Gaulle. If this institutional constraint was an important reason to look for alliances and greater cooperation between the parties of the Left, there were more reasons for the Socialists to develop their ideological and strategic position. The technocratic tendencies of the French socio-economic development in the 1950s and 1960s, consumerism, and the Algerian war, created the conditions that left some sectors of the middle class unsatisfied with the Capitalist system. Neither the Socialist party, which was then the SFIO, nor the PCF, were able to offer a satisfactory solution to the alienation felt by the progressive middle classes, to their diffuse will to “*changer la vie*”. Thus, in the 1960s and 1970s, the French Left went through a long crossing of the desert that led them to organic and ideological renovation.

The Socialist renewal started with the creation of the *Parti Socialiste Unifié* (PSU) in 1958, which was a party that grouped dissatisfied Socialists, intellectuals and progressive Catholics, and with the creation of political clubs that helped to promote ideological reflection. The loss of prestige and electoral strength for the SFIO, and the proliferation of Leftist and Socialist groups that were looking for a Socialist alternative to Social Democracy as well as Communism, created a factionalised panorama in the French Left. In the context of the Fifth

¹⁰⁵ The exception being the tripartite government in France, in which the Socialists were in government in a coalition with the Communists and the Radicals between 1945 and 1947. Also, in 1956, Guy Mollet was prime minister of a Republican front.

Republic, it became evident in the mid-1960s that this factionalism had to be overcome through some kind of union of the Left.

In 1967 and 1968, there were timid approximations between Socialists, Left Radicals and Communists. However, the way towards Left unity was temporarily halted in the May of 1968. The events of May showed the social and cultural crisis of post-war political culture, which affected both the traditional political parties of the Right and Left. However, in the short term, the consequences of the May events were especially important for the Left, as new dissident generations overflowed the traditional proposals of the Socialists and the Communists. Moreover, the social unrest mobilised the most conservative sectors of the society, and the Right overwhelmingly defeated a divided Left in the legislative elections of June 1968. In the presidential elections of 1969, after the resignation of De Gaulle, the Left were defeated by the candidate of the Right, Georges Pompidou. The Socialist candidate Gaston Defferre only received a depressing 5% of the votes in the first round.

These harsh defeats showed the need for Socialist ideological and organic renovation, as well as the need for Left unity. The Socialist party was renovated between 1969 and 1971 under the new name *Parti Socialiste*. The PSF renewed its organisation, aggregating most of the French Socialist family, updated its ideological basis, and elected François Mitterrand (a strong candidate for the presidential elections) as its first secretary. Due to its heterogeneous constitution, the party was highly factionalised and great ideological diversity existed in its ranks. At least four different factions coexisted in the PSF. The supporters of the former leader of the SFIO, Guy Mollet, formed one of them. They were Social Democrats, deeply anti-Communist, and Atlanticists with regard to foreign policy. Their main interest was to preserve an important role for the old-time leaders of the SFIO in the new party. Another faction was composed of the members of the clubs who had joined the party. In general, they were Socialists who wanted to renovate the Left and establish cooperation with the Communists in order to reach power. The third faction was composed of the supporters of Mitterrand, who were more concerned with a successful electoral strategy than with dogma, although they tried to synthesise the contributions of all the factions. Finally, the most ideologically committed and Leftist faction was the *Centre d'études, de recherches et d'éducation socialistes* (CERES). Young intellectuals led by Didier Motchane and Jean-Pierre Chevenement formed this group, which was the most influential faction in setting the party line until 1975. CERES described itself as *reformiste révolutionnaire*, and was in favour of

reforming France's economic structures, reconstituting the Socialist party primarily on the basis of a reliance on the working class, and establishing the union of the Left.¹⁰⁶

With this diverse composition, the PSF experienced an ideological turn to the left that was sanctioned in *Changer la vie*, their ephemeral programme of 1972. This programme, developed under the influence of the CERES leadership, had a very short life because it was basically used for setting a clear position for negotiating a common programme with the PCF.¹⁰⁷ Notwithstanding this fact, it entailed a Leftist revival that went in the opposite direction to the revisionist trend that the European Socialist parties—notably the BLP and the SPD—had set in the 1960s.¹⁰⁸ Contrary to this revisionism, the newborn PSF emphasised the traditional values of Socialism, such as state ownership and a solid base among the working class, and envisaged the rupture with Capitalism. It promised nationalisation and it was in favour of workers' self-management (*autogestion*) as a way of creating a new, original, Socialist society in which the exploitation of man by man would disappear. The PSF also aimed to transform the actual process of European integration, which was based on market integration, and demanded the construction of a more social Europe, called for greater collaboration with the Third World, and ambiguously stated its long-term aim to withdraw France from NATO.

In July 1972, the PSF signed the Common Programme of the Left (*Programme commun de la gauche*) with the Communist Party and the Left-Radicals. The symbolic relevance of this program was huge. It completed the myth of Left unity reversing, at least apparently and temporarily,¹⁰⁹ the historic split of the 1920s between Socialists and Communists. However, the union of the Left meant different things for the PCF and the PSF, and there were different interpretations on the meaning of this achievement even within the Socialist party.

For the Communists, who considered themselves the vanguard and the sole revolutionary party of the working class, the common programme should serve to advance towards their understanding of Socialism.¹¹⁰ Thus, it was only a transitory phase that should set favourable

¹⁰⁶ George Arthur Coddling and William Safran, *Ideology and politics: the Socialist Party of France* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979); David L. Hanley, *Keeping Left?: Ceres and the French Socialist Party: a Contribution to the Study of Fractionalism in Political Parties* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

¹⁰⁷ D.S. Bell and Byron Criddle, *The French Socialist Party : The Emergence of a Party of Government* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1984), 67-70.

¹⁰⁸ See: Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, 241-275.

¹⁰⁹ It was a five-year programme.

¹¹⁰ Brown, *Eurocommunism & Eurosocialism*, 43-45.

conditions for moving towards Communism. Moreover, an alliance with the Socialists should provide the PCF with democratic credibility, and should serve to safeguard some of the Communist electoral achievements—especially at the municipal level, which was very important for spreading their influence across the working class.¹¹¹

On the other hand, the common programme of the Left had several meanings for the Socialists. In general, the Socialists were aware that alone, their strength was moderate at best, and they thought that a united Left would be necessary in order to achieve power in France. Moreover, signing a common program implied that the PCF agreed to play the game of liberal democracy, emancipating itself from the influence of the Soviet Union. However, for Mitterrand and his faction, the union of the Left should serve to reach power in France and to calibrate internally the forces of the Left. Thus, for this faction, the union between Socialists and Communists was not only useful to defeat the Right, but also to change the balance of forces in the Left, which meant strengthening the PSF at the expense of the PCF.¹¹² It was in that light that the common programme made sense to them. CERES, in turn, held a different interpretation of the union of the Left. This faction of the PSF interpreted the union with the Communists in a dialectical way. For them, unity was not only a way of reaching power, but also a way of transforming the nature of both the PSF and the PCF. They considered that the union of these parties would prevent the Socialists from leaning towards Social Democracy, while at the same time it would prevent the PCF from adopting Stalinist tendencies, forcing it to democratise.¹¹³

The Socialist turn to the Left in France, and more specifically the union of the Left, was not welcomed by the Social Democrat parties that dominated the SI. The renovation of the PSF at the Congress of Épinay was presented by the new party as the anti-Bad Godesberg, quoting the Congress of the SPD in which the German Social Democracy dropped Marxism. Thus the PSF built their new identity in opposition to the old Social Democracy that was represented by the SPD.¹¹⁴ This stance did not please PSF's sister parties in the SI, but it was the signature of the Common Programme between the PSF and the PCF that caused greater concern and disapproval among the European Social Democracy. In the Congress of Vienna of the SI in

¹¹¹ D.S. Bell and Byron Criddle, *The French Communist Party in the Fifth Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 173.

¹¹² Alain Bergounioux and Gérard Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir: le Parti socialiste français, 1905-1992*, (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 325-345.

¹¹³ Hanley, *Keeping Left?*, 84.

¹¹⁴ Flandre, *Socialisme ou Social-démocratie?*, 39-67.

1972, the PSF was marginalised and its ideological and strategic stance was isolated.¹¹⁵ A rift started in the SI during this year between the kind of Socialism represented by the PSF and the classic Social Democrat parties. This happened at a crucial moment for the unity of the European Socialists, since the principle that the European Parliament should be elected democratically had been accepted at the summit of The Hague in 1969.¹¹⁶

1.2. Relations between the PS and the European Socialists (BLP, PSF and SI) at the beginning of the Carnation Revolution, April 1974 to December 1974

1.2.1. The BLP and the PS before the revolution

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Portuguese Socialists were marginal within the international agenda of the BLP. However, although Labour support for the PS was modest until 1974, it was crucial for the Portuguese (first grouped in the ASP and later in the PS), because it helped them to survive conditions that required a clandestine position, and created a link between both parties that they mutually fully exploited during the Carnation Revolution.

Immediately after the ASP entered the SI in 1972, Mário Soares sought to strengthen relations between his association and the Labour Party. He met with some leading members of the BLP (Joan Lestor, MP; Ivor Richards, MP; Frank Judd, MP; Lord Gifford and the International Secretary of the party, Tom McNally), and they discussed how to improve their collaboration. Soares wanted to strengthen the political relations between both organisations and to go beyond the “occasional contacts between leaders” that were common at that point. In order to achieve this, the leader of the PS proposed to keep the BLP informed about developments in the Portuguese political situation and Portuguese colonies, and asked for the “active solidarity” of the BLP, which meant “political, diplomatic and financial support.”

¹¹⁵ Michele Di Donato, “Un socialismo per l’Europa del Sud? Il PS di François Mitterrand e il coordinamento dei partiti socialisti dell’Europa meridionale”, in *Nazioni e Narrazioni tra l’Italia e l’Europa, Storia Contemporanea*, ed. Michelangelo di Giacomo, AnnaRita Gori, Tommaso Nencioni and Gregorio Sorgonà, 16 (April, 2013): 240.

¹¹⁶ Eley, *Forging Democracy*, 407; Albert S. Lindemann, *A History of European Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 332.

The concrete demands that the ASP made to the BLP were for help in “[organising] the Portuguese workers resident in England in the trade-union and political fields” and “[promoting] a campaign in English public opinion to clarify in political terms the economic, social and political situation in Portugal and the colonies.” The link with the BLP was very important for the ASP, as “London, where relations with Africa are concerned, is more important than Paris—for it is a centre for contacts—and this is why the ASP wishes to have a leading comrade settled in London.”¹¹⁷

On the side of the BLP, the situation in the Portuguese colonies was a very relevant issue, as the development of the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique directly affected the British former colony of Rhodesia, as we will see in greater detail later, and the BLP used the fluid relations between the British conservative government and Portugal to criticise the Conservative foreign policy. Therefore, the BLP and the ASP decided to coordinate their positions regarding the Portuguese colonial situation. Moreover, the British saw the usefulness of supporting the ASP, because “[b]etween a communist party—strongly supported by Moscow—and a catholic movement lacking in organisation but with strong support and potential—the ASP represents, in Portugal, the only chance for democratic socialism.”¹¹⁸

Following this meeting, Labour implemented some of the policies outlined and discussed with Mário Soares. The first time that the BLP and the PS worked jointly in public was in London in July 1973, during the celebrations of the 600th anniversary of the alliance between Portugal and Great Britain.¹¹⁹ The Conservative government in the UK invited the Portuguese Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano to London to be present at the ceremony of commemoration, and the BLP decided to boycott the event. This was a way of showing its opposition to the Portuguese regime and the supportive policy of the British Conservative government regarding Portugal and the Portuguese Colonial Wars. As a response to the initiative of the Government, Labour invited the Secretary General of the PS to visit the UK as their official guest. This gave the PS the chance to gain some international visibility, and Soares the chance

¹¹⁷ Memorandum, IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974).

¹¹⁸ Memorandum, IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974). The underlined appears in the original document.

¹¹⁹ Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*.

to appear as an important figure of the Portuguese opposition just two months after the creation of the party.¹²⁰

When Caetano made the official visit to Great Britain, the leadership of the BLP, which included Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Ron Hayward, and Ian Mikardo, had a meeting with Soares and other members of the PS Executive Committee—Jorge Jorge Campinos, Secretary of International Relations, and Fernando Loureiro, Secretary of Emigration. The British “welcomed the newborn party:” Hayward offered it all of the “support and co-operation” of the Labour Party. Following this, the representatives of both parties held talks on how to assist the Portuguese Socialist opposition.¹²¹

In this discussion, they agreed on continuing and further developing the strategy outlined in the previous meeting. Thus, they agreed that a useful way of helping the PS would be by trying to organise the immigrant Portuguese workers who lived in the UK and draw them towards the PS, and by trying to do the same in the rest of the European countries where there were Portuguese immigrants,¹²² in collaboration with other European Socialist parties and trade unions. It was also agreed that the BLP “would oppose any kind of association between the EEC and the current Portuguese regime.” Finally, both parties condemned the Portuguese Colonial Wars and “the atrocities of the Portuguese Armed Forces in Mozambique”, demanding publicly “the end of the [conflict]” and the creation of an “international enquiry on these atrocities.”¹²³

The rapprochement between Portugal and the EC was an important concern for the PS and the BLP, because the Portuguese regime—following the acceptance of the UK to the EEC—had signed a preferential trade agreement with the EEC in July 1972.¹²⁴ The Portuguese Socialists considered that the rapprochement between the EC and Portugal would have negative effects for the latter, economically as well as politically. They were concerned because the regime had exploited this agreement as a political success, and they feared that Portugal could make

¹²⁰ The ASP was transformed into the PS in April 1973, mentioned above.

¹²¹ “Comunicado conjunto do Partido Socialista e do British Labour Party,” *Portugal Socialista*, 1 (August 1973): 8.

¹²² In 1973 it was estimated that there were close to 2.000.000 Portuguese people working and living abroad. See: António Barreto, “Mudança Social em Portugal, 1960-2000”, in *Portugal Contemporâneo*, ed. António Costa Pinto, António (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2004), 137-162.

¹²³ “Comunicado conjunto do Partido Socialista e do British Labour Party” *Portugal Socialista*, 1 (August 1973): 8.

¹²⁴ For the history of the Portuguese European integration see: Nicolau Andresen Leitão, *Estado Novo Democracia e Europa. 1947-1986* (Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2007); Costa Pinto and Severiano Teixeira, “From Africa to Europe.”

one more step and join the EC, which could help the Portuguese regime to perpetuate itself.¹²⁵ For the Labour, the idea that Portugal was approaching the Community as a British *protégé* was also unacceptable, because it could make the British complicit in helping to strengthen the Portuguese dictatorship. Besides, the BLP was itself divided on British integration in the EEC.

This public demonstration of solidarity from such an important party as the BLP was a promising start for the newborn PS. It was invaluable proof of solidarity, and a moral and international boost for the recently created party. Moreover, this meeting publicly committed the BLP to certain behaviour towards Portugal and the PS, which, was of crucial importance to the Portuguese Socialists in 1974, when the BLP acceded to power in Britain and the Portuguese Regime fell.

1.2.2. The outbreak of the Carnation Revolution and Portuguese decolonisation

The relations between the PS and the BLP acquired a decisive importance after the 25th of April 1974, when a group of high and middle ranks of the Portuguese Armed Forces, the *Movimento das Forças Armadas* (MFA), led a coup d'état that put an end to the *Estado Novo* in Portugal. The MFA, sick of the unsustainable Colonial Wars that the Portuguese regime had waged in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau since the beginning of the 1960s, overthrew the long-standing Portuguese regime. The main motives of the military were to put an end to the wars, which were unsustainable for Portugal for economic, social and moral reasons,¹²⁶ and to re-establish democracy in Portugal, although there were also other reasons, such as the re-establishment of the old hierarchy within the army, and its reputation.¹²⁷ These general reasons were the only things the leaders of the coup held in common; they held different ideas on the political future of Portugal, and on future relations with the colonies. Regarding the Colonial problem, there two tendencies were broadly defined. The most popular course among the high ranks of the military that supported the coup was a kind of neo-colonial relation with the colonies that would take the shape of a federation of *Lusophone* countries, in which Portugal would keep a prominent position. This trend was advocated by

¹²⁵ Ramos da Costa, F., Avis des socialistes portugais (ASP) sur les negociations en cours entre le gouvernement portugais et la Communaute Europeene (CEE), IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974).

¹²⁶ Hipólito De La Torre and Josep Sánchez Cervelló, *Portugal en el siglo XX* (Madrid: Istmo, 1992).

¹²⁷ The grievances within the Portuguese army and its relevance for the coup of 25th April can be seen more in detail in a book that has become a point of reference in the literature on the Carnation Revolution: Maxwell, *The Making of the Portuguese Democracy*, 32-35. For a sociological and political analysis of the composition of the Portuguese armed forces see: Jaques Fremontier, *Portugal les points sur les i* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1976).

the General António de Spínola,¹²⁸ who some months before the coup had written about it in his influential book *Portugal e o Futuro*.¹²⁹ The other trend was defending the principle of self-determination, and the immediate concession of independence for the colonies. This trend was supported by the main Leftist political parties—the PS and the PCP—and by the low and middle ranks of the military.

Notwithstanding these differences, the general agreements permitted the MFA to draft a basic programme that stated the immediate objectives of the movement to save Portugal. It consisted in the creation of a National Salvation Junta (JSN),¹³⁰ led by General António de Spínola, which should form a provisional government within three weeks; the re-establishment of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association; the promise of a new economic policy that would be at the service of the Portuguese people; and the promise to respect the international commitments of the country. According to the programme, the MFA recognised that the solution to the Colonial wars was political and not military.¹³¹

Despite the vagueness of the programme regarding the future of the Portuguese colonies, it was a good start and it was generally welcomed by all of the Western powers, because it pointed to the liberalisation and democratisation of Portugal, and to the end of the Colonial Wars. The programme was also considered valid by most of the Portuguese supporters of the coup, including leader of the PS Mário Soares who considered that it should be the base for building a national salvation government.¹³²

To demonstrate how important relations with the UK were for Portugal, the JSN sent a letter to the British embassy immediately after the coup, informing them of the creation of the Junta, and explaining the immediate steps that they would take: “assuming his functions the President [Spínola] will appoint a provisional civil Government, which will prepare, within

¹²⁸ He was a renowned General in Portugal who had been Military Governor in Guinea and Vice-Chief of the Defence Council of the Armed Forces. He became a reference for the military opposition to the regime when he published a book, *Portugal e o Futuro*, where he expressed the idea that the only solution to the Colonial Wars was political and not military, and he proposed to look for a different kind of relation between the Portugal and its colonies, emphasizing the idea of establishing a federation.

¹²⁹ António de Spínola, *Portugal e o Futuro. Análise de conjuntura nacional* (Lisboa: Arcádia, 1974).

¹³⁰ In Portuguese *Junta de Salvação Nacional*

¹³¹ Programa do Movimento das Forças Armadas Portuguesas, 25 of April 1974. It can be consulted here: <http://www1.ci.uc.pt/cd25a/wikka.php?wakka=estrut07>

¹³² Declarations du Secrétaire General du Parti Socialiste, Lisbon, 07/05/1974, IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974).

the period of twelve months, the holding of elections for a Constituent National Assembly.”¹³³ For the Portuguese, it was important to keep the British informed, because they wanted to maintain the best possible relation with their oldest ally. Besides, at that moment, it was very important for the new regime to obtain British international recognition, because it could open the door for recognition by all of the Western powers.¹³⁴

Aware of the relevance that British recognition had for the new Portuguese regime, the first step the British took was to invite Mário Soares to London, an invitation which was made through the BLP and not through the government because Soares did not have yet any official position in Portugal. The coup d'état had caught Soares by surprise, and he only arrived in Lisbon from exile¹³⁵ on 28th April. He was received enthusiastically, and three days later he participated in the May Day celebrations, where he and PCP leader Alvaro Cunhal were cheered by a huge mass of people present at the celebrations. Immediately after May Day, he went to London, which was his first travel abroad after the overthrowing of the *Estado Novo*.

During his one-day visit to London, Soares met with the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and the Foreign Secretary James Callaghan. They discussed several topics, including official recognition for the new regime, the formation and the tasks of the Portuguese provisional government, the Socialist/Communist balance of forces in Portugal, and decolonisation. This was the first stage of Soares' tour of the West European capitals with the official purpose of providing information about the political situation in Portugal and obtaining international recognition for the new regime. However, Soares also used this trip to get “[advice], political, economic and moral support [for the PS] from the European sister parties.”¹³⁶

¹³³ Letter from G. Caldeira Coelho (Portuguese Ambassador) to James Callaghan (Principal Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs), London 27th April 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2061, Recognition of new regime in Portugal.

¹³⁴ According to the testimony of Mário Soares, the first concern of Spínola after the coup was to gain the recognition of the Western Powers. Among them, England was especially important. See: Mário Soares, “Portugal e a transição para a democracia: um testemunho pessoal” in *Portugal e a transição para a democracia (1974-1976)*, ed. Fernando Rosas (Lisboa: Colibri, 1998), 324.

¹³⁵ Mário Soares was exiled in Paris, but on the 25th of April, he was in Bonn trying to meet with Willy Brandt. See: Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 101.

¹³⁶ Confidential report from R. H. Baker (FO, South European Department) to Lord Bridges, 10 May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares' visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974. This document has been partially used in António Simões do Poço, “*Friends in high places – O Partido Socialista e a ‘Europa conosco’*”, in *Revolução ou Transição? História e Memória da Revolução dos Cravos*, ed. Raquel Varela (Lisboa: Bertrand Editora, 2012), 117-138.

At the meeting in London, the first issue discussed was the recognition of the new Portuguese regime. The British had some criteria that they used to recognise newly-established regimes. It was a British practice to “recognise governments which enjoy with a reasonable prospect of permanence, the obedience of the mass of the population and the effective control of much the greater part of the national territory. It is our view that the new Portuguese regime fulfil these criteria.”¹³⁷ However, the Labour government waited to recognise the new Portuguese regime until the visit of Soares, thus giving the impression that they were waiting to hear Soares’ opinion before taking any decision. James Callaghan “intended to try to strengthen Dr. Soares’ position by announcing that the Government had decided to accord recognition to General Spínola following the discussion with Dr. Soares in London.” This would provide a very positive image of Soares to Portugal, and it would show the British support of the Socialist leader. Thus, on 2nd May, the British government recognised the new Portuguese regime. Wilson “welcomed the timing of British recognition, as this would show our full support for Dr. Soares”, and the leader of the PS agreed, considering that “this was certainly how the decision would be interpreted [in Portugal].”¹³⁸

Regarding the formation and the tasks of the future provisional government, Soares thought that the government would be formed within two weeks, and he expected to be appointed Prime Minister or Foreign Minister. The Communists also wanted to participate, and Soares thought that it would be appropriate, “if only to share the criticism if things went wrong.” The provisional government would be in power for one year, after which free, general and democratic elections would be held. Meanwhile, the tasks of the government would be to tackle the economic problems of Portugal and decolonisation. Soares’s comment on Portuguese economic problems is very significant; he said that these problems “must be solved without resort to extreme right or Leftist solutions.” Soares cited the Pinochet government in Chile “as an example of an approach which he hoped Portugal could avoid.” In

¹³⁷ Early day motion Number 90: Recognition of Portuguese Administration, 9 of May, 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2061, Recognition of new regime in Portugal

¹³⁸ Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Dr. Mário Soares at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday 2 May 1974 at 10 Downing Street, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974. This document has been entirely published in Keith A. Hamilton and Patrick Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas. The Southern Flank in Crisis 1973–1976*, Series III, Vol. V (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 357-360.

facing these economic problems, Soares said: “liberty in Portugal – to which the Socialists are very attached – would be maintained.”¹³⁹

This statement says more about the ideological orientation of the leader of the PS than about the economic problems of Portugal, which is why I consider it interesting to reflect on it further. Soares gave the Western governments the impression of being in the political centre as early as May 1974, which apparently was at odds with the programme of his own party. The British received this impression, and considered that “two themes that emerge clearly are the socialist attachment to liberty and the need for middle-of-the-road policies”. This idea was reinforced by the fact that “the socialists would not object to the formation of parties of the right” and awareness of “Dr Soares’ intention to try to dissuade the workers from insisting on all the wage increases to which the rise in prices entitled them”.¹⁴⁰ These statements show the realistic approach of the leader of the PS, and also that he was willing to clarify any doubt about his and his party’s commitment to the rules of the game existing in the West—Atlanticism, liberal democracy, and Capitalism. This was because the programme of the PS could lead to some concern in the British, American and, in general, all the West European governments. It stated that the aim of the party was to establish a Socialist society in Portugal, something that was definitely in contradiction with Capitalism and incompatible with the maintenance of the East-West status quo. In addition, according to the programme, the model of Socialism envisaged by the PS was that it “consider[ed] the most accurate for Portugal the ones praised by the Chilean Popular Union or the French Union of the Left.”¹⁴¹ Furthermore, the PS said in its programme that among the more urgent issues to be tackled immediately was raising the standard of living of the working classes. For all of these reasons, Soares consciously contradicted the programme of his party at this early stage of the Revolution.

The fact that Soares’ statements were at odds with the PS programme can be further explained by two recent experiences, one international and the other national. Firstly, the Chilean coup d’état in September 1973 against the Socialist President, Salvador Allende, had shown the

¹³⁹ This quotation is not from the same meeting, but from a report that the British had on the meeting between the American Ambassador in Bonn and Mário Soares, which was held some days after Soares’ visit to London. Although a statement such as this one cannot be found in the documents on Soares’ conversations in London with Wilson and Callaghan, the British wrote that this statement was “in the same line as what he had said to us.” Confidential report from R. H. Baker (FO, South European Department) to Lord Bridges, 10 May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

¹⁴⁰ Confidential report from R. H. Baker (FO, South European Department) to Lord Bridges, 10 May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

¹⁴¹ Relatório de Mário Soares ao Congresso da Acção Socialista Portuguesa, *Construir uma Nova Vida, Destruir o Sistema*, 1973, pp. 44-45.

limits of the Socialist experience in certain places that were geo-strategically important for the equilibrium of the Cold War. Secondly, the situation in Portugal had changed since the PS wrote its programme in 1973, when it was still an illegal party. In addition, the programme of the PS left some room for changes and flexible interpretations. At the beginning of the text it said: “[it represents] a point of reference” “[...] it is a starting point for further ideological discussion, reflexion and development.”¹⁴² However, the feeling that Soares’ statements provoke is that he was not as committed to his party’s programme—which he himself had written to a great extent¹⁴³—as he was to taking advantage of the state of affairs that offered him the possibility of obtaining the support of the Western powers for his party, as well as for the political evolution of Portugal along Western lines.

To return to the meeting between Soares, Wilson, and Callaghan in London, another issue discussed was the issue of the Socialist/Communist balance of forces. The British were concerned because when the leader of the PCP Alvaro Cunhal returned to Portugal from exile, he was received enthusiastically by the population. Therefore, they wanted to know the strength of the PCP compared to the PS. Regarding the strength of his own party, Soares said that since it had been illegal until a week ago, he needed time to evaluate it. However, he thought that “to judge from the support given to him [Soares] in public demonstrations, the Party was either in the strongest position, or sharing that position with the Communists”.¹⁴⁴ This was probably an exaggeration aimed at convincing Wilson and Callaghan of the relevance of the PS. The reality was that the Socialists seemed to have great popular support, but their organisation was weak and they had very few militants—as we have seen above, they numbered between 600 and 3.000.¹⁴⁵

In fact, Soares tried to draw the British attention to his own party by using Cold War logic; he warned them about “his belief that the Portuguese Communist Party is receiving substantial financial backing from the Soviet Union and other Communist regimes in Eastern Europe.”¹⁴⁶ Thus, the British realised “that the Portuguese Socialists were in need of technical help.” They decided that “Mr. Jack Jones and the TGWU, as well as the Labour Party, might be able to help them over this.” According to Soares, this would be very important, because as he

¹⁴² Programa do Partido Socialista, 22.AGO.1973 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 2249,001, im. 156).

¹⁴³ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 53.

¹⁴⁴ Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Dr. Mário Soares at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday 2 May 1974 at 10 Downing Street, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

¹⁴⁵ Stock, “O PS de 1973 a 1983,” 140.

¹⁴⁶ Telegram from James Callaghan for departmental distribution, 6 of May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

emphasised, “Senhor Cunhal had just returned to Lisbon, and the Communists had been given a lot of [financial] support which provided them with big advantages.” With this information, Callaghan reached the conclusion that there were two things that needed immediate action: “First, there was the question of Party support; Dr. Soares should let the Labour Party know what he wanted. Secondly, as between Governments, he hoped General Spínola would tell the British Government what Portugal needed so that Britain [...] could help.”¹⁴⁷

This promise of support for the PS was very important for Soares and his party. The PS needed financial and technical assistance if they were to play a relevant role in the creation of the new regime, but Soares also “needed technical assistance to help him to organise and project his electoral campaign.” Regarding this concrete issue, Wilson said that “Mr. Hayward [the General Secretary of the Labour Party] would know how this help should be given, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary [Callaghan, as Chairman of the Party and Foreign Secretary] would also be able to provide assistance.”¹⁴⁸ It was not settled how and when this assistance would be provided. However, this conversation shows that from the very beginning of the Revolution, the PS counted on the support of the BLP, which offered the PS financial and technical assistance as early as May 1974. The aim of this assistance was to strengthen the Portuguese Socialists so that they could counterbalance the potential strength of the PCP, and eventually to win the elections that were planned for the next year.

Finally, the issue that was probably most important to the British at that time was Portuguese decolonisation. They were especially concerned about the ideas of the Portuguese on this issue, and on the method and timing for carrying out this task. Soares said the “he fully accepted the urgency of the colonial problem which he was confident would be solved. If the British Government had any suggestions to make on this issue [...] he would be glad to receive them”. Soares believed that if there were going to be problems, they would appear in Angola, where the presence of Portuguese settlers was larger, and there were several independence movements confronting each other,¹⁴⁹ and Mozambique, because of the impact that the decolonisation could have in Southern Africa, where the two racist governments of South Africa and Rhodesia could intervene in the situation if the Portuguese did not carry out

¹⁴⁷ Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Dr. Mário Soares at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday 2 May 1974 at 10 Downing Street, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

¹⁴⁸ Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Dr. Mário Soares at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday 2 May 1974 at 10 Downing Street, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

¹⁴⁹ The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA).

an orderly decolonisation. The case of Guinea Bissau should be easier, since, in fact, it had already been independent since 1973. Wilson declared that the decolonisation of the Portuguese colonies “were of the greatest interest to the British Government, and we would like further discussions about them in due course.” Callaghan added that “he would be glad to make British experience in decolonisation available to the new Portuguese Government”, and he invited Soares “to send a delegation to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to discuss the problem with his officials.” This was a very valuable offer, since the new Portuguese Government would be inexperienced. However, it also shows the British attempt to monitor Portuguese decolonisation. Callaghan continued by saying that “the British Government was anxious to help the Portuguese in any way they could”, and added a sentence that shows that the British also wanted some benefit from Portuguese decolonisation: “and [...] we could help each other over Rhodesia,”¹⁵⁰ an issue to which I will refer below.

Thus, in Soares’ first trip abroad, only seven days after the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution, he and the British Government discussed all of the issues that would be shared concerns during the first months of the Revolution. It is noticeable from the very beginning of the relations between British Labour and Mário Soares that they mingled formal and informal ways of doing politics. The British proposed using governmental channels to support Portugal during the process of decolonisation that lay ahead. At the same time, they proposed using party and trade union channels to help with the reconstruction of the PS and to strengthen its position within Portugal *vis-à-vis* the Communists for the planned future elections. This shows a blurred line between Government and party when it came to relations with the Portuguese that far from disappearing, became even more imprecise when Mário Soares was appointed Foreign Minister of the Portuguese Provisional Government. In addition to the balance of forces between Socialists and Communists, the main issue of concern for both the British and the Portuguese that was discussed at the London meeting was the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. In the case of the British, the fact that they mentioned the case of Rhodesia suggests that as well as helping Portugal to carry out an ordered decolonisation, they wanted to take the chance to exert more efficient pressure on their former colony.

Since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of Rhodesia in 1965, which was deemed illegal by Britain, the Commonwealth, and the United Nations, the white government

¹⁵⁰ Record of a conversation between the Prime Minister and Dr. Mário Soares at 2.10 p.m. on Thursday 2 May 1974 at 10 Downing Street, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

in the former British colony had become a nightmare for the UK, a source of anxiety and international humiliation that had damaged British authority and prestige as the leading member of the Commonwealth.¹⁵¹ The international sanctions imposed on Rhodesia during these years had been evaded thanks to the collaboration of the white-ruled countries of Southern Africa—Angola, Mozambique and South Africa—and had not had the effect desired by the British, which was to force the Rhodesians to come to an agreement with the black majority to ensure the majority rule. Moreover, the issue of Rhodesia was especially sensitive for the BLP for several reasons, including the fact that the UDI of the former colony occurred with the Labour party in power, which left the feeling that the ineffectiveness of the Labour government had contributed towards this outcome.¹⁵² Another reason was that because during the years in opposition, the BLP had made the issue of Rhodesia and the situation of Southern Africa in general into a key argument for criticising the Conservative government and its pro-white foreign policy. Now the Portuguese decolonisation would transform the regional balance of power, which was an opportunity to further press the Rhodesians to come to terms with the black population and with the UK. Therefore, the collaboration between Britain and Portugal in Southern Africa could be profitable for both parties.

After this visit to London, Soares travelled to Brussels, Paris, Bonn, Rome, Helsinki and Amsterdam. He had the same double objective as in London; on the one hand, to explain the future steps to be taken by the JSN, and to ensure international recognition of the new Portuguese regime, and on the other hand to get international support and assistance for the PS. Regarding the Socialist Party, Soares was asked in Belgium about his party's commitment to NATO and the EEC. The leader of the PS admitted that "the Portuguese Socialist Party had in the past campaigned against both NATO and the EEC," but he added that "now that the political situation in Portugal had changed, the policy of the Portuguese Socialist Party has also changed." He thought "it was safe to say that his party was now in favour of continued membership of NATO and of a rapprochement with the European Communities."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation. The retreat from empire in the post-war world* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 314-324; Carl Peter Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence. An International History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

¹⁵² J.R.T. Wood, *So far and no further! Rhodesia's bid for independence during the retreat from Empire 1959-1965* (Victoria B.C.: Trafford, 2012), 241-475.

¹⁵³ Letter from R. Hanbury-Tenison (British Embassy in Brussels) to A.C. Goodison (Southern European Department, Foreign & Commonwealth Office), Visit of Senhor Mário Soares to Brussels, 6 May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.

Here again, the leader of the PS disregarded the programme of his own party only a year after it was written. The programme said that one of the aims of the PS regarding international policy was to work for the “simultaneous disappearance of the diplomatic instruments—universal and regional—of domination of the two super-powers, particularly NATO.”¹⁵⁴ However, Soares changed his mind about this because of the new political situation in Portugal. What is striking here, more than Soares’ scant attachment to the programme of his own party, is that he demonstrates that he himself embodied the party. By saying “it was safe to say that his party was now in favour of continued membership of NATO”, without having had a Congress or a meeting of the National Commission, which was the organism in charge of following the line of action established in the Congress,¹⁵⁵ Soares seemed to take decisions that affected the programme—and ultimately the ideology—of the party on the fly. This shows that his control over the party was almost total,¹⁵⁶ something that in this early stage of the Revolution was understandable when considering the weak structure of the PS. However, this is a characteristic that would tend to increase in the following years, and create some internal problems within the organisation, such as inadequate internal democracy, ideological vagueness and contradictions, and an opportunistic policy of relations with other political parties.

In this European tour, however, Soares was successful in gaining support for the PS, especially in the UK, as we have seen above, and in the RFA. For British Labour, a key factor in deciding to support the PS was the fact that Soares was its leader. He was quite well known to some Labour leaders, and his party could offer, in the eyes of the British, the guarantee of a moderate centre-left party. In the words of James Callaghan: “I have known Mário Soares for many years and have considerable confidence in him, we shall be offering the Portuguese Socialist Party organisational and technical help in the belief that a government with their participation, is the one which offers the best prospects for the West.”¹⁵⁷ Thus, Callaghan gives a clue to how relevant the figure of Soares was for the BLP in deciding that the PS was the party to be supported. This statement, however, has to be put in context. It was directed to the American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who did not trust the capabilities of the

¹⁵⁴ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, 1973, p. 61.

¹⁵⁵ Stock, “O PS de 1973 a 1983,” 134.

¹⁵⁶ This is confirmed in the memoirs of one of the founders and former Secretary of International Relations of the PS, Rui Mateus. See: Mateus, *Contos Proibidos*.

¹⁵⁷ Telegram from James Callaghan to Henry Kissinger, 2 May 1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2072, Dr. Soares visit to UK and other European capitals May 1974.; document quoted in Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 126. Also in Del Pero, “A European solution for a European Crisis.”

Portuguese Socialist leader,¹⁵⁸ so it is possible that Callaghan was trying to convince Kissinger of the reliability of Soares and the Socialists.

In Germany, Soares met with Chancellor Willy Brandt, and he was also promised of closer cooperation between the German Social Democracy and the PS, a cooperation that would be implemented via the SPD and the SI.¹⁵⁹ Soares' success in Europe contrasts with the American position towards the new Portugal and the PS. The US was overly concerned with the predictable presence of Communists in the Portuguese government, which could be a dangerous precedent for other countries in Western Europe, such as France and Italy, and so at the beginning of the Revolution, the Americans kept cold relations with the new Portugal.¹⁶⁰ As we have seen above, Italy and France had two powerful Communist parties which could possibly reach the government. The fact that there would be a Communist presence in the Portuguese government was a precedent that could open the door for Communists in other member-countries of NATO, which was something that the US was not willing to accept. According to Kissinger, the presence of Communists in Portugal could precipitate a "southern-Europe domino" effect that could lead to the collapse of NATO.¹⁶¹

The PS exploited Soares' tour around Europe for its own benefit. The party publicly emphasised the fact that Mário Soares had done this trip as the Secretary General of the PS, and that the British government had waited to know the opinion of the PS before recognising the JSN. As it appeared in party newspaper *Portugal Socialista*, "the comrade Mário Soares, secretary general of the Socialist Party, exposed [when he arrived in Lisbon] the extremely positive results of his trip." "[he] underlined that he had done [the trip] exclusively as representative of the Socialist Party [...] invited by the Socialist parties in Government, notably the English, who confirmed to him that they would not recognise the National Salvation Junta without first consulting with the Portuguese Socialist Party about the guarantees that they offered for democracy and decolonisation."¹⁶²

Soares' statements in Lisbon summarise the aim of his trip to the UK and the rest of Europe, and its usefulness for the PS. Firstly, he tried to obtain the full support of the Western governments, and the Social Democrat parties that ruled some of them, by emphasising his

¹⁵⁸ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 127.

¹⁵⁹ Rôla da Fonseca, "«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»," 112.

¹⁶⁰ Del Pero et. al., *Democrazie*, 127. Also see: Gomes and Moreira de Sá, *Kissinger Vs Carlucci*; Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos*.

¹⁶¹ Schneidam, *Engaging Africa*, 151.

¹⁶² "Mário Soares em conferência de imprensa," *Portugal Socialista*, 5 (May 1974).

political moderation and realism. Secondly, he tried to appear in Portugal as being in possession of international support and legitimacy, which was provided by the main European Socialist parties in power at that time. The fact that he could say that international recognition of the new regime depended on PS approval of it might have provided the party with a good deal of publicity and prestige in the eyes of the Portuguese, who had not been accustomed to international approval during the last 48 years. Furthermore, it presented the PS as the guarantor of democracy in Portugal. Since the party had quite a weak organisation, this international backing was precious capital that would give almost immediate results, such as the increasing public prestige of Soares and his group, and the radical increase of affiliations in the PS.¹⁶³ In addition, the fact that Soares mentioned that he had guaranteed the JSN's commitment to democracy and decolonisation put some pressure on the directions that the new Portugal had to take.

Some days later, on the 16th May, the JSN formed the Provisional Government. It included members of the main parties that had hitherto been clandestine. The President was General António de Spínola, the Prime Minister was Adelino de Palma Carlos, and although most of the government was conservative, members of the Portuguese Left also occupied important ministries. Mário Soares was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other members of the PS in the government were Salgado Zenha as Minister of Justice, Raul Rego as Minister of Social Communication, and António de Almeida Santos as Minister of Territorial Coordination. The Communists were also called to participate in the government, in part due to Mário Soares' persuasion of General Spínola.¹⁶⁴ The leader of the PCP, Alvaro Cunhal, was appointed a Minister without a portfolio, and Avelino Gonçalves became Labour Minister. Additionally, the Government included members of the moderate Social Democrat Party (PPD)¹⁶⁵ and the heterogeneous Portuguese Democratic Movement (MDP/CDE).¹⁶⁶ This was a great change in the Portuguese and international situations, because there were suddenly Communists in the government of a NATO member country. This was the starting point for Western, especially American, concerns about Portugal, as the presence of Communists in NATO was not tolerable for the US, as we will see more in detail below.

¹⁶³ Between May and December 1974, the party went from having between 600 to 3000 militants to having 40000. See: Stock, "O PS de 1973 a 1983."

¹⁶⁴ Rui, *Contos Proibidos*, 53. Also: Reis, "O Partido Socialista na revolução," 67.

¹⁶⁵ Its name in Portuguese was *Partido Popular Democrático*.

¹⁶⁶ Its name in Portuguese was *Movimento Democrático Português / Comissão Democrática Eleitoral*.

The new programme of the Provisional Government was quite moderate and very similar to the programme of the MFA. It aimed to reorganise the State and substitute the corporative organisation imposed by Salazar for a more decentralised administration, guarantee civic freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and establish a mixed economic system. Regarding international policy, the programme stated that Portugal would respect its alliance with NATO, its links with the United Kingdom, friendly relations with the US, and a respectful relation with Spain. It was also stated that Portugal would seek to intensify its commercial and political relations with the countries of the EEC and re-establish diplomatic relations with all the countries of the world. Regarding the Colonial Wars, the Provisional Government stated that the solution would be political and not military. Finally, it was planned to hold democratic elections within the next twelve months.¹⁶⁷ All the political parties accepted the programme, which was welcomed in the Western chancelleries, but it was still quite vague on the issue of decolonisation, because it did not clarify what the future of the colonies would be.

This issue made a new visit by Mário Soares favourable—on 24th May, he visited London again—this time as Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs. Soares was invited to the UK to discuss Portugal's policy towards its African Territories. This time, the meeting between British and Portuguese was more official in character than the previous one held three weeks before. Now, it was an official meeting between the British Foreign Secretary and the Portuguese Foreign Minister, so the situation of the Socialist Party was not touched upon. Soares opened the meeting by informing the British that Spínola had confirmed his acceptance of the principle of self-determination for the colonies, with all its consequences, in his inaugural speech as President. This was a good start, but there were many problems to tackle in the meantime. The first issue was to achieve a ceasefire in Guinea Bissau. Soares had met with the PAIGC in Dakar and made arrangements there to sign a ceasefire protocol in London, a city chosen by the Portuguese because they had remembered “Mr. Callaghan's offer to help by providing the advice of experts who had experience of decolonisation in Africa.”¹⁶⁸ After this, the Portuguese troops would withdraw to certain points of Guinea Bissau, where they would remain, and conversations would continue to implement the

¹⁶⁷ Programa do I Governo Provisório, <http://www.portugal.gov.pt/media/464072/GP01.pdf>; consulted the 17th of April 2013.

¹⁶⁸ Record of the conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Portuguese Foreign Minister held at Number 1 Carlton Gardens on Sunday 26 May 1974 at 5pm. UKNA, FCO 9/2073, Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal (Dr. Mário Soares) to UK 24 May.

principle of self-determination. This process would rapidly lead to independence for Guinea Bissau. Regarding Mozambique, Soares thought that the scenario would be similar to Guinea Bissau; first a ceasefire with Frelimo would be signed, and then the Portuguese would be ready to grant independence to Mozambique. This would be quite straightforward as long as certain legitimate interests of both the population and Portugal were maintained, such as trade, investment, communications, and so on. Finally, regarding Angola, Soares thought that it would have to wait because it was less urgent than Guinea and Mozambique, especially in the military field.

After this discussion, the British brought up the issue of Rhodesia. Obviously, the problems of Mozambique and Rhodesia intersected. The Rhodesians had received a lot of help from Mozambique in the past, particularly over trade and apart from the link with South Africa, Salazarist Portugal was the most important factor in keeping Rhodesia running. In the current situation, the British thought that the regime of Rhodesia would be very concerned with the possible decolonisation of Mozambique, and they did not hesitate to ask for collaboration or even advice from Mário Soares about how to act with the Rhodesians. The British were very straightforward with the Portuguese: “we ought to encourage the Portuguese to do what they can by way of applying pressure on the Rhodesians, and to keep in touch with us on the subject.” Soares said that the Rhodesians “had a Mission or Consulate in Lisbon which effectively functioned as a diplomatic mission”, and the British came up with the idea that the closing of the Consulate would be “a serious morale blow” to the Rhodesians. At the same time, it would give credibility to the Portuguese among of the African States, which, in turn, could facilitate a solution to the colonial problem. Both parts agreed that they needed to help each other in Southern Africa. The British offered to mediate between Portugal and the African countries. They compromised on circulating a telegram written by the Portuguese among the African countries that described their policy in Africa, and they would tell the Africans that “this was what we understood the Portuguese policy to be”, which should increase its credibility.¹⁶⁹

This meeting was clearly focused on Portuguese decolonisation, since it was the most urgent international issue for the UK that derived from the Carnation Revolution. However, the

¹⁶⁹ Record of the conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Portuguese Foreign Minister held at Number 1 Carlton Gardens on Sunday 26 May 1974 at 5pm. UKNA, FCO 9/2073, Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal (Dr. Mário Soares) to UK 24 May.

situation in metropolitan Portugal was still unclear, and everything remained to be done in order to establish democracy in the country. Thus, at the dinner given by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for the Portuguese delegation, which was composed of Mário Soares, the Lt Col Almeida Bruno, and Fernando Guimarães a member of the Portuguese Embassy in London, the British touched upon other issues. They questioned the Portuguese about the economic situation in Portugal, the Portuguese position regarding NATO, and the Communists.

Soares took the initiative in the conversation and said that he was deeply concerned about the state of the economy. "Portugal would probably need outside (EEC) help." He also mentioned the situation in the trade union movement being formed, and expressed his concern about the influence held by the Communists. This was an issue of enormous potential relevance for the PS, as at that time the PCP was the only party in Portugal with strong links to the working class. During the years of the dictatorship, the Communists had developed a strategy of infiltrating the regional unions that existed in the *Estado Novo*, and now they were implanting their own model of monolithic trade union and occupying the key positions within it. Soares therefore considered that "there is urgent need for outside help to prevent it [the national trade union] becoming completely dominated [by the PCP]." This problem, Callaghan thought, should be treated through the TUC, and he offered to "discuss this particular problem with the Chairman of the TUC International Committee, Mr Jack Jones." Soares said that he hoped that a single trade union confederation would be established in Portugal, but not under Communist control. Then, the conversation switched to NATO, and the Lt Col Bruno intervened. As representative of the army in this meeting, he expressed "full support for NATO", something that was reiterated by Mário Soares.

We can see from this meeting that as the new regime was in a period of creation, several different topics were touched upon. The British and the Portuguese not only discussed international policy, they also treated issues concerning internal policy, such as the formation of the trade union movement in Portugal. The British were willing to interfere in the Portuguese internal affairs in order to avoid the Communist control of the trade union movement. In this case, once again, we can observe how the Labour leaders used all the means at their disposal to carry out their foreign policy. The Foreign Secretary Callaghan, who was also Chairman of the Labour Party, proposed to use his contacts with Jack Jones to use the trade union channel to prevent a Communist oriented trade union in Portugal. This

was a response to the anti-Communism that led all of the policy of the Labour government towards Portugal, but it could also be beneficial for the PS, who needed to create formal links with the workers which they had not done until that moment. Thus, in the first months of the Portuguese Revolution, the boundaries between government and party were diffuse for both the British and the Portuguese.

Mário Soares stayed in London for some days, as he had meetings with the leaders of the PAIGC. They arrived at some agreements; the Portuguese were prepared to recognise the principle of independence, but not to recognise the PAIGC as a government, because it would go against the principle of self-determination expressed in the programme of the MFA. This was now the only problem to be overcome, and the independence of Guinea Bissau would be complete. With this issue well on the track, Soares left London on 4th June, but before leaving he met with British Minister of Foreign Affairs David Ennals at the airport. There, Soares explained to the British how the negotiations with the PAIGC had gone, and he told them that he was very hopeful of success. Ennals also wanted to know if Soares had already made any moves with respect to Rhodesia. Soares replied that although he wanted to “align [the Portuguese] position in relation to Rhodesia as close as possible with that of the United Kingdom”, the commercial relationship with Rhodesia “was very important to Angola and Mozambique.” Soares therefore considered it necessary to act with caution, taking things “gradually” in order to “avoid problems with the local population in these territories.” Regarding the closure of the Rhodesian diplomatic mission in Lisbon, Soares said that “Spínola was studying [...] this subject but had not yet had time to reach a conclusion.”¹⁷⁰ In fact, the closure of the mission did not take place until nine months later, in February 1975.

Finally, regarding the case of Mozambique, and the future negotiations with Frelimo, the Portuguese said that they would want to hold future talks in London as well. Ennals said that “we should be happy to welcome Dr Soares and [Frelimo] to London. If Dr Soares felt it would be helpful for British Ministers to meet [Frelimo] in London, we would be glad to help.” Furthermore, Ennals asked “whether it would be helpful, if the opportunity, to have

¹⁷⁰ Record of conversation between the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Portuguese Foreign Minister in the Alcock and Brown suite, London airport, on Tuesday 4 June 1974 at 1.15 pm, UKNA, FCO 9/2073, Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal (Dr. Mário Soares) to UK 24 May.

informal contacts with [Frelimo].” Soares responded that “such contacts could only be useful.”¹⁷¹

After these intense weeks of contacts between British Labour and the Portuguese Foreign Minister, and leader of the PS Mário Soares, Labour started to implement the strategy drafted with Soares in order to strengthen the PS. This implied a different level of action at the party level. The BLP started to economically support the PS in June. The main objective was to help its material and organisational reconstruction; as we saw above, this was an essential issue for the Portuguese Socialists at that time. The Labour Party did so individually as well as through the SI, which thanks to the German efforts was incrementing its international activities since 1973. The Socialist parties that were members of the SI started to use the organisation to support the PS, not only following the principle of workers’ international solidarity, but also using the SI as a tool for carrying out a conscious foreign policy. The SI started co-ordinating the policies and the economic support of their member parties and channelling it to the PS. However, the quick evolution of the Portuguese situation would mean that the European Socialist help would soon overflow the SI, as we will see later.¹⁷²

Initially, the SI took a leading role in organising and co-ordinating the activities and the support of its member parties for the PS. It became the liaison office of the European Socialists. It was a good way for the European Social Democrat parties who had similar interests regarding Portugal to channel their joint support towards the PS, because thus they could direct it in the same direction. At the same time, the member parties that were in government at that moment could intervene in Portugal without being accused of direct intervention in Portuguese internal affairs. In May, Secretary General of the SI Hans Janitschek met with Soares in London, who had been invited by the BLP, as we have seen. Although there are no records of what was discussed between Janitschek and Soares in the historical archive of the SI, the Portuguese probably asked for every kind of support the SI could offer the PS. At least this is suggested by the fact that some days after this encounter, the International planned to hold an emergency meeting of the Portugal Committee of the

¹⁷¹ Record of conversation between the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Portuguese Foreign Minister in the Alcock and Brown suite, London airport, on Tuesday 4 June 1974 at 1.15 pm, UKNA, FCO 9/2073, Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal (Dr. Mário Soares) to UK 24 May.

¹⁷² Guillaume Devin, *L’Internationale Socialiste. Histoire et sociologie du socialisme international (1945-1990)* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1993), 185-194.

SI¹⁷³ “to discuss the giving of technical aid by member parties to Portuguese Socialist Party”.¹⁷⁴

The meeting was held in Rome on 6th June. The decision taken by the Bureau on Portugal was to give material, economic, and technical support to the PS. The member parties were asked to provide the PS with direct financial aid and the following:

20 electric duplicators, 50 manual duplicators, 20 photocopying machines, 5 scanners, 1 new set of printing machinery for the newspaper ‘Republica’, 1 off-set printing machine, 1 printing press for posters, 50 type-writers, 5 addressographs, 3 Fiat 124 or Simca 1500 cars, 5 Fiat 850 or Simca 1000 cars, 1 electronic punched-card filing system [...], [p]hotographic and cinematographic equipment, [c]upboards and filing cabinets.

Besides this demand of material support, the Bureau also asked to the member parties to provide the following:

[s]alaries of 20 senior party officers (approx. 3500 French francs monthly per person), 50 [s]alaries for second-level party workers (approx. 2000-3000 French francs monthly per person), [r]ent of 370 premises for party use (approx. 1000 French francs monthly per premise), travel expenses for party workers (total of approx. 3000 French francs monthly). The Bureau [also] decided to make a contribution out of the International’s Reserve Fund to the amount of £5000 to the Portuguese Party.

The European Socialist parties responded to this call for help and immediately offered the PS a sum of more than £32.000.¹⁷⁵

The BLP contributed towards fulfilling the requirements of this appeal, following the promise made to Soares at their first meeting at the beginning of May. The International Committee of the BLP met on 11th June 1974, and the party discussed the appeal of the Bureau of the SI to its member parties. It was agreed that a sum of money would be donated,¹⁷⁶ and that the trade unions would be asked to support these appeals.¹⁷⁷ Thus, the Labour party, as well as the Labour Government, built their strategy around the cornerstone of the PS. Considering all the

¹⁷³ The Portugal Committee of the SI was formed of the party members from Belgium, Israel, Germany, Great Britain, Italy (both, the PSI and the PSDI), Portugal and the SI.

¹⁷⁴ Telegram from Rodney Balcom to Karl Czernetz Dringen, 21/05/1974, IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974).

¹⁷⁵ Bureau decisions regarding Portugal and Chile, 08/06/1974, IISH, SI Archives, 779 (Portugal 1970-1974). Although this document has never been published, it has been already used in a doctoral thesis: Kyrtos, “The Attitudes and Policies,” 180.

¹⁷⁶ I have not been able to find a document with the exact amount of money donated by the BLP to the PS through the IS.

¹⁷⁷ Minutes of the sixth meeting of the International Committee held on 11 June 1974 at the House of Commons, BLP Historical Archive, Box 98.

support that the BLP and the other parties of the Portugal Committee gave the PS, it is possible to argue that the Western European parties used the SI to provide the material and economic support necessary to set the basic infrastructure of the party at a national level

To summarise, the relations between British Labour and the PS during the first two months of Revolution were intense and fruitful for the Portuguese Socialists. They profited from a favourable situation at the beginning of the Revolution. Firstly, this was because they were the sister party of the BLP in the SI. Secondly, in the situation that emerged after the fall of the regime, they were seen as the best option for ensuring a quiet and peaceful transition to democracy without Leftist adventurism. Thirdly, the leader of the party was Mário Soares, who had forged good relations with the BLP and enjoyed the confidence of its leaders since before the outbreak of the Revolution. These factors made the PS the object of support from British Labour. The British assistance consisted of economic, material, moral, political and technical support. The British had the conviction that supporting the PS was the right choice because the Socialists were the kind of moderate party that would be in favour of keeping Portugal in NATO, and also that they would not carry out an adventurist economic policy. Thus, this was the party that could better ensure the interests of the Labour Government and the West. This support, as we have seen, was carried out via several channels, namely the government, party, trade union, and SI. The objective of all this support was also quite well defined: to strengthen the PS as a guarantee that could minimise the potential influence of the PCP in the Revolution. In practice, the BLP wanted to help the PS to win the elections planned for 1975.

Additionally, the British had also had other interests in Portugal, such as the process of decolonisation, in which the PS only had a marginal role. Its leader Soares was central to this process, however, because he was the Portuguese Foreign Minister. The British were anxious to help the Portuguese to carry out the process without turmoil. This could give them some advantages with respect to the situation in Southern Africa. Despite the minor role of the PS in this process, the Portuguese Socialists exploited the fact that its leader was a crucial figure, thus they could profit from the political capital gained by Soares.

1.2.3. The resignation of Spínola and 'the Communist threat'

During the first months of collaboration between British Labour and the leadership of the PS, the situation in Portugal deteriorated at the political and economic level, and social unrest

increased enormously. During the first months of the revolution, long-repressed frustrations were unleashed, and the people took to the streets demanding further changes than those being carried out by the JSN, which compromised Spínola's ideas on the transition process. Between May and September, the people attained wide democratic freedom, including in the workplace, the ceasefire in Africa was achieved with the involvement of Mário Soares, and there was a revolutionary atmosphere in the major cities of Lisbon, Oporto, and Setúbal as well as in the south of the country. This situation called into question the plans of Spínola and the more conservative sectors of the Armed Forces, who tried to stop labour and social unrest by demanding greater presidential authority to declare a state of siege in July. The opposition of the Communists and the Socialists provoked the fall of the Provisional Government and the defeat of Spínola's presidential ambitions.

Spínola's reactionary tendencies made him the common enemy of the PS and the PCP from August onwards, which provided good grounds for Socialist/Communist collaboration in the government and in the streets due to the timely coincidence of interests. A truly revolutionary process was taking form autonomously, and the PS and the PCP¹⁷⁸ were being overtaken by the workers' initiatives and by the speed of the process. At the same time, while they tried to react by capitalising on and orientate the social unrest and the activities in the workplaces, they were getting general popular support. This was due to their projected image as guarantors of a revolutionary path that Spínola and his followers were trying to interrupt. In this complex situation, the MFA suffered a split between the Spínolists and a more Leftist faction that was not very well defined ideologically, which makes it very difficult to form a single picture of it. Within this Leftist faction, forces gathered around the Colonel Vasco Gonçalves that were in favour of authoritarian, bureaucratic Communism coexisted with idealistic proponents of direct and popular democracy and a moderate group more in tone with Socialist democratic ideas and nonaligned Third World Socialism.¹⁷⁹

On 18th July, the Second Provisional government was formed, in which the new Prime Minister was the pro-Communist Colonel Vasco Gonçalves, and almost all the previous ministers were maintained. In principle, the aim of this government was to strengthen the

¹⁷⁸ To understand the complex situation and the role played by the PCP in the workers unrest, see: Raquel Varela, *História do PCP na Revolução dos Cravos* (Lisboa: Bertrand Editora, 2011), 90-109. Basically she argues that, on the one hand, the PCP sought to control the workers' demands that escaped their control by channeling them through the organisations controlled by the party, such as the trade union *Intersindical* and the Labour Ministry. On the other hand, the PCP sought to smash the most radical demands of the workers that escaped to their control.

¹⁷⁹ See: Chilcote, *The Portuguese Revolution*, 117-127.

executive power of the JSN, which meant strengthening the presidential power, for dealing with the process of decolonisation and tackling the social insurgency. President Spínola was especially upset with the direction Portuguese decolonisation was taking in the hands of Soares, who had joined forces with the military that remained in Africa to put pressure on the government to transfer power to the national liberation movements. With the support of the PCP, Soares was carrying out a policy based on the ideas of the PS programme, which meant granting the right of self-determination and immediate independence to the colonies. However, he was acting in a hurry because of the pressures existing in the colonies, and because of the annoyance his strategy was causing among the most conservative sectors of the new regime. Thus, Soares was looking for the shortest possible way to grant the colonies full independence, which ruined the neo-colonialist plans of Spínola.

Following an authoritarian line, the new government—despite some concessions to the workers—tried to tackle the galloping economic crisis, protect the owners and managers of the big companies, and intervene against labour groups. These groups of workers increasingly began to organise themselves within the companies and provoked a big wave of strikes that demanded structural changes in labour relations during August and September in 1974.¹⁸⁰ The PCP and the PS tried to capitalise on the workers' discontent, which mostly was spontaneous and not controlled by any political party. This situation compromised the efficiency and coherence of the government, and contributed to the political polarisation. The direct result was the resignation of Spínola at the end of September, and increasing Communist control of the Revolution from October onwards.

The colonial problem, however, was the trigger of the events that led to the resignation of Spínola on 30th September. The views of General Spínola and parts of the MFA were in conflict with the views of the PS, the PCP, and the majority of the lower ranks of the army. This became evident after the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau. At the end of July, the initiative of Mário Soares and the pressures of the Portuguese armed forces located in Guinea hastened the Portuguese compromise with the PAIGC to recognise the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, and to give independence to the island of Cabo Verde. This compromise, according to Soares, could have been finished in London in May, but Spínola's intransigency had caused a delay.¹⁸¹ It led to the immediate decolonisation of Guinea Bissau; the Portuguese officially

¹⁸⁰ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-revolution*; Medeiros Ferreira, *Portugal em transe*.

¹⁸¹ Medeiros Ferreira, *Portugal em transe*, 60.

signed the independence of the colony on 26th August.¹⁸² The manner and the speed of the decolonisation irritated Spínola and the sections of the army that had imagined the different solution of neo-colonisation through federation for the colonial problem. These plans were frustrated by the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau, but they were completely ruined when between August and September, the Portuguese, led by Melo Antunes and Mário Soares, signed the recognition of the independence of Mozambique with Frelimo. A period of transition and transfer of power that took nine months was planned. Thus, Mozambique officially obtained its independence in June 1975.¹⁸³

In this context, the president announced on 10th September that he would take the negotiations for Angola's independence into his own hands. According to the British Embassy in Lisbon, "It has been believed for some while that Spínola has been disconcerted by the manner with which Mário Soares and some of his Government colleagues have been forcing the pace over Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. [...] Many people here—and indications are that Spínola is among them—feel that Soares & Co. would have looked for short-cuts in dealing with Angola." This situation created extra tension within the Portuguese government. In practice, it caused the reappearance of the Right-wing forces behind Spínola. The conservative supporters of the President, the big Portuguese banking families and the greater landowners, organised a rally of support for Spínola on 28th September to demonstrate in favour of the President and his political line, which appealed to the 'silent majority' of Portuguese people. This movement of the Right was seen by most of the media and by the Portuguese Left as a cover for reactionary activity, more in line with the former regime's aims than with those of Spínola.

On the night of the 27th September, elements of the Leftist Portuguese forces, who included extreme left-wing militants, Socialists, but above all Communists, set up barricades on the main roads into Lisbon. They sought to prevent the entry of large numbers of Spínola's supporters who wanted to attend the demonstration. In the morning of 28th September, Spínola ordered the removal of the barricades, and took precautions in case a civil

¹⁸² See: João Paulo Guerra, *Descolonização Portuguesa: O Regresso das Carabelas* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1996); Josep Sánchez Cervelló, "El último imperio occidental: la descolonización portuguesa (1974-1975)," *Cuadernos de Estudios Luso-Espanoles*, 2 (Mérida: UNED, 1998). Also: Paul Christopher Manuel, *Uncertain Outcome: The politics of the Portuguese Transition to Democracy* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994).

¹⁸³ For the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, see: Schneidam, *Engaging Africa*; António Costa Pinto, *O Fim do Império Português* (Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 2001); Sánchez Cervelló, "El último imperio occidental"; Keneth Maxwell, "As colónias portuguesas e a sua descolonização," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 15-16-17 (May 1985): 529-547.

confrontation could take place. In this strained situation, he decided in the afternoon to cancel the ‘silent majority’ rally, in order to avoid what could have been a civil confrontation. This was considered a victory of the Left, but the street celebrations demonstrated that, above all, it had been a Communist success.¹⁸⁴

The British embassy in Lisbon considered that the events following the cancellation of the silent majority’s demonstration was “used by the extreme left parties and the left wing of the Armed Forces Movement as an excuse for a pre-emptive strike against the right. The nature and the scale of the Communist Party demonstration in the afternoon of 28 September suggest a degree of prior organisation.” From this moment onwards, the control of the Communists over the situation would increase substantially, and with it the British concern regarding the Communist drift of the Revolution. The PS informed the British that from now on “there will also be purges in the Junta of National Salvation, where the more Right wing elements may be forced to resign.”¹⁸⁵ These predictions were right, and on 30th September, General Spínola resigned. In his speech of resignation, he said that his main reasons for resigning were that the principles of the MFA were being betrayed, the laws were not being obeyed, and the country lived an atmosphere of anarchy. Special mention was made of the process of decolonisation, which “was not being conducted in accordance with the original principles outlined in the programme of the MFA.”¹⁸⁶ Together with Spínola, several members of the cabinet and the JSN who followed the same political line as the resigned General were dismissed.

In this episode, the PS took the side of the PCP because the Revolution was acquiring an authoritarian tone under the Presidency of Spínola that made them fear that it was at risk. However, despite the collaboration between the PS and the PCP in the events of 28th September, from this moment onwards, the relations between Socialists and Communists became embittered. From October onwards, the PCP, in alliance with Gonçalves’ faction of the MFA, took control of most of the media and the national trade union, and increased its influence over the State apparatus. Until this moment, the PCP had taken a cautious stance in the revolutionary process, but now they started to gradually and ambiguously implement a strategy in which they were the vanguard of the revolution in alliance with some sectors of the MFA, which should be the institutional and military protector of the revolution from the

¹⁸⁴ See: Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*.

¹⁸⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Lisbon to the Foreign Office, 29/09/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2059, Change of Government in Portugal: October 1974

¹⁸⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Lisbon to the Foreign Office, 30/09/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2059, Change of Government in Portugal: October 1974.

reactionary forces.¹⁸⁷ This strategy would be implemented with more intensity after March 1975. However, immediately after Spínola's resignation, the JSN appointed General Costa Gomes as the new President, and he appointed Vasco Gonçalves as Prime Minister again. Gonçalves formed the Third Provisional Government with Leftist members of the MFA and members of the PS (Mário Soares was kept as Foreign Minister), the PCP, and the Social Democrat PPD. Despite the inclusion of Socialists and Social Democrats in the government, the turning of the scales in favour of the Communists was important. This was especially so because Prime Minister Gonçalves included people close to the PCP among the eight MFA ministers.

These events, as I mentioned above, aroused British concern about the increasing Communist takeover. This feeling was shared by all the governments of Western Europe, and especially by the US. However, the European governments kept relatively calm, at least compared to the US. According to the Americans, Portugal was practically lost to the Communists. This was a dangerous precedent because Portugal was a NATO member, and the US thought that something had to be done in order to teach the Portuguese a lesson. Thus, the US asked NATO's Secretary General to exclude Portugal from the Nuclear Planning Group. This was a gesture of intransigence that was not only directed at Portugal; the US also wanted to send an indirect message to Italy, where the Communists were the second electoral force, and had proposed a *compromesso storico* to the Christian Democrats to govern in coalition to save Italy from authoritarian menaces. The American message was clear: they would take a Communist presence in the government of any NATO member very seriously.¹⁸⁸

The Social Democratic governments of the FRG and the UK were critical of this American action. They thought that the US had overreacted, and that Portuguese exclusion would be counter-productive, in the sense that it could radicalise anti-NATO feelings in the Portuguese government and the army, as well as in the Portuguese public opinion. However, although the Europeans did not share American methods, they were equally concerned by the situation in Portugal. The British interpretation of the events in Portugal gives a clear idea of the extent that Communist behaviour made them fear that Portuguese democratisation was at risk. In the report that British Ambassador in Lisbon Nigel Trench wrote to inform London about the

¹⁸⁷ On the nuances of the Communist strategy and its role in the Revolution see: Varela, *Historia do Partido Comunista Português*; Raquel Varela, "O PCP quis «tomar o poder?»" in *Revolução ou Transição? História e Memória da Revolução dos Cravos*, ed. Raquel Varela (Lisboa: Bertrand, 2012), 139-160.

¹⁸⁸ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 134-135.; Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos*, 88-94.

resignation of Spínola, he said: “unhappily, I cannot feel that what has been a victory for the Left is also a victory for the civil liberty and democracy in Portugal”. In fact, according to Trench, this whole episode said a lot about the Portuguese Communists. There was “as much evidence of Communist plotting, manipulation and resort to unconstitutional means as there has been evidence of this by the Right.” The image perceived during the last days in Lisbon “[were] not a reassuring one for those who value democracy in Portugal.”¹⁸⁹ Besides, the Leftist takeover deepened a problem that was very serious for Portugal—the economic crisis. After the Communists increased their control of the situation, foreign investors escaped from Portugal, which was a further concern for the British because of the unpredictable consequences “anti-monopolist government economic policies” could have within a short to medium range of time. “The outcome [of the recent Right-Left struggle] is alarming,”¹⁹⁰ concluded Trench.

The British wanted to have first-hand information about these events, and on 2nd October, Soares had the opportunity to personally explain the situation to the British Ambassador in Lisbon. The leader of the PS was anxious about it because he “feared that the recent developments in Portugal might have alarmed Western governments.” When he met the British Ambassador, the first thing he said was that “Portugal would remain faithful to existing international obligations and alliances.” But with the Communists taking key positions in the government and within the Armed Forces, Soares’ words were questionable. He probably needed to justify the fact that his party had taken part in the past actions against Spínola on the side of the PCP, and he tried to minimise the outcome of this whole episode. But he surely was afraid of the reaction of the Western powers to this situation, because he did not want to see what had happened in Chile repeated in Portugal. The British noticed this, and wondered “how such intractable problems as decolonisation of Angola will be made any more soluble by the withdrawal of the one man—Spínola—who seemed to enjoy [...] confidence from the white settlers. [...] So far as NATO is concerned, one is forced to wonder how long the Communist Party [...] will continue to acquiesce in Portuguese membership.

¹⁸⁹ Report from Nigel Trench, “The fall of Spínola”, 02/10/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2059, Change of Government in Portugal: October 1974.

¹⁹⁰ Report from D C Thomas to Mr Morgan and Sir John Killick, 09/10/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2059, Change of Government in Portugal: October 1974.

And one can only see with apprehension the interaction of events in Portugal and in Spain after the death of Franco.”¹⁹¹

The British analysis shows the global implications that the evolution of the situation in Portugal entailed. On the one hand, they obviously linked the internal Portuguese situation to the future solution of the colonial problem, which after the independence of Guinea Bissau and the agreement for the independence of Mozambique, meant facing the case of Angola. This was problematic, because there was a large white population in Angola who could not accept black rule. This caused worry in Great Britain as together with Mozambique, Angola was the most relevant place for the interests of the UK in Southern Africa. Moreover, the future of a Communist Portugal in NATO was called into question. This was an additional source of concern for the NATO member countries, on top of the fact that war between Greece and Turkey, both NATO members, was unleashed in Cyprus in July. Due to the geographical position of all these countries, these issues together put the stability of the Alliance in the Mediterranean at risk. Furthermore, the Regime of the Colonels in Greece collapsed due to the conflict with Turkey over Cyprus, opening a new focus of political instability in the Mediterranean just when the Communists were increasing their grasp over Portugal and in Spain Franco was very old and sick. The fact that Franco was close to death made it quite clear that Spain would pass through a transition to a new kind of regime very soon, and the contagion effect that the Portuguese situation could have over the Spanish neighbours was frightening for the British. The conflicted history of Spain, especially the Civil War that brought Franco to power, implied the risk that if the Communists reached power in Spain, the country could easily dissolve into turmoil.

The result of this event in Portugal was that the Left strengthened its position in the government and the army, and even in the streets. From this moment onwards, the political struggle changed from the Left vs Right axis to a new axis situated in the Left, where the main contenders were the PS and the PCP because of the temporary disappearance (at least until the first months of 1975) of the Right. This new axis of Portuguese politics meant that the PS would become the main alternative for restraining the PCP, which according to the most common historical interpretations, pushed the PS to become the national leader in the fight for the democratic-parliamentary model in Portugal.¹⁹² In this process, however, it was

¹⁹¹ Report from Nigel Trench, “The fall of Spínola”, 02/10/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2059, Change of Government in Portugal: October 1974.

¹⁹² Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 68; Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*;

also important that the support of the European Social Democracy was directed towards strengthening the PS in that position, as we will see.

The trigger for the disagreement between the PS and the PCP was an article written by Mário Mesquita and António Reis in the Socialist-owned newspaper *República* in October. They wrote on behalf of the Political Commission of the PS and criticised the strategy of the PCP regarding future elections. The Communists were accused of using the former unitary anti-Fascist platform *Movimento Democrático Português / Comissões Democráticas Eleitorais* (MDP/CDE) as a second organisation under their control. They wanted to present it at the elections, and the Socialists accused them of trying to covertly create a duplicate of the PCP in order to get more electoral support. The reaction of the leader of the PCP Alvaro Cunhal was to accuse the Socialists of anti-Communism and of trying to divide the Left.¹⁹³ Thus the relations between Socialist and Communists started to deteriorate. Until that moment, they had been cordial and sometimes co-operative, as we have seen above, because the interests of both parties coincided. Indeed, the Socialists had proposed greater collaboration with the Communists several times. They had even proposed signing a common programme with them before the outbreak of the Revolution, following the strategy of the Left in France, as we will see in the next section of this chapter. However, from October onwards, their relations deteriorated and would worsen in 1975.

On 12th and 13th October, the Executive Committee of the PS met with the aim of preparing a programme in order to face the immediate political and economic problems that Portugal encountered after the fall of Spínola. It was also meant to be the basis for the programme that they would present to the party Congress that had to be held in December. The document issued was called “a democratic and original road to Socialism.” It shows how difficult it was for the PS in that context to find an equilibrium between commitment to Socialism and the Portuguese workers on the one hand, and commitment to the West and a moderate process of democratisation on the other. All in all, it was a rather ambiguous and sometimes incoherent programme.

The document reaffirmed the PS commitment to pluralistic democracy, economic anti-monopolistic strategy, and an independent international policy. The document said that democracy should be consolidated and “oriented towards the concrete interests of the working

¹⁹³ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 69-70.

class.” The economic strategy required a “decisive State intervention”, but it made some concessions to the private initiative: “the State should be the main agent in that policy, but the private sector must be given guarantees to participate.” Regarding the international policy, the document stated that the Portuguese road to Socialism required a “progressive disengagement from political and military blocs [...] while respecting international engagements according to the programme of the [MFA],” which means NATO. The document recognised, however, that “this via must account for the limitations deriving from the present situation in our country.” Regarding Africa, a new relation of co-operation with the Portuguese ex-colonies was envisaged. The PS used Soares’ involvement in the process of decolonization decolonisation that was taking place and proclaimed that it was a success of the party. They said that “the [PS] considers that the activity developed [...] by the Provisional Government is highly positive, especially the process of decolonisation to which the name of our general secretary is closely connected. The friendly relations between the [PS] and the African liberation movements [...] have served the national interest and contributed towards solving the problems which, otherwise, would practically be unsolved.”

These were the bases for the programme that aimed to tackle the most urgent Portuguese problems, while putting the country on its road to Socialism. This Portuguese road, the PS claimed, was unique, because the specific conditions of the country—its economic and political underdevelopment—“invalidate the import of foreign political models.” This meant that the PS rejected the Western European Social Democrat and the Eastern European models of Socialism for Portugal. However, it could have another reading, which is that the PS no longer considered the model of the French Socialist Party for achieving Socialism in France or the Chilean model suitable for Portugal. This would imply that the prospect of the union of the Left between Communists and Socialists was rejected by the PS, a characteristic of PS programme imported from the PSF that was a big concern for the European Social Democrat parties—especially the SPD—as we will see below. The confirmation of this change of model is that the PS concluded the document saying that “the [PS], zealous of its autonomy, is naturally in solidarity with all the forces of the Left struggling for democracy although it reaffirms its independence and does not maintain privileged bilateral relations with any party.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ A Democratic and Original Road to Socialism, October 1974, IISH, Socialist International Archives, 780, (Portugal 1975-1976).

As we can see, the programme was quite ambiguous, and kept a precarious equilibrium between a Leftist anti-Capitalist, neutralist-Third Worldist, democratic line for moving towards Socialism, some concessions to private initiative in the economic realm, and the Atlantic commitments of Portugal in the international scene. What is a change from the previous programme of the PS, and from the political behaviour of the PS before around September, is that the model of the union of the Left that had been praised in the programme of the party was now being avoided. Thus, since the failure of the ‘silent majority’ demonstration, the Communist seizure of relevant positions that controlled the media and the State apparatus provoked the cancellation of the policy of union of the Left. It is hard to say the connection that this decision could have with the fact that a Socialist-Communist collaboration was not desired in the West, especially in the US, the UK, and the FRG. However, as we have seen above, the relations between the British and the Portuguese Socialists were based on the prevention of a Communist takeover in Portugal. Thus, it is plausible that together with the internal development of the Revolution, the external dimension where British Labour were prominent, influenced the subtle changes in the programme of the PS. This is emphasised by the fact that the changes occurred in the three fields of policy that could be more uncomfortable for the West: international policy (respect for existing Atlantic commitments now coexisted with neutralism), economic policy (a kind of mixed economy with “decisive State intervention” and respect for the private initiative was proposed), and the above-mentioned strategy of alliances.

Eight days later, on 20th October, the celebration of the PCP’s congress took place. The Communists held its seventh Congress (extraordinary) in Lisbon, the first one held in Portugal after 48 years of dictatorship. The Congress was called with the intention of discussing and modifying the programme and the statutes of the party in light of the new situation in Portugal. There, a short-term party programme for dealing with the immediate problems of Portugal was proposed. It was a rather moderate programme. It was based on the defence of liberty and the democratic state, the defence of economic and financial stability (although within the framework of a profound economic and social reform), and continuing the decolonisation process. The programme was realistic, and drafted with a view to allaying fears about Communist intentions;¹⁹⁵ for instance, although any mention of the ‘dictatorship

¹⁹⁵ In fact, Alvaro Cunhal stated in an interview with *France nouvelle* that the rejection of the term ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ was merely tactical, because in Portugal the concept ‘dictatorship’ had very negative connotations. See: *France Nouvelle*, November 5, 1974 and Alex Macleod, *La révolution inopportune. Les*

of the proletariat' was dropped, it still could be attractive for the working class and some efforts were made to attract the peasants and the traditionally anti-Communist small landowners. Finally, a strategy of alliance with the Armed Forces that would serve to advance, consolidate and defend the achievements of the Revolution was outlined. Reinforcing the relations between the PCP and the PS was also suggested.¹⁹⁶

Despite all of the moderation displayed, the PCP's Congress provoked reactions in the British government, who mistrusted the Portuguese Communists. In a report that the British embassy in Lisbon sent to the Foreign Office in London, they emphasised some parts of Cunhal's speech that could raise doubts about the PCP's commitment to the forthcoming elections. They highlighted the fact that Cunhal had said: "if the electoral law established principles and norms which could result in one way or another in false reading of the popular will, the result will not be that indisputable suffrage which everybody feels obliged to respect."¹⁹⁷ However, the British tried not to show their mistrust and their concerns about the Communists in public. In fact, they were interested in giving the image that they had supported the inclusion of the PCP in the first Provisional Government from the beginning of the Revolution, which was not completely true.

In December, Mário Soares was interviewed in the *Times*. He was asked about the fears that some countries had about the presence of Communists in the Portuguese Government, and he responded that at the beginning of the Revolution, he had had the agreement of Wilson and Brandt to include the PCP in the government. According to Soares, they had thought that "it was a good thing [...] to count on communist participation in the provisional government with a view to consolidating the democratic process." The situation should not be alarming because "whether the Communists remain in the Government depends on the results of the election." When the interview was published, the British government was surprised because Wilson had not said anything like this in his first meeting with Soares, or at least there was no record of it. Notwithstanding this fact, the British thought that Soares' statements should not be refuted because "it makes harder for the Portuguese communists to argue convincingly that

partis communistes français et italien face à la Révolution portugaise (1973-1975) (Québec : Nouvelle Optique, 1984), 144.

¹⁹⁶ Álvaro Cunhal, Intervenção Abertura do VII Congresso (extraordinarion do Partido Comunista Português. It can be consulted in: http://www.dorl.pcp.pt/images/classicos/cunhal/acunhal_viicongaber.pdf

¹⁹⁷ Report from the British Embassy in Lisbon to the South West European Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) Congress", 22/10/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2060, Communist Party in Portugal.

we want to see them removed from power and [we] are therefore interfering in Portuguese internal affairs (thus perhaps justifying Soviet and Eastern European Support for the PCP).”¹⁹⁸

The concerns of the British Labour Government held regarding the Communists in Portugal, however, still existed. On 25th October, there was a meeting of the Permanent Under Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs (PUS), in which the Portuguese situation was discussed. In the preparatory report that was the basis for the discussion, the British envisaged “in simplistic terms”, the following possible scenarios for development in Portugal:

- (i) A Communist takeover, possibly through control of the Armed Forces Movement or through the election of a popular front government.
- (ii) A left-wing (but not overtly Communist) military dictatorship with some trappings of parliamentary democracy.
- (iii) A democratic government of the centre-Left, with the Armed Forces in the wings.
- (iv) A right-wing counter-coup probably leading to
- (v) a civil war [...] ¹⁹⁹

Although the British acknowledged that these scenarios were just hypotheses, they considered that “something along the lines (ii) or (iii) above” would be the most likely outcome. The uncertainty made the British feel concerned and insecure about Portugal. They kept looking at every possibility that remained open in Portugal, as can be seen in their analysis of the implications of the Portuguese Revolution for the policy of the UK.

HMG’s basic interests are:

- (i) Positively, to encourage the development of healthy democratic institutions in a Portugal firmly aligned with the West, and
- (ii) Negatively, to prevent Portugal falling within the Soviet sphere of influence.

The outlook is not encouraging [...] but it would be wrong and counter productive to regard Portugal as a lost cause.

¹⁹⁸ Western views on Communists in the Portuguese Government, 04/12/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2060, Communist Party in Portugal.

¹⁹⁹ Minutes from Mr D.C. Thomas to Sir J. Killick, UKNA, FCO 24 October 1974. Document published in: Hamilton and Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, 376-382. (The citations without a specific reference in the two pages that follow correspond to this document.)

The British thought that the best strategy was to keep a positive stance towards the Portuguese government, and to offer them assistance and cooperation. By doing so, they aimed at “increasing our ability to influence their actions.” They were aware of the influential position they held vis-à-vis Portugal, “the old alliance [...] and a Labour government”, and they tried to exploit this position “to the full.”

Regarding concrete measures to implement, the British considered that they had to try to influence the MFA by establishing contacts and cooperation between the British and the Portuguese military. They also wanted to influence the Portuguese foreign policy: “we have already demonstrated our willingness to assist the Portuguese in the process of decolonisation”, and they thought that the best way to “educate” the Portuguese, who were considered naïve in their views of the international relations; Mário Soares was included in this assessment. Another means of influencing the Portuguese events was through political parties.

Regarding this point, the British decided as follows: “without appearing to dabble in domestic Portuguese party politics, we should do all we can to strengthen the moderate and democratic parties in Portugal.” The Conservative party had already established relations with the centre-right CDS, and “offers to help from the Labour Party to the Portuguese Socialist Party have been made at a high level, but to the best of my knowledge have not been followed up seriously on either side.” In the light of this assessment, the bilateral relations between parties were bridged, and the report proposed to sponsor visits by the leaders of the PS, PPD and the CDS to the UK, with the aim of “[...] giving them access to party political organisational expertise and increasing their international status.”²⁰⁰

This concern was not only evident at the governmental level, but also at the party level; there was deep concern about the radicalisation of the situation. This was not so much because of anti-Communist feelings, or because of international concerns of the kind held in the Government. The concern at the grassroots level seemed to come from the fear that the situation in Portugal could lead to a situation like the one in Chile a year before. Thus, at the party level, the BLP became involved in a new campaign of solidarity with the PS, which had the objective of strengthening it in the face of the next elections. In November, the PS made a

²⁰⁰ Minutes from Mr D.C. Thomas to Sir J. Killick, UKNA, FCO 24 October 1974. Document published in: Hamilton and Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, 376-382.

further plea for financial and material assistance to the SI. The BLP decided again to give economic support to Portuguese party at the ninth meeting of the international committee.

However, the lower ranks of the party were concerned about the possibility that the Leftist drift of the Revolution could provoke a counter-revolutionary coup. On 15th November, the Secretary/Organiser of the Youth section of the Labour Party, Ian McCartney, wrote a letter to Ron Hayward, General Secretary of the Labour Party, in which he made comparisons between the Portuguese and the Chilean situations. McCartney argued that “[i]t is this experience that makes me ever vigilant in my support for our comrades in Portugal. We must ensure that no counter revolution takes place or succeeds, by uniting behind our Portuguese comrades in a practical manner. This means [...] on a long term basis political & trade union educational facilities in this country must be made available in some way to aid the Portuguese Labour & Trade Union Movement.” McCartney went on to say that “I suspect your programme will not be purely on the basis of a fraternal delegate but will include discussions relating to the future co-operation between ourselves and our comrades in Portugal.”²⁰¹ Finally, McCartney’s letter to Hayward proposes help from his Youth Section branch “to organise a visit this summer to the South East [of England] of two younger members of our Portuguese Socialist Party’s Youth Organisation.”²⁰²

In his answer to this letter, Hayward summarised the kind of relationship and co-operation that the BLP was maintaining with the PS, and the decision of the Labour leadership to help the Portuguese to construct their organisation. As he put it, “[t]hrough the Socialist International, we have had long-standing and close links with Mário Soares and his colleagues in the Portuguese Socialist Party and it is our intention to assist them financially in building a strong Socialist Party in Portugal. Also, the Executive is anxious that we should demonstrate our solidarity with our Portuguese comrades, especially in these early and difficult days for them, and this is why it was decided to send a delegation to their Conference in Lisbon.”²⁰³ Regarding the issue of the visit of two young members of the PS to England in

²⁰¹ Letter from Ian McCartney to Harold Wilson, 15/11/1974, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

²⁰² Letter from Ian McCartney to Ron Hayward, 15/11/1974, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

²⁰³ Letter from Ron Hayward to Ian McCartney, 18/11/1974, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

summer, it was considered a very good idea. In fact, it was carried out in the summer of 1975, when two young militants of the PS spent two weeks in England paid for by the BLP.²⁰⁴

1.3. The PS, the PSF and the outbreak of the Revolution

In this section I will trace the ideological affinities between the PS and the PSF from the creation of the Portuguese party until the beginning of the Carnation Revolution. From 25th April 1974 until the end of the year, I will look at the relations between both parties, which will allow me to analyse the depth and the nature of this collaboration during the early phases of the Carnation Revolution. This period is from 25th April 1974 to 28th September, and from that moment on until the end of the year, when the PS held its first legal Congress in Portugal.

My argument in this section is that while the British exerted a moderate and subtle political influence on the PS that pushed it towards a centred and moderate stance in the first months of the Portuguese Revolution, the PSF exerted a more Leftist and radical ideological influence, as they served as the theoretical point of reference for the PS. British Labour, as we have seen above, used governmental and party channels, as well as the SI, to keep relations with the PS, and almost all the relevant contacts happened through Mário Soares. The French Socialists, in turn, did not have the chance to use governmental channels because they were in the opposition in France. Therefore, all their contacts with the PS were carried out from party to party.

1.3.1. The ideological affinity between the PS and the PSF after the creation of the Portuguese Party

Out of all the European Socialist parties of the SI, it was the PSF who had the closest relations with the PS before the Carnation Revolution. Mário Soares lived in France from 1970 to 1974, and he and other Portuguese Socialists²⁰⁵ frequented the headquarters of the PSF during those years, being present at the Congresses where the French party was renovated.²⁰⁶ Thus, Soares became familiar with the theoretical discussions of the French Socialists and how they

²⁰⁴ Letter from Ron Hayward to Ian McCartney, 15/01/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

²⁰⁵ Such as the exiled Francisco Ramos da Costa.

²⁰⁶ Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*.

worked. This rendered the PSF the main international ally of the Portuguese Socialist Party, as well as its ideological point of reference before the outbreak of the Revolution; this became evident several times during 1973 and in the first half of 1974 through the public statements of the leaders of the PS. The PSF offered an attractive model to the PS, because since the beginning of the 1970s, the political and economic situation in Portugal pushed the opposition towards the Left, which left the Liberal, Republican and Social Democrat models discredited. Thus the PS modelled itself on the PSF at the moment of its creation.

The most significant proof of this is the fact that the historical archive of the PS contains the schemes and manuscripts that Mário Soares used to write the Programme of the PS in 1973, and they show that he based his work on the 1972 programme of the PSF, *Changer la vie*, and on the Common Programme of the French Left, also from 1972.²⁰⁷ The same file of the PS archive shows that there were two more programmes used and synthesised by Mário Soares; one is programme the Portuguese Communist Party from 1965, and the other is the Manifesto of the French Radical Party. The fact that Soares used all these programmes as a model or inspiration for writing the PS programme gives a clear idea of what he could have had in mind. They strongly suggest that he was preparing a programme for the PS that would be suitable for a future union of the Left with the Portuguese Communists. Clearly, the model and inspiration was the French union of the Left. Through this union, Soares probably wanted to rebalance the equilibrium of forces in the Portuguese Left, as the French Socialists were trying to do in France.²⁰⁸

The ultimate result of Soares' analysis and use of all these texts was the PS programme, which was mentioned in the first section of this chapter. I will briefly sketch its main characteristics here, in order to establish the more substantial links between this programme and the programmes of the French Left, specifically the PSF. First of all, it draws attention to the fact that the initial report presented by Mário Soares in the programme of the PS was called *Construir uma nova vida, destruir o sistema*. The title of the programme of the PSF in 1972 was *Changer la vie*, which means approximately the same.²⁰⁹ This suggests that Soares

²⁰⁷ Esquemas de programas políticos, manuscrito de Mário Soares, 1973, CD-ROM Fontes para a Historia do Partido Socialista, Partido Socialista and Fundação Mário Soares.

²⁰⁸ Soares wrote an extensive article on the Congress of Epinay in which he showed his admiration for the renovation of the French Socialism and for their attempt to rebalance the equilibrium of forces in the Left by negotiating from equal to equal with the PCF. See: Mário Soares, "Congresso da Unidade", 15/06/1971, Arquivo Mário Soares, Fundação Mario Soares, (1971), "O Congresso da Unidade", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: <http://www.casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=00034.002.003> (2015-10-15)

²⁰⁹ The Portuguese title can be translated as 'to construct a new life [...] and the French 'to change life'.

found the inspiration for the name of the PS programme from the French document, appropriating and adapting a motto used by the PSF that had emerged in France around 1968 to the Portuguese circumstances. In terms of ideological bases, the PS recognised Marxism as its inspiration, although it was “a theoretical inspiration permanently reconsidered as a guide to action in a non-dogmatic way.” It also found inspiration “in the progressive Christians that looked for Socialism.”²¹⁰ If we compare this statement to the PSF programme, the ideological inspiration that led the theoretical creation of both parties was the same. The PSF stated in its 1972 programme *Changer la vie*: “without obeying any dogma [...] the main theoretical contribution that inspires [the PSF] is Marxism. However, we should not forget the [...] original contribution of the Christians engaged in the combat for Socialism.”²¹¹

Moreover, despite the different immediate objectives of the PS and the PSF—the Portuguese aimed to overthrow the Portuguese dictatorship and the French to reach power through electoral means—the PS proposed to reach its objective through a union of all the forces of the opposition in a way that resembled the kind of union of the left praised by the French. The PS called “for the union of all anti-fascist forces, proposing to all the forces of the Left the creation of a common programme.” This was the Portuguese adaptation of the French Union of the Left to their own environment, which in 1973 was that of an outlawed party in a country ruled by a dictatorial pseudo-Fascist regime. It should be noted that the PS did not only claim all of the forces in the opposition for the union, it also called for the union of the forces of the Left—which at that time in Portugal meant the PCP—and the fact that they proposed to create a common programme it should also be noted. The mention of the common programme shows that the PS proposed a strategy to deal with the Communists that was identical to the one followed by the PSF.

This coincidence indicates the ideological influence the PSF had over the PS, since the common programme with the Communists was not the most obvious or usual way for Socialist parties to deal with Communist parties, especially after the end of the World War II. Even in the PSF, this formula was not adopted without discussion. At the Epinay Congress of 1971, there was an intense debate on how to deal with the French Communists. The final aim of this debate was twofold: on the one hand to understand what was the best way to compete

²¹⁰ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, edições Textos Portugal Socialista (Itália), SET.1973. Documento do Arquivo Histórico do Partido Socialista (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 4385,002, im. 2).

²¹¹ “Le Parti socialiste, en publiant son programme de gouvernement s’adresse a l’immense majorité des Français”, *Changer la vie: Programme de gouvernement du Parti socialiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).

with the Communists, and on the other hand to establish a strategy for the Left to reach power in France.²¹² There were several different versions among the French Socialists on how to compete with the French Communist Party (PCF), which at that time was electorally and organisationally stronger than the PSF. The more successful one was proposed by the most Leftist faction of the party CERES, and consisted of signing a Common Programme and establishing united action with the PCF. Other ways of relating to the Communists were also considered that at that point were not chosen. These options ranged from establishing common action with the PCF in the parliament and at the local level to the suspension of talks with them until there were guarantees from the Communists on crucial points such as respect for human rights, Europe, freedom from Moscow control, and political alternation.²¹³ This shows that agreeing to a common programme was not the only alternative to relating to the Communists.

Even if the PS did not have the experience of long theoretical discussion on the topic that the PSF did, nor the experience of being a popular front before, which the French were in the 1930s, they went with the formula chosen by the PSF in 1971. This coincidence suggests that the French way of dealing with the Communists was entirely adopted by the PS at the moment of its creation. The logic behind the adoption of this strategy was approximately the same for the French and Portuguese. The French Socialists wanted to neutralise the power of the Communists, and they thought that the best way to do this was to join them at the programmatic level.²¹⁴ Besides, it was expected that this union would facilitate the electoral victory of the Left in France. This logic can also be applied, although in a different context, to the Portuguese case. The PS also wanted to compete with the Communists, who were the strongest organisation of the Portuguese opposition. Soares thought that the best way to deal with the PCP was to be allied with them, because it could benefit the enlargement of the PS, especially among the working class. This was especially important because, as I pointed out above, in 1973 the PS was a small party composed of middle-class people and intellectuals without links to the working class. Through the union with the PCP, which had a strong links with the workers, the Socialists hoped to co-opt not only part of the Communist grassroots

²¹² See: Bell and Criddle, *The French Socialist Party*; Bernard E. Brown, "The Common Programme in France", in *Eurocommunism and Eurosocialism. The Left Confront Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York and London: Cyrco Press, 1979), 14-66.; John Gaffney, *The French Left and the Fifth Republic. The Discourses of Communism and Socialism in Contemporary France* (Houndmills and London: MacMillan Press, 1989).

²¹³ Bell and Criddle, *The French Socialist Party*, 61-83.

²¹⁴ Brown, "The Common Programme in France."

support, but intellectual support as well.²¹⁵ The other objective of the union of the Left in Portugal was also comparable to the aim of the PSF. If the French Socialists saw this strategy as an opportunity for the Left to win the elections in France, the PS saw it as the best way to fight for the fall of the Portuguese regime.

Finally, another crucial coincidence between the programmes of the PS and the PSF was the inclusion of the concept of *autogestão* (self-management) in both of them. The notion of *autogestion* was the essence of a distinctively French model of Socialism that was first proposed by the *Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail* (CFDT) and the *Parti Socialiste Unifié* (PSU), and later adopted by the PSF in 1972. At the beginning, the PSF adopted it timidly, since the party did not want to jeopardise the recently achieved union of the Left by emphasising a concept that was against the Communist conception of Socialism. After 1974, however, it became the cornerstone of the Socialist ideology.

This concept is quite complex to define, because in the early 1970s it had several different and sometimes contradictory meanings.²¹⁶ It appeared in France in the mid-1960s to describe the Communist decentralised economy of Yugoslavia. However, it was in 1968 that the concept became popular, since it was generally understood as the answer to the anti-hierarchy vindications of that year. The most common understanding of this concept in the post-May 1968 France was “a revolt against the abuses of hierarchy, an aspiration to power at the lowest possible level: the plant, the street, the consumer’s associations, the university, or the classroom.”²¹⁷ With this vague but powerful meaning, this concept became the basis for the idea of socialism for the PSF.

In the discourse of the PSF, *autogestion* became the strategy for advancing towards Socialism, as well as its ultimate goal. It became the solution for transforming the capitalist relations of production, or proposing workers’ control of companies and self-management at every level of society, while at the same time it offered an attractive alternative to State property as understood in the Communist countries. However, beyond the meaning given to this concept in the discourse of the PSF, the adoption of *autogestion* was a symbolic way of unifying all of the French Socialist tendencies into a renovated organisation built around a

²¹⁵ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução.”

²¹⁶ On the several meanings of the concept *autogestion* see: Pierre Rosanvallon, *L’âge de l’autogestion* (Paris: Seuil, 1976).

²¹⁷ Jean-Pierre Cot, “Autogestion and Modernity in France”, in *Eurocommunism & Eurosocialism. The Left Confronts Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York and London: Cyrco Press, 1979), 70.

new idea of Socialism. The adoption of this concept marked a Socialists a new area of agreement, and “the creation of an essentially new kind of socialism capable of inspiring an essentially new kind of person.”²¹⁸

The same concept, *autogestão*, was adopted by the PS in 1973. In Portugal, this concept was previously known as *basismo*,²¹⁹ and it was connected very easily to the traditions of the first Portuguese Socialism.²²⁰ Mário Soares was mainly responsible for introducing the new concept into the language of the PS, and he was its main theorist. He borrowed it from the French Socialists during the period of exile in France, where he participated in the intense debate going on around this concept; he was even invited to deliver a speech on *autogestion* in a colloquium organised by the CFDT, where the PSF and the PSU were also invited in February 1974.²²¹

At the beginning of the 1970s, Soares saw the potential of the concept *autogestão*, although he believed that workers’ self-management could only work under specific conditions. His basic view on the issue was the following:

I am for *basismo*, I mean: I am in favour of the permanent control of the ones elected by the assemblies and [in favour] of the wide participation of the people in the [political] decision-making process [...]. However, I consider a danger for the democratic movement to choose *basismo* as a system, decapitating the movement from a responsible and coordinated direction at a national level. [...] Since the events of May 1968, [...] direct democracy has progressed everywhere. [...] For me it is a phenomenon to congratulate ourselves and that still should be developed. This is, in essence, the problem of *autogestão*, of which I am a convinced supporter.”²²²

Soares reflected deeply on this concept in the early 1970s, but his ideas did not vary very much from this quotation. He was in favour of grassroots democracy if it went together with, and was subordinated to, a democratic State. According to him, the combination of these two kinds of democracy (representative democracy and grassroots democracy) would lead to a new kind of democratic Socialism, as *autogestão* was incompatible with Capitalism, but also with State centralism. At the same time, by imposing democratic parliamentary control over

²¹⁸ Gaffney, *The French Left and the Fifth Republic*, 147.

²¹⁹ It could be roughly translated to English as grassroots management.

²²⁰ See the section 1.1.1. of this thesis.

²²¹ “Comunicação de MS (a apresentar no Cólóquio da Confederação Francesa Democrática do Trabalho sobre Autogestão)”, 18/02/1974, Mario Soares Foundation, Arquivo Mario Soares, (s.d.), "Diversos de OUT.66 a FEV.74", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_93356 (2015-10-10).

²²² Soares, Mario, “Resposta ao inquerito do Expresso”, Mario Soares Foundation, Arquivo Mario Soares, (s.d.), "Diversos de OUT.66 a FEV.74", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_93356 (2015-10-10).

the grassroots self-management, the diversion of this movement into anarchy could be prevented.

If we focus on the programme of the PS in 1973, and compare it to the programme of the PSF in 1972, it becomes noticeable that the concept of *autogestion/autogestão* was broadly understood in both programmes as the extension of grassroots democracy through workers' control of the companies and self-management, which would allow the combination of Socialism and freedom. However, this concept created some contradictions within the programmes of both parties that were not clearly explained. These contradictions were evident when they developed their economic policy sections. In both programmes, an important degree of State nationalisations and control of the economy was envisaged on the one hand, and workers' self-management on the other hand, which in principle was a contradiction. Additionally, both parties saw the concept of *autogestion* as the final objective of the Socialist society. The Programme of the PS said that “*autogestão*, understood in all its senses, was the central objective of the Socialist society.”²²³ The same idea appeared in the programme of the PSF: “the PSF estimates that *autogestion* is the finality of the Socialist society, as far as it means the disappearance of the antagonistic classes.”²²⁴

These essential similarities between the first programme of the PS and *Changer la vie*, the programme of the French Socialist Party—the use of a common language, the commitment to breaking away from Capitalism, the proposition of a common programme for the Left, and the importance of the concept of *autogestion/autogestão*—strongly suggest that the main ideological point of reference for the Portuguese Socialists before the outbreak of the revolution was the French Socialists. Despite the different socio-economic and political contexts of the French and the Portuguese, the PS adopted the analysis of the PSF to a great degree. This would create some problems of application, which together with the dynamics of the Carnation Revolution and the dialectic established between the influence of the European Social Democracy and the French Socialists over the PS, provoked the invalidity of this programme. Notwithstanding this fact, the French provided the PS with a radical language that distinguished it from West European Social Democracy, and which would be useful for the party during the Revolution, as we will see later.

²²³ Programa do Partido Socialista, 22.AGO.1973 (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 2249,001).

²²⁴ “Le Parti socialiste, en publiant son programme de gouvernement s’adresse a l’immense majorité des Français”, *Changer la vie: Programme de gouvernement du Parti socialiste* (Paris; Flammarion, 1973).

However, we have to take into account that Soares was not the only writer of the PS programme. For instance, Major Melo Antunes wrote the chapter on the Armed Forces, and other members of the Council Directive of the party, including Tito de Morais, Ramos da Costa, Jorge Campinos, Bernardino Gomes, Sottomayor Cardia, Marcelo Curto, António Reis, as well as Mário Soares. discussed and eventually approved the programme in August 1973, during a meeting that lasted three days, at the headquarters of the Foundation Leo Lagrange.²²⁵ Thus, despite being based on the PSF programme, the final draft of the PS programme in 1973 was also retouched, and eventually it was approved, keeping it open to changes and to different interpretations. It was a compromise between the tendencies existing in the PS, which made it quite flexible and the object of different interpretations. In fact, on the second page of the programme, it was said that “[the programme] is not definitive, it is a project and a reference for the orientation of the militants.”²²⁶

The ideological affinity between the French and the Portuguese Socialists was made evident in other ways several times before the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution. It was translated into friendship, and a cooperative and supportive relation between the PSF and the PS. However, it is important to bear in mind that the relations between both parties were determined by the different status of each party—the PSF was the third political force in their country, whereas the PS was an illegal small party that had to lead a clandestine existence. This generated an asymmetric dynamic, in which the French party was the donor and the Portuguese the recipient. Thus, all the activities they organised had the aim of supporting the PS or facilitating its political evolution in the direction outlined in its programme, which means in the direction promoted by the PSF.

Thus, in September 1973, under the auspices of the PSF, the PS and the PCP met in Paris with the intention of establishing a kind of cooperation similar to that reached by the French Left. The Portuguese Socialists intended to sign a common programme like the one signed between the PSF and the PCF, but this was rejected by the Communists. Instead, it was agreed to issue a joint statement, in which they would show the same stance regarding short term strategy, which was to put an end to the dictatorship and to the colonial wars, establish democratic freedoms in Portugal, end monopolies in Portugal, and establish a provisional government

²²⁵ This was a foundation linked to the French Socialist Party.

²²⁶ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, 1973, p. 12, edições Textos Portugal Socialista (Itália), SET.1973. Documento do Arquivo Histórico do Partido Socialista (Arquivo Mário Soares - Pasta 4385,002, im. 9).

after the fall of the regime that would call elections for a Constituent Assembly.²²⁷ Since these were the more general elements on which both parties agreed, this was just a joint statement that did not entail any compromise between the parties. If this Socialist attempt to sign a common programme with the Communists did not succeed, it was because the PCP was not interested in accepting it. The reason was probably that the Portuguese Communists at that time knew that they were much stronger than the recently created Socialist Party, and they did not want to be linked to a weaker organisation that could later limit their actions and even profit from them. However, there was one more attempt of the Portuguese Socialists to sign a common programme with the PCP in April 1974. Both parties met again in Paris, in a venue discreetly provided by the PSF,²²⁸ with the intention of advancing the elaboration of a common programme. Again, the result was a new joint statement along the lines of the previous one that had to be published on 25th April, but the immediate outbreak of the Carnation Revolution left the contents out of date and it was not published.²²⁹

In Paris on 4th October 1973, a short while after the first failed attempt to sign the Portuguese version of the common programme, a delegation of the PS composed of Mário Soares, Jorge Campinos (International Secretary), and Ramos da Costa (Treasury Secretary) met a delegation of the PSF composed of François Mitterrand, Robert Pontillon (National Secretary for the International Relations), and Didier Motchane (National Secretary for the Relations with the Third World). The meeting was a colloquium that was designed to be informative, but it was also an opportunity to discuss strategy and possible activities against the Portuguese regime. Moreover, it was a chance to provide visibility to the Portuguese Socialists. For them, to have a meeting with the PSF and François Mitterrand (who was very popular in France and abroad, especially after having achieved the union of the French Left) - was very valuable, because it provided them with international legitimacy, national prestige, and a good deal of publicity. This time, both parties exchanged information about the political situation in France and Portugal. The Portuguese declaration “underlined the value as an example [for the PS] of the unitary policy of the French Left in a common programme”, and the Portuguese delegation showed its interest in “the ideological and organisational efforts of our French comrades.” Both parties issued a joint statement, in which they condemned the

²²⁷ Martins, Susana, “A fundação do Partido Socialista,” 47.

²²⁸ Antoine Blanca, “Portugal: les dernières heures d’exile de Mario Soares”, *Le Poing et la Rose*, 29 (May 1974): 7.

²²⁹ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” *a Democracia*, 63; Maria João Avillez, *Soares, Ditadura e Revolução* (Lisboa: Edição do Círculo de Leitores, 1996), 264.

collaboration between the French Gaulliste government and the Portuguese regime, and the PSF promised to fight for the expulsion of Caetano's Portugal from NATO and to obstruct its acceptance in the EEC.²³⁰

These statements were in the line with the ideas expressed in the PS programme on foreign policy. As we have seen above, the PS was in favour of a neutralist international policy for Portugal, as well as the “disappearance” of NATO. Furthermore, it “condemned” the Atlantic Alliance because it supported “the current Portuguese government and its colonial policy.”²³¹ With regards to the EEC, the programme of the PS was more ambiguous. It was in favour of the “consolidation” of the “idea of a supranational Europe”, and therefore “the PS [did] not want to ignore the existence of the European Community.” However, the PS was against the “neo Capitalist and Imperialist” bases on which the EEC was built, and it envisaged “the construction of a Socialist Europe to serve the workers and not the private interests.”²³² Based on these ideas, and on the fact that the Portuguese regime—following the acceptance of the UK to the EEC—signed a preferential trade agreement with the EEC in July 1972, the PS and the PSF condemned the rapprochement between Portugal and European Community.²³³

To summarise, before the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution, the PSF was the main ideological model, and the international point of reference, for the newborn PS. However, despite the fact that the first programme of the PS was inspired by the programme of the PSF, the French ideas were adopted with flexibility, since there were different ideological tendencies within the PS. The first attempts to put this policy into practice were to try to establish a common programme with the Portuguese Communists. This attempt was promoted by the PSF, but the reticent attitude of the PCP did not allow the programmatic union between Portuguese Socialists and Communists. Apart from the ideological collaboration, the PSF also publicly supported the PS by inviting the leaders of the party to France, which provided them with publicity and moral support.

²³⁰ “Comunicados conjuntos do Partido Socialista com o Partido Socialista Frances”, *Portugal Socialista* (October 1973).

²³¹ Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, 1973, p. 61. CD-ROM Fontes para a História do Partido Socialista, Partido Socialista and Fundação Mário Soares.

²³² Declaração de Princípios e Programa do Partido Socialista, 1973, p. 63. CD-ROM Fontes para a História do Partido Socialista, Partido Socialista and Fundação Mário Soares.

²³³ On the history of the Portuguese European integration see: Leitão, *Estado Novo Democracia e Europa*; Costa Pinto and Severiano Teixeira, “From Africa to Europe.” On the transformation of the idea of Europe in the PS and its international constraints see: Alan Granadino, “De la Europa social a la CEE. La transformación de la idea de Europa en el Partido Socialista portugués a través de sus relaciones con los partidos socialistas europeos en los años 70,” *Circunstancia*, year XII, 34 (May 2014).

1.3.2. The PS and the PSF after 25th April 1974

When the coup d'état of April 25th took place, it was a surprise to the French Socialists, as well as the rest of the international community. The first reaction of the PSF to the MFA's coup was to welcome it. On 26th April, the PSF and the PCF and MRG, who were its partners in the Common Programme, in addition to the trade unions *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (CFDT) and the *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT), signed a common declaration in which they “welcomed the overthrowing of the dictatorship,” expressed their “solidarity with the Portuguese democrats” and demanded some democratic openness, such as “the establishment of freedom and the respect for the Human Rights in Portugal.”²³⁴

Although the PSF was a party in the opposition, and therefore potentially less influential than the BLP or other European Social Democrat parties in government, its support of the process opened in Portugal and to the PS was very relevant for the Portuguese Socialists. The PSF, and in particular François Mitterrand, were very prestigious and as we saw above, they were an example to the PS after achieving the union of the Left in France, and recent ideological and organic renovation. The PSF could not offer the same level of diplomatic, political, and economic support as the BLP or other European parties with governmental responsibilities, but the French could provide the PS with some Leftist legitimacy, as well as ideological and strategic guidance.

In this section I introduce a new argument; at this early stage of the Revolution, Mário Soares was constructing a double-edged image of himself and of his party²³⁵ with the aim of obtaining as much support as possible from as many partners and people as possible. Thus, if for the Western European powers he was the moderate and centred leader of a Socialist Party that envisaged “middle-of-the-road” policies, and who “was now in favour of continued membership of NATO and of a rapprochement with the European Communities”, in Portugal, he and the PS wore a different, more Leftist face. It was based on an anti-Capitalist discourse combined with the defence of a pluralist democracy and freedom. Soares and his party used their contacts with the PSF, and some concepts and ideas borrowed from the French Socialists, to strengthen and legitimise this Leftist face.

²³⁴ 450R11, Déclaration commune, 02/05/1974, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²³⁵ It should be noted that during the first months of the Revolution “the image of the PS is the image of Mário Soares in TV.” Ferreira, *Portugal em Transe (1974-1985)*, 243.

From the beginning of the Revolution, the leader of the PS used anti-Capitalist rhetoric in public that was along the lines of the “rupture with Capitalism” defended in his party programme, and also praised by the PSF and the French Common Programme of the Left.²³⁶ In the public speech made by Soares on 1st May in Lisbon, he congratulated his countrymen on the disappearance of Fascism, but he also warned the Portuguese because “the socioeconomic powers that allowed it to oppress us are intact”, and he defended the struggle against “the socioeconomic structure of Capitalism.”²³⁷

The image that Soares projected in Portugal was intended to make of the PS a party attractive enough in the context of the Revolution. He needed to do it because after the fall of the Right-wing dictatorship, the Left dominated the political discourse in Portugal, where the strongest party was the PCP.²³⁸ In addition, from the beginning of the Revolution the Socialists had to respond favourably to the spontaneous social grievances and labour conflicts that emerged after almost fifty years of repressive dictatorship. In the first three months of the Revolution, the strikes multiplied, and the population began improvised revolutionary actions, which threatened the established order as well as the leadership of the Leftist political parties in the revolutionary process. The workers took control of the factories and companies, and demanded better salaries; the peasants started to occupy the land of the big *latifundia* of Southern Portugal, and the urban social movements occupied empty houses and buildings in the big cities.²³⁹ To use the words of Martin Kayman, “the populace started to interpret the revolution by themselves.”²⁴⁰

The radical language of the Portuguese Socialists, which always went together with moderate/reformist political objectives, was an attempt to satisfy these demands rhetorically, but also to orientate and shape the course of events in the preferred direction, which was the establishment of a socially-sensitive Western kind of democracy. The PS tried to respond to

²³⁶ Although he has not developed this point, the link between the anti-Capitalist rhetoric of the PS and the PSF has been pointed out by Fadi Kassem. See: Kassem, “Choosing a foreign policy for French Socialists,” 92.

²³⁷ “1 de Maio de 1974”, *Portugal Socialista*, 5 (May 1974): 6.

²³⁸ Immediately before the overthrow of the *Estado Novo*, the only political parties in Portugal were the PS, the PCP, the *Frente Patriótica de Libertação Nacional*, the *Partido Comunista de Portugal (Marxista-Leninista)* and the *Movimento Reconstituente do Partido do Proletariado*. Moreover, there were other political groups and organisations that, usually, were placed in the extreme Left.

²³⁹ To see a description of the strikes that shows the extent of social unrest in Portugal in the first three months of the Revolution, see: Maria de Lurdes Santos, Marinús Pires de Lima, and Vítor Matias Ferreira, *O 25 de Abril e as Lutas Sociais nas Empresas*, 3 Vol. (Porto: Afrontamento, 1976); on the social movements involved in the occupation of houses see Pedro Ramos Pinto, *Lisbon rising. Urban social movements in the Portuguese Revolution, 1974-1975* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press 2013).

²⁴⁰ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-revolution*, 73.

the social unrest in order to fulfil the most urgent social demands and to gain popular support. However, the PS also tried to co-opt the social unrest in order to impose limits on it, and to channel it towards the direction that the party preferred. The rhetoric and ideological means that the PS had at their disposal for coping with this complex situation were to some extent borrowed from the French Socialists. By using concepts such as the union of the Left, Socialism in freedom, or *autogestão* the PS tried to manipulate and influence the ongoing Revolution. Moreover, the French Socialists also gave the PS Leftist legitimacy, which was useful for the Portuguese to legitimise and defend some ideas that could be perceived as moderate or conservative.

Thus, with the support of the PSF, the Portuguese Socialists could defend the rapprochement between Portugal and the EC. This was an option that seemed necessary for the economic survival of the new regime, but it was not attractive for the Portuguese Left and it was not included in the Programme of the MFA. As both parties (the PS and the PSF) had the same idea on the European integration (they were in favour of a supranational Europe, but they wanted to transform its Capitalist fundamentals in order to achieve a Socialist and democratic Europe) the support of the PSF legitimized the Europeanist pretensions of the PS, allowing the Socialists to argue for the rapprochement between Portugal and the EC without compromising their Leftist project. Moreover, as the PS argued in favour of the French-style union of the Left in public, the Socialists could seek collaboration with the PCP to fight against the reaction—an ever-present shadow during the first months of the Revolution—and later they could place the responsibility for the failure of the union of the Left on the “Stalinist” behaviour of the PCP.

At the same time, the interest of the PSF in Portugal, which had been marginal, increased after 25th April. In the first months of the Revolution, especially after the resignation of Spínola, the PSF thought that the situation in the Iberian country offered optimal conditions for moving towards Socialism. Taking into account the problems that Portugal had to face, such as decolonisation and democratisation, but especially the socio-economic crisis and backwardness of the country, the PSF thought that “Portugal does not only need a political revolution. It needs a social and economic revolution.”²⁴¹ In this context, the French were very interested in the role that the PS could play in the Revolution. Taking advantage of this exceptional opportunity to test their theoretical ideas on how to march to Socialism, the PSF

²⁴¹ Claude Fuzier, “Le mai portugais,” *L’Unité*, 109 (03/05/1974): 22-23.

supported the PS from the beginning, and tried to exploit its ascendancy over the Portuguese party.²⁴²

Thus, from the beginning of the Revolution, the French Socialists tried to promote the union of the Left in Portugal. This was based on two different assumptions. The first was that this strategy could benefit the Portuguese Socialists, as they could take advantage of the strength of the Communists, who were better implanted in the country and in the working places, but still suffered from the effects of almost fifty years of anti-Communist propaganda. This assumption also presupposed that from an electoral perspective, this union would be positive for the Socialists, as it would eventually reduce the political influence of the Communists. According to Mitterrand, if both parties were united by a common programme in which any of them would accept some conditions imposed by the other, the Communists would be constrained to accept a plural democracy, and the Socialists a significantly Communist economic programme. Then, in the event of elections, the Socialists would receive more support than the Communists.²⁴³ The second assumption for defending the union of the Left in Portugal was based on the belief that only a union between Socialists and Communists could ensure a new and democratic way to Socialism in Portugal. The union of the Left would ensure that freedom would be respected on the way to Socialism and, at the same time, the union would be able to restrain the possible actions of the reactionary forces. This was the assumption of the faction of the PSF called CERES. Furthermore, a powerful reason for the French Socialists to promote the union of the Left in Portugal was the certainty that this strategy was the preferred one among the Portuguese Socialists. As it appeared in *L'unité* in May: “the PS [...] playing to the full the union of the Left, wishes, like the PC[P], to enroll on a dynamic *à la française*, from which they have high expectations.”²⁴⁴

By spreading their ideological influence in Portugal, the French Socialists also saw an opportunity to strengthen their international position within the SI. The PSF had joined the SI in 1972, and the strategy of uniting the Left was viewed with concern by the other member parties. In the 1950s and 1960s, anti-Communism had been at the ideological base of the SI,

²⁴² Kassem, “Choosing a foreign policy for French Socialists.”

²⁴³ Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, 326.

²⁴⁴ Maurice Fabien, “Lisbonne la rouge,” *L'Unité*, 110 (10-16 May 1974): 26. The original text in French: “Jouant à fond l'unité de la gauche, il souhaite, comme le P.C., s'inscrire dans une dynamique à la française, dont il attend beaucoup.”

and the new strategy of the PSF introduced fundamental changes in the organisation.²⁴⁵ Although the SI accepted the French strategy, the PSF was isolated, and the International stated publicly that its Social Democrat party members unanimously rejected making any ideological concession to Communism.²⁴⁶ In this precarious position, the PSF sought to counterbalance the ideological predominance of the European Social Democracy within the SI by exercising ideological influence over the PS, as well as over other Socialist parties of Southern Europe, as we will see later.²⁴⁷ To all these reasons, of course, pure fraternal solidarity must be added.²⁴⁸

In May 1974, there were presidential elections in France, and Mario Soares publicly wished for “the victory of François Mitterrand [...]” The first secretary of the PSF, leading a united Left, lost by a very narrow margin with Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, but it is interesting to pose the rhetorical question of what would have happened in Portugal and in the Portuguese Left in the case of Mitterrand winning in France. His victory would have implied that a united Left could have governed an internationally influential Western European country, opening the path for a political alternative that could have shaken the very foundations of the Cold War. This could have been very influential for the PS, and for the development of the Revolution in Portugal, because as Soares put it:

Here we are involved in a very interesting historical process, we are going to transform our country, to democratise it, to ensure the quick decolonisation of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea, to enter in Europe. We count on a democratic, progressive France and, if this France has [as its leader] François Mitterrand, of whom I am admirer and personal friend, that would be for me a great joy.²⁴⁹

Although Mitterrand did not win the French presidential elections, and during the electoral campaign he showed little commitment to the Common Programme of the Left, his result (of 49,3% of the votes in the second round) was considered very positive for the united Left, as it demonstrated great social support for this project. Internationally, the reputation of Mitterrand

²⁴⁵ Hugues Portelli, “Le Parti Socialiste et l’Internationale Socialiste (1971-1981)” in *L’Internationale Socialiste*, ed. Hugues Portelli (Paris: Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1983), 137-146. Also see: Michel Dreyfus, *L’Europe des Socialistes* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 1991), 269-289.

²⁴⁶ Sablosky, *O PS e a transição*, 38.

²⁴⁷ Devin, *L’Internationale Socialiste*.

²⁴⁸ Antoine Blanca underlined the altruistic solidarity in an interview with Fadi Kassem. See: Fadi Kassem, “Les socialistes français face à la révolution démocratique au Portugal, 1974-1981” (Master diss., Institute d’Etudes Politiques de Paris, 2007), 24.

²⁴⁹ Mário Soares, “Un message de Mario Soares aux socialistes,” *L’Unité*, 110 (10/05/1974): 26.

and his strategy grew enormously, and he was confirmed as a firm candidate for the French presidency in the future.²⁵⁰

In this moment, which coincided with the first weeks of the Carnation Revolution, Mario Soares invited Mitterrand to visit Portugal. The visit of the leader of the PSF in June 1974 caused an important effect in favour of the PS. It was the first important international visit to the new Portugal²⁵¹ and it provided the project of the PS with a great deal of publicity and credibility. It is very interesting to see what the feelings of the members of the PS executive were before the arrival of the French Socialists in Portugal, as they show how attached prominent personalities of the PS were to the ideas of the French Socialists. Three members of the executive of the PS, Vasco da Gama Fernandes, António Reis, and José Magalhães Godinho, were interviewed in *Portugal Socialista* about the significance of the visit of Mitterrand. Vasco da Gama Fernandes understood this visit as “a message of solidarity with this sector [the Socialist] of our country. He is an example for us [...] because he got to unite the French Left in the common fight against the wrong ways of progress, a goal in which both countries [probably he wanted to say parties] are involved.”

António Reis, in turn, said:

Mitterrand is the secretary general of a Socialist party whose ideological orientation is very close to ours, and whose recent evolution is full of thought. It is very interesting for us to strengthen relations [...] with brother parties that follow a coherent Socialist line. If we take into account the deep cultural links that connect us with France and the great repercussion that the French politics have on us, it is understandable the importance of strengthening this relation. [...] Besides, Mitterrand is disposed to work with us and he promises to ensure all the assistance from his party.²⁵²

In this welcoming atmosphere, the French delegation arrived in Portugal at the beginning of June. They went to Porto, Lisbon and Coimbra, where they assisted the public demonstrations of the PS. On 4th July, Mitterrand gave a speech in a rally organised by the PS in Lisbon, in front of 15000 people. He was quite radical, probably trying to please the audience, but also publicly committed the PS to the ideological line drafted by the PSF. He started his speech by saying that “Socialism is the only answer for the world [in which we live].” Then, keeping up the tone, the leader of the PSF said that “our testimony is of anti-capitalist unity, agglutinating the forces of the Left against capitalism, which currently is a power of international

²⁵⁰ On Mitterrand as a political figure, see: Alistair Cole, *François Mitterrand. A study in political Leadership* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

²⁵¹ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-revolution*, 84-85.

²⁵² “Qual o significado político da vinda de Mitterrand ao nosso país?,” *Portugal Socialista*, 6 (8 June 1974).

oppression.” He remembered that the case of Chile had demonstrated how dangerous Capitalism could be. For this reason, he “advised unity” and said “keep united. Communists, Socialists, Liberals, Republicans, not to say Christians...”

This idea of Left unity was also defended by the members of the PS. Magalhães Godinho, a member of the PS executive, said that it was “necessary to consolidate democracy in this historical moment, which could be prolonged for long time. [...] It is indispensable to establish [...] an alliance or coalition of parties to construct together a democratic Portugal [...] which none of us could build alone.” Godinho added that the union of the Left had to have its own rules: “open cooperative spirit, loyalty in purposes and acts and to refuse hegemonic ambitions”. What is even more interesting is that Mário Soares was also attached to these ideas in public. Although he did not mention the Communists, he stated: “I can ensure in the name of the Socialist Party that we are open to all the Portuguese democratic forces, without exception, to negotiate [...] a programme that could keep us united not only until the elections, but beyond the elections.”²⁵³

Until that moment, the behaviour and the public statements of the PCP had been very moderate. The party leader, Alvaro Cunhal, showed in his public statements his commitment with the programme of the MFA and with democracy. At this stage, the PCP was more concerned with the threat of the reaction than with implementing the Portuguese way to Socialism. The party was busy strengthening the trade union *Intersindical* and growing its organisation and they defended the coalition with the PS and the PPD in the provisional government. Thus, when Spínola began to show his counterrevolutionary tendencies—on 13th June he tried to impose a state of emergency that eventually failed—the general atmosphere seemed to facilitate the union of the Left against the reaction.

After this visit to Portugal, the French Socialists analysed the Portuguese situation in an article that appeared in their newspaper *L'Unité*, and also in a private meeting with members of the PS. In *L'Unité*, Calude Estier (who was part of the French delegation, the director of the journal, national secretary of the PSF, and Mitterrand's trusted man) considered that the social mood in Portugal could be described as euphoric, recalling the days of the liberation in France. However, this enthusiastic situation made it difficult to grasp the enormous problems that Portugal would have to face, namely the economic crisis, decolonisation, and the construction of democracy. However, perhaps the most disturbing difficulty was “who is

²⁵³ “Socialismo: a única resposta para o mundo que nos rodeia,” *Portugal Socialista*, 6 (8 June 1974).

going to resolve these problems?” The French realised that, in the current situation, it was not easy to see where exactly the real power was. Some recent events, such as the nomination of a former minister with Caetano to represent Portugal in the UN without informing Mário Soares as Minister of Foreign Affairs, or the accumulation of prerogatives into the hands of Spínola, left the feeling that the Right still kept some power in Portugal. According to the French, the reactionary forces of the Right were reorganising, and this entailed a risk of involution. For this reason, Estier considered the unity of the forces of the Left to be necessary. This union was meant to be very influential because the PCP were solidly implanted in Portugal, and the PS seemed to enjoy great social support. However, they noted that there were frictions between the PCP and the PS, especially because both parties wanted to spread their control over the nascent trade union movement.

Regarding the worrying state of the Portuguese economy, the French thought that the most immediate solution to the crisis was facilitating a closer relation between the EC and Portugal. This was what the new Portuguese leaders desired, and the PSF considered that the solidarity of the progressive forces of Europe with the new Portuguese regime was essential for the evolution of the revolutionary process in the right direction, namely towards a liberal democracy that could eventually lead to a socialist democracy.²⁵⁴

If this was the French overall analysis of the situation in Portugal, representatives of the PSF and the PS carried out a complementary analysis in private, which focused on how to strengthen the position of the PS in the Revolution. The French considered that despite the great potential strength of the PS, it had deficient structures, and the cadres of the party were scarce and poorly educated. The PSF saw that these shortcomings “had been tackled by opening the party as much as possible to new incorporations,” which referred to the incorporation of political groups that now constituted tendencies within the PS, such as the *Movimento Socialista Popular* (MSP) led by Manuel Serra, which entered in the PS in May.²⁵⁵ This was a necessary strategy in order to grow the party faster, but the leadership of the PSF considered that “there was the risk that the organised factions could create parties within the party”. Notwithstanding this fact, the PSF thought that “it was necessary to keep open the party,” although emphasising “the assimilation of the members and factions integrated.”²⁵⁶ The particular case of the PS, recently created from scratch in a context of

²⁵⁴ Claude Estier, “Un peuple sur ses gardes,” *L’unité*, 119 (12-18/07/1974): 18-21.

²⁵⁵ In this group a mixture of Marxist-Leninist and Progressive Catholic groups co-existed.

²⁵⁶ 450R11, Manuscript, *Entrevue avec Crespo*, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

revolution, which made the existence of organised factions risky, because they could take over the whole party. However, as the PSF had experience with the coexistence of factions within the party, the French offered the PS their advice on the internal organisation, and proposed that some members of the party would visit Portugal in July for three days, in order to show the PS how the PSF worked. Additionally, the French proposed to collaborate in the education of the PS' ranks, to provide examples of propaganda that could be useful for the upcoming elections and help to strengthen the organisation of the PS in France.²⁵⁷

In the summer of 1974, the first Portuguese provisional government failed, and the second provisional government was formed. Social unrest increased due to the hesitant behaviour of the government in fulfilling the demands of the workers and the peasants. In August, both the PS and the PCP supported the passing of a law that limited the right to strike, in an attempt to control the protesting workers during this early phase when the threat of a reactionary coup was not forgotten, and the consequences were an increasing feeling of frustration among the workers whose rights to strike were now limited. Mário Soares signed the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau, and he was negotiating with Mozambique and Angola, as we saw earlier in this chapter. This was an important achievement that made Soares very popular in Portugal and abroad. However, the success of the Revolution, in both the sense of a Socialist revolution, and of a necessary step in the process of democratisation, was everything but certain.

In the middle months of the year, the PSF considered that despite the successful beginning of the decolonisation process, this was not the time to relax, since the Portuguese provisional government and the PS still had the toughest tasks ahead. The most difficult and controversial one would be to implement the structural changes in the Portuguese economy that would address its most overriding problems, while at the same time putting the country on its way to Socialism.

If the elements of the bourgeoisie, always present in the economic and banking system of the country, accepted in fact, [...] the end of a ruinous colonial war [...], they are much less ready to let the Portuguese economy engage, even if it is timidly, in a socialist path, as the forces of the left and the young officials of the Armed Forces Movement desire.

²⁵⁷ 450RI1, Manuscript called *Entrevue avec Crespo*, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

The French observed with concern that “a serious competition” was growing between the main parties of the governmental coalition, especially between the PCP and the PS, as both parties wanted to spread their control over the nascent trade union movement. However, they were confident in the unionist will of the PS. “Happily this controversy has not damaged [...] the united action of the forces of the Left, neither their collaboration in the [governmental] coalition. [...] The numerous French socialist militants that have [been] in Portugal this summer have noticed the audience of the PS [...] and the coincidence of their doctrinal and strategic positions with those of the French PS.”²⁵⁸

Indeed, the French Socialists had motives for thinking that the PS was attached to their positions. In mid-July, Salgado Zenha sent a text to the French to be published in their newspaper *L'unité*, where he expressed the objectives of the PS for the future of Portugal. The Socialists believed that the reactionary forces were attempting to damage the economic situation in Portugal, in order to prepare a counter-revolutionary coup. Thus, the steps to be taken in order to ensure the success of the Revolution were to speed up the process of democratisation and to approach the EC. The best way to ensure that these steps could be done successfully was to keep and strengthen the union of the progressive forces.

Zenha considered that “it is necessary to institutionalize quickly the political freedoms”, something that could only be achieved “in the framework of the democratic legality.” For institutionalising and consolidating democracy, he believed that “the political alliance existing in the provisional government should be maintained,” the parties in favour of democracy “should remain all together.” Thus, the Socialists saw the union with the PCP, the PSD, also with the armed forces, in the provisional government as the best strategy to ensure the viability of the democratisation of Portugal, which was threatened by reactionary forces. The fact that the PS emphasised the establishment of a pluralist democracy in Portugal over the implementation of the Revolution was consequent with the ideas of the PS. Salgado Zenha wanted to clarify: “it does not mean that we, socialists, renounce or will ever renounce to our socialist objectives. But that means that socialism in Portugal necessarily has to go through democratisation and decolonisation.”

After democratisation and decolonisation, Zenha considered the economic problems of Portugal to be the “third battle” that the provisional government had to fight. This battle was essential to ensure the victory of democracy in Portugal. For this reason, Zenha called for the

²⁵⁸ Antoine Violet, “L’été portugais,” *L'unité*, 122 (06/09/1974): 22.

“battle of production”, but not only this. He proposed another solution for the Portuguese economic problems, which was an approach between his country and the EC. This implied a geo-political redefinition of Portugal that was not welcomed by everyone in the Left. For the extreme Left—the *Union Democrática Popular* (UDM) and the *Movimento Revolucionário para o Partido do Proletariado* (MRPP)—the EC was the supreme form of Capitalism, and so they rejected it. For the PCP, aligned with the Soviet Union, the EC was the paradigm of State Capitalism.²⁵⁹ According to Zenha, however, this was the only way to save the Portuguese economy, as more than 50% of the foreign trade of Portugal happened with the EC, and hence democracy. In his own words, “any other policy will be suicidal, independently of the social and political preferences of anyone.” Notwithstanding this fact, Zenha nuanced his idea of rapprochement between Portugal and the EC. Once Portugal was closer to Europe, the PS would join the forces within the EC that were already fighting for the construction of a social and democratic Europe. He thought that “[...] the comrade François Mitterrand [and] the French Socialists advanced courageously and in an exemplary way over the new paths for the freedom of Europe.”²⁶⁰

1.3.3. Portugal after the resignation of Spínola: Fertile soil for Socialism?

Until September 1974, there had been two competing political models in the Portuguese Revolution. One model was represented by Spínola, which sought to impose a presidential democracy in Portugal, and envisaged a federalist neo-colonialist future for the relations between Portugal and its colonies. The other was the more social model supported by the PS, the PCP and the majority of the members of the MFA. As we have seen above, this fact, together with the conflict triggered in the government by decolonisation, escalated the situation to a high level of tension that reached its peak with the failed demonstration of the “silent majority” at the end of September. On 30th September, Spínola resigned, and the forces of the Left occupied the most important positions in the government and in the MFA.

After the forces of the Right were knocked out, the new situation in Portugal led the French to think that this was the right moment to advance towards Socialism. Portugal became fertile soil for applying the ideas of the PSF: “The MFA is radicalising. The Communist Party understands its influence. The Socialist Party is developing quickly and implanting in the

²⁵⁹ See: João de Menezes Ferreira, “Partidos políticos, interlocutores sociais y el desafio de la CEE,” *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 60-61 (April-September 1988): 447-464.

²⁶⁰ Francisco Zenha, “Les socialistes en première ligne,” *L’unité*, 119 (12-18/07/1974): 20.

whole country. A recent survey shows that, in terms of vote intention, the Socialists represent 25% of the electorate and the Communists 18%.” In this positive context for the progressive forces, the French it considered “essential” and “decisive” to strengthen the union of the Left in Portugal, and the union between the Left and the military. The Portuguese Right had failed in their counter-revolutionary attempt, which had opened the way for the progressive forces to advance towards a Socialist democracy. However, although the forces of the Left were in an advantaged situation, their “combat [...] was far from being won.” This was so because the international reactionary forces, according to the PSF led by the US, were upset with the recent evolution of the Mediterranean European countries. For this reason, the success of the united progressive forces was very important, as the Portuguese events could have “huge consequences for the future of the Left and Socialism in Europe and the world.”²⁶¹

The victory of the forces of the united Left in Portugal, following a strategy that was along the lines as the one proposed by the Socialists in France, could be a great boost for the PSF at home and internationally. It could mean that a Western European country, a member of NATO, would be able to implement a new form of Socialism in which Socialists, Communists, and a progressive military force would work together, respecting freedom and democracy. This would be a structural change in the international context of the Cold War that could be used as a precedent for the French, as it could give credibility to the project of the united Left in France and elsewhere, and prove its feasibility.

Notwithstanding this fact, the emphasis of the PSF in highlighting their support of the PS and the union of the progressive forces in Portugal was probably also a response to the criticism that they were suffering from the PCF at home after the autumn of 1974. After the positive results of Mitterrand in the French presidential elections, the PCF, who had been a loyal and supportive partner until then, changed its strategy. The results had shown that the PSF had increased its electoral weight at the expense of the PCF, and the Communists started to criticise the Socialists in public. The Communists complained about the Socialist intent to grow at their expense, and criticised the PSF for being a centrist, reformist party that only wanted electoral profit from the common programme of the Left.²⁶² The tension between the French parties grew in the autumn, to the extent that the Communists questioned the

²⁶¹ C.E., “Gauche + fusils,” *L’unité*, 126 (4/10/1974): 1-2.

²⁶² See: Bell and Criddle, *The French Socialist Party*, 84-88; Bell and Criddle, *The French Communist Party*, 178-179; R.W. Johnson, *The Long March of the French Left* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1981), 167-174;

usefulness of the common programme. The Socialists, who were very interested in keeping such a profitable partnership, tried to avoid the tension with the PCF, and the case of Portugal was a way for them to show their commitment to the union of the Left, Socialism and the (democratic) Revolution.

From this we can understand that although the French Socialists knew that the Portuguese experience was original and unique, and that foreign models could hardly be applied in Portugal, they tried to exploit the fact that they were an example to the Portuguese. Thus, the leader of the PSF wrote in October 1974, that the French Socialists “have to take the initiative [...] regarding the internationalization of [their] struggle.” They had to do so because the “the German social democracy, the British labourism, the Scandinavian socialism do not place their action in a strategy of rupture [with Capitalism].” On the contrary, a French Socialism committed with the union of the Left, with the rupture with Capitalism and electorally strong “will have a formidable force of contagion. [...] It is already happening in Portugal, tomorrow will happen in Spain. We cannot say that the question is not posed in Italy. Who knows what will happen in Greece? France has [already] shown the way.”²⁶³

Soares’ public statements probably reinforced the French display of confidence in the future. From the beginning of the Revolution until the end of 1974, he seemed to be interested in pursuing the union with the Communists. The PS and the PCP coexisted in the current provisional government, but Soares seemed to desire to go beyond this coalition. Moreover, he consistently repeated the Socialist commitment to the rupture with Capitalism. On 25th September, he said that “Portugal needed a complete modification of its economic structures, because it was not a question of adjusting the most inequitable aspects of capitalism, but of destroying capitalism. Social-democracy is not applicable in Portugal.”²⁶⁴

At the end of October 1974, in an interview with the Portuguese journal *Expresso* that was also published in *L’unité*, Soares once again confirmed his commitment to the union of the Left. According to the leader of the PS, the union with the Communists was a question that would have to be decided at the Congress of the PS that would be held in December. “However, I can tell you now that we consider necessary to maintain the current coalition, that its existence is very important until the elections. Even after the elections, we do not see why we should modify this coalition [...]” Furthermore, he said:

²⁶³ François Mitterrand, “La force de contagion,” *L’Unité*, 127 (11/10/1974): 32.

²⁶⁴ *La Croix*, 25 Sept. 1975, Robert Pontillon’s Collection, Centre Jean Jaurès, Paris. Quoted in Kassem, “Choosing a foreign policy for French Socialists,” 94.

it is evident that the current coalition is not a popular front. A closer, organic alliance between the PC[P] and the PS [...] will not be excluded. For that it is indispensable to reach an accord on the mid and long term objectives, on the means of action and on a common programme signed in front of all the people. Although we have envisaged it, the discussion of this programme and this agreement has not taken place yet.²⁶⁵

However, a combination of factors made the union of the Left praised by the French Socialists in Portugal difficult. There were several elements that went against the unitary idea. One of these was the growing tension between the PCP and the PS, due to their attempt to hold hegemony over the political—and in particular the social—realms. The PCP claimed to represent the revolution's avant-garde, and the PS began to adopt a more moderate position, appearing as the bulwark against the authoritarian threat that the Portuguese Communists represented for many Portuguese. Another factor was the internal division within the MFA, which in part was a reflection of the PS-PCP confrontation, but the situation was much more complex; some sectors were ideologically attracted to extreme left-wing positions that advocated popular power represented by councils, who were against the role of the political parties. Finally, one more element was the international pressure exerted over the PS, especially by the political parties and governments of the European Social Democracy and the US. They were pushing the PS and its leader, Mário Soares, towards a centrist position, that was at odds with the union of the Left praised by Mitterrand and the PSF.

The French involvement in the Portuguese situation through the PS, and the union of the Left they were promoting, was not happily accepted by the European Social Democracy, especially because the strategy that the PSF proposed was at odds with the interests of the British and German Social Democrats, as we have seen above. The union between Socialists and Communists proposed by the French Socialists was something that ought to be avoided, according to the European Social Democrats. The SPD, which was the most anti-Communist party among the European Social Democracy, was worried about the French ideological influence over the PS. Therefore, after Mitterrand's visit to Portugal, the German Social Democrats sent Günther Wehrmeyer as a representative to Portugal, with the aim of helping the PS to overcome its organisational and structural problems, but also to help the PS to clarify its ideology. The Germans considered it "truly important" that Wehrmeyer should explain and clarify some Social Democratic principles to the Portuguese Socialists, so that they could be better prepared for the next electoral challenge. The Germans also wanted the Portuguese to realise that they could not accept the ideas of the French Socialists, especially

²⁶⁵ "Mario Soarès: la voie portugaise," *L'unité*, 129 (25-31/10/1974): 16-17.

the Union of the Left, as a “universal remedy” for the PS, because it was conditioned by specific French developments. The German representative was instructed that he should be subtle, but that he should let the Portuguese know about this issue and about the fact that the main enemy of the PS was the PCP.²⁶⁶

The quick development of the political situation in Portugal, and the increasing Communist influence over the Revolution during the autumn of 1974 and especially during 1975, had the effect that the PSF could hardly agree on a strategy for adapting their own ideas to the reality of the Portuguese situation. The Portuguese Revolution posed an ideological challenge for the PSF, and the different tendencies that co-existed within the French party held different opinions on how the PSF should get involved in the Revolution, and on how they thought that the PS should behave towards the Portuguese Communists in the given situation. Thus, two opposite tendencies grew inside the PSF from the last months of 1974 onwards. On the one hand, there was a faction represented by Mitterrand, which supported the PS and its behaviour with respect to the Communists, whom he accused of sectarianism. On the other hand, the second biggest faction of the PSF, the CERES, criticised the moderate and opportunistic behaviour of the PS, and accused them of being Social Democrats and refusing to assume their role in the union of the Left. Furthermore, the situation provoked tensions within the French Union of the Left, since the PCF supported the PCP, which rendered the situation of the PSF even more complex. All of this had repercussions for the PSF’s internal distribution of power, its behaviour *vis-à-vis* the PS, and the ideological transformation of the Portuguese Socialists, as we will see in the next chapter.

1.4. The First Congress of the PS in Lisbon

The first legal Congress of the PS was celebrated in Lisbon on 13th to 15th December 1974. It was an important event for the PS as well as for Portugal, considering the confusing political situation in the country, and the fact that elections were expected in the spring of 1975. It was the right moment for the party to update and consolidate its ideological underpinnings, its political programme, and its internal organisation. The revolution had started eight months before, and its recent evolution suggested that the path towards democracy in Portugal would be difficult and uncertain. Thus, it was necessary for the PS to rethink its strategy and to put forward a new programme that, on the one hand, could tackle the main problems that Portugal

²⁶⁶ Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 149.

was facing, and provide a satisfactory solution for the West, and on the other hand could present a credible and acceptable alternative way to Socialism in Portugal. From an organisational perspective, the Congress was also important for solving the confusion that reigned in the ranks of the PS. From 25th April, thousands of new militants had joined the party; indeed, in April 1974, the PS was formed of less than a thousand militants, and by December the estimated number was about 40000,²⁶⁷ and the PS had been unable to assimilate the overwhelming amount of newcomers. They lacked theoretical education, and they belonged to different ideological families ranging from Social Democrats to Marxist-Leninists.

The Congress showed the international support enjoyed by the PS, as it was attended by representatives of almost all the main European Socialist parties. Attendees included the President of the SI Bruno Pitterman and its Secretary General Hans Janitschek, the Secretary General of the BLP Ron Hayward, representatives of the SPD including Bruno Firedrich, and the National Secretary of the PSF Lionel Jospin, accompanied by International Secretary Robert Pontillon, and Antoine Blanca. As well as these parties, there were representatives from almost all the Socialist and Social Democrat parties of Western Europe.²⁶⁸

Special attention must be paid to the fact that the PS invited several Communist parties, such as the PCE and the PCI. During the congress, Santiago Carrillo was invited to give a speech. Inviting the Spanish and Italian Communists and the speech by Carrillo have to be understood as the strategy of Soares to stop the critics within his party who suggested that he was anti-Communist for not establishing a pact with the PCP as a way of moving faster towards Socialism in the current situation.²⁶⁹ It can also be considered as a message directed at the PCP and its leader Alvaro Cunhal, which showed the kind of Communism the PS was willing to deal with, namely the kind employed by the Eurocommunist parties that accepted political pluralism in democracy.

²⁶⁷ “Problemas de organização,” *Portugal Socialista*, dedicado ao I Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista (19/12/1974): 8.

²⁶⁸ In addition to the SI, the BLP, the SPD and the PSF there were representatives from the EEC; the Commissioner Altiero Spinelli, Socialist and Social Democrat parties from Austria, Belgium, Chile, Israel, Canada, Brazil, Cyprus, Greece, Guinea Bissau, the Netherlands, Italy, Angola, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Norway, Namibia, New Zealand, Tunisia, Sweden, Zaire and Spain. Besides, there were representatives of the Communist parties from Spain, Italy, Romania and Yugoslavia. See: “Delegações estrangeiras presentes no Congresso,” *Portugal Socialista*, 19 (19/12/1974): 2.

²⁶⁹ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 168.

This Congress is considered to represent the PS at its most radical, as from then on, until 1979, the ideology and programmes of the party become progressively more moderate.²⁷⁰ However, although the rhetoric used at the Congress was quite radical, the first signs of moderation can be traced to the declaration of principles and the programme approved by the PS. The executive elected in the congress, led by Mário Soares, had to face the challenge of the most left-leaning faction within the party, *Movimento Socialista Popular* (MSP), and this competitive setting explains the overall radical rhetoric used by both groups in the Congress.

Leader of the MSP Manuel Serra presented a motion that was supported by the most radical members of the party, in which he criticised Soares and the leadership of the PS, not because of their moderation, but because of their ambiguous policy, their close relationship with the European Social Democracy—which was a concern for the most radical members of the party—and because of Soares’ individualist style of leadership. Serra proposed a more resolute policy for the search of “Socialism without ambiguity”, that would include collaboration with the more progressive sections of the MFA and with the PCP. He also defended the democratisation of the internal structure of the party.²⁷¹

Mário Soares faced the challenge from the left by using a radical rhetoric that was at the same level as the vocabulary used by Serra. He accused the MSP of being controlled by the radical elements of the MFA who aspired to break the unity of the PS in order to favour the PCP, and he made political propositions that were also very radical—situating the PS with the PSOE at the extreme left of the SI— although they contained some moderate nuances that I will analyse below. First, however, it is necessary to point out that the faction of Serra was defeated by a narrow margin: his motion obtained 44% of the votes, and the historical leadership headed by Soares received 56%.²⁷² The challenge by the MSP was used by Soares to ban the existence of organised factions within the PS immediately after the Congress. “There cannot be parties within the party”,²⁷³ he stated, and this ban was used to emphasise internal discipline in the party, and to ensure his own control over the party.

I will now take a closer look at the contents of the Congress: first the declaration of principles, and then, the programme approved in the Congress, which was the one supported

²⁷⁰ Filipe Nunes, “‘A nossa via’. A política e as políticas nos programas eleitorais do Partido Socialista (1980, 1987 e 1995)” in *O Partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras, Celta, 2005), 181-203.

²⁷¹ *Portugal Socialista*, dedicado ao I Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista (19/12/1974).

²⁷² Mateus, *Contos Proibidos*, 67.

²⁷³ “Problemas de organização,” *Portugal Socialista*, dedicado ao I Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista (19/12/1974): 8.

by Mário Soares. The declaration of principles of the PS that emerged from the Congress was slightly different than the one that had been stated a year and a half before when the party was created. Now, the PS described itself as “the political organisation of the Portuguese that searched for the solution of the national problems within democratic Socialism.”²⁷⁴ Therefore, it was not only the political party of the Portuguese Socialists, but the party of all the Portuguese. This inclusivity shows that the party was willing to represent a variety of sectors of the society, rather than only the working class, at a moment when they expected the elections to be held soon. This slight change in the declaration of principles also shows the first step taken by the PS towards becoming a catch-all party competing for electoral victory in the following years. The main theoretical objective of the PS remained the construction of “a society without classes where the power will emanate from the popular will” in Portugal. According to the PS, this implied “a new concept of life that had to be achieved through the establishment of workers’ power within the frame of a project that would make the means of production collective, and would establish economic planning that could coexist with plural initiatives.”²⁷⁵

As in the previous declarations of principles, the PS considered itself the heir to a long tradition of democratic Socialism, and proposed to make a synthesis of the trends that aimed at the achievement of Socialism in freedom, on the one hand, and the trends that stressed the necessity of warranting political and ideological pluralism, on the other. The PS advocated grassroots democracy as much as State democracy, because combining both would avoid the risks that each presented separately. State democracy without grassroots democracy had the risk of losing contact with reality, and eventually ending up in the position of not representing the people. On the other hand, grassroots democracy without State democracy held the risk of being dysfunctional and totalitarian.²⁷⁶

When it comes to the theoretical bases of the party, the PS again considered Marxism to be its main theoretical tool for analysis, although it would be constantly rethought as a guide for action, rather than a dogmatic corpus. It also recognised the contribution of all the religious

²⁷⁴ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁷⁵ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁷⁶ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

tendencies that fought for scientific Socialism. The theoretical basis that inspired the PS were almost exactly the same as the ones that inspired the PSF, as we saw above.²⁷⁷

With this double theoretical basis, the PS considered along noticeably Marxist lines, that the arrival of the Socialist revolution was a fundamental stage in the history of mankind. However, they proposed “a way to Socialism that would be able to embrace and develop political pluralism, which implied the respect for human dignity, the practice of free criticism, the exercise of the rights of the citizen within a legally organised State”.²⁷⁸ With this statement. the PS rejected the idea of a revolution that started to take shape in Portugal under the direction of the PCP. This statement also shows the commitment of the PS to political pluralism as it was provided in the Western democracies.

This is confirmed in the next point of PS’ declaration of principles, which states that the party “believes that the path that brings to Socialism comprises a diversity of ways that depend on the socio-economic and politic structures and the mentalities and civilization of the people concerned” therefore, the PS declares to be “against the bureaucratic and authoritarian models that, for historic reasons contrary to the essential Marxist inspiration, Socialism has adopted in certain countries, the PS proposed look for a Portuguese way towards Socialism taking advance of other peoples’ experiences.”²⁷⁹ At the same time, the PS declared itself to be against the Capitalist system and bourgeois domination. The party rejected the false ideas of societies that have only the formal aspect of democracy, but that are actually welfare societies where the inequality between men is reinforced and their aspirations frustrated. Therefore, the PS “rejects the way followed by the movements that called themselves Social Democrats, or even Socialists, that end up deliberately serving the structures and interests of Capitalism”; the PS was in favour of “the complete destruction [of Capitalism]”, something that should be carried out through the union with all the other forces that claim the same objectives.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁷⁸ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁷⁹ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁸⁰ 450 RI 8, Declaration de principes du Parti Socialiste Portugais pour une voie democrartique et originale vers le socialisme, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Social Democracy was considered unfeasible and undesirable for Portugal because in the context of the national and international economic crisis, which was bringing about a dangerous combination of inflation and increasing unemployment, opting for developing the country along capitalist lines—even if capitalism was regulated—would mean putting Portugal in the hands of the big monopolies. This would jeopardise Portuguese independence and democracy. Moreover, due to the underdevelopment of the Portuguese economy in terms of the Western European countries, to opt for a Social Democratic way would imply putting all the pressure of the austerity that the context demanded onto the working class. Thus, the PS considered that Social Democracy in Portugal was only the proposal made by the bourgeoisie for saving their own privileges.²⁸¹

To sum up, there was a pivotal idea in the declaration of principles of the PS that summarises the ideological underpinning of the party. This is their aim of achieving Socialism via a way that had never been tried before, a kind of third way between Social Democracy and Bureaucratic Communism that consisted in combining democracy from below—grassroots democracy—with democracy from above—parliamentarian representative democracy—and respecting political pluralism and individual freedom. The bases of this Portuguese original way to Socialism coincides completely with the way to Socialism proposed by the PSF after its unification in 1971.

Regarding the programme propagated from the Congress, it was elaborated at the above-mentioned meeting that the Executive Committee held in October. Although it followed along the same lines as the programme of 1973, this time it was wider and more concrete, especially regarding economic policy. The PS again proposed massive nationalisations, but now the programme was more specific about how the nationalisations would be carried out. It was planned for them to be carried out a step at a time. The party proposed “to start with the banking and insurances sector, and after that it would be the turn for the key industrial sectors and the companies that exploit services that satisfy the collective necessities, such as water, energy, transports and communications.”²⁸² This plan, as well as the rhythm and extent of the nationalisations, coincide almost completely with the plan proposed a year before by the PSF in its programme *Changer la vie*. According to the PSF, “the nationalisations will affect first

²⁸¹ “Economia portuguesa socialismo e social-democracia,” *Portugal Socialista*, 16 (28/11/1974): 3.

²⁸² Política Económica, A economia na sociedade socialista, 450 RI 8, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

[...] the banking and the finances sector [...] and then they will be applied to the industrial sector according to specific criteria.”²⁸³

For the PS, the planning of the economy entailed the balanced development of all the economic sectors. Thus, agrarian reform was an essential part of the economic programme. In Portugal, land ownership was accumulated in very few hands, especially in the South of the country where there were still many peasants and agriculture was still a very important (though inefficient) sector in the Portuguese economy. In order to overcome this situation, the PS proposed implementing an agrarian reform that would change the structures of the property. This reform would respect the right of property of the small and medium exploitations, although the owners of these kinds of exploitations would be closely controlled by the new Institute of Agrarian Reform, which would inherit the land after the death of these owners. In the regions where *latifundia* was predominant, the objective of the agrarian reform was to transfer the possession of the land from their current owners to the workers of those lands. Cooperatives of workers would be encouraged in the new expropriated lands that would belong to the Institute of Agrarian Reform.²⁸⁴

The external economic relations proposed by the PS were based on the party's belief that international economic exchanges were the key element in the process of national economic development, and at the same time the basic element in strengthening economic solidarity and cooperation. External economic activity would be planned democratically with the participation of the workers through a centralising state organism and representatives of the importing and exporting companies. The PS wanted to reinforce the exchange of relations with the new African nations that emerged after Portuguese decolonisation, although these relations would only be based on fraternal cooperation, and not merely for lucrative purposes. Regarding economic relations with the West European countries who were the main Portuguese commercial partners, the PS proposed a collaboration with the European progressive forces to redefine a communitarian Socialist policy. This was meant to lead to a Socialist and democratic EC that would serve the working classes and not private interests.

Finally, to complete the economic programme, the PS developed the industrial policy. The industrial sector should be the engine of the Portuguese economy, and the means of

²⁸³ “Le but des socialistes est que cesse l’exploitation de l’homme par l’homme,” *Changer la vie: Programme de gouvernement du Parti socialiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).

²⁸⁴ Política Económica, A economia na sociedade socialista, 450 RI 8, *Portugal, Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista português*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

production of the industry would be collectivised. This collectivisation should radically change the relations of production, and as a way to ensure this change, *autogestão* would be extended to all the industrial companies. Therefore, democratically elected groups of workers would rule the companies. The generalisation of self-managed companies would be integrated in the State planning of the economy; the State would intervene by participating directly in the management of the companies. This mix of state planning and *autogestão* paralleled the combination of two grassroots and representative democracy in the characteristic Portuguese way to Socialism in the realm of economic policy. Again, the same kind of way to Socialism had been delineated by the PSF a little longer than a year before. The PSF considered that democracy could only exist if the political democracy went together with economic democracy, and the French also proposed to achieve this real democracy extending to all the realms of the social life, including the economy, by complementing nationalization with *autogestion*.²⁸⁵

Moving on to foreign policy, the programme of the PS was based on the principle of international solidarity and co-operation, and thus was a foreign policy in the service of peace. The main inspiration for the elaboration of the programme was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN, which implied that the PS would pursue a foreign policy in the service of peace that would try to achieve the disappearance of the world military blocs and disarmament. Therefore, as it was discussed in their programme of 1973, the PS proposed “a policy of progressive disengagement from the military and political blocs”, and adopting a policy of non-alignment. The party was also committed to the defence of Portuguese workers abroad, and the principles of “proletarian internationalism.” According to the party, the main aim of Portuguese foreign policy within the current context should consist in the consolidation of democracy in Portugal.²⁸⁶

Regarding the Portuguese European policy, the PS thought that Europe was the context within which the future of Portugal had to be framed. They were keen to consolidate the process of European integration, but in the sense of a Europe that would be at the service of workers, which would be a Europe that would have an independent international role in helping world equilibrium and bringing about peace. In order to play this role, Europe should be open to all

²⁸⁵ “Mais la nationalization n’est pas une fin en soi,” *Changer la vie: Programme de gouvernement du Parti socialiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).

²⁸⁶ Política Internacional, A economia na sociedade socialista, 450 RI 8, *Portugal, Congress National du Parti Socialiste portugais*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

the European people, helping to overcome the differences between Western and Eastern through the increase of economic, technical, scientific and cultural relations between them.

The construction of this imagined Europe should be based on an anti-Capitalist strategy that would annul the deep asymmetries between its regions. This Europe would be accomplished by redefining the communitarian policy. The way to change it and make it more social was through the co-operation of the European working class, by establishing a common strategy for all Western Europe workers through its political organisations and trade unions. The PS was committed to the reinforcement of the trade unionist international co-operation.

Notwithstanding this idea of Europe, the PS was in favour of the integration of Portugal into the EC as it was. The PS expected the improvement of the Portuguese social welfare from the EC integration. This should be reached through the modality of economic integration that would be favourable for the development of the Portuguese economy. Thus, the PS “indissolubly” linked the construction of Socialism in Portugal to the construction of a democratic and Socialist Europe.²⁸⁷ However, the party did not comment on whether this implied that integration with the current EC would help the construction of Socialism in Portugal, and whether later the integrated Portugal would help to construct a Socialist Europe, or if instead the Construction of a Socialist Europe would help with the construction of Socialism in Portugal and to its future integration. In any case, the PS was aware that in the short term the integration of Portugal into the EC was impossible on the current terms, due to the lack of competitiveness of the Portuguese economy with respect to the European member countries. Notwithstanding this fact, the PS proposed the open negotiations with the EC with the aim of enlarging and deepening the existing preferential commercial agreement which was signed by the government of Marcello Caetano in 1972 and taking into account the defence of the national economy and the interests of the Portuguese working class.²⁸⁸

Another issue that was tackled in the international programme of the PS was cooperation with the Third World. The PS defended the independence of these countries, and was against any kind of imperialism, as it showed by playing a prominent role in the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. Portugal, due to its geographic, cultural and socioeconomic conditions, was a country that could work as a bridge between the countries of the Third

²⁸⁷ Política Internacional, A economia na sociedade socialista, 450 RI 8, *Portugal, Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista português*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

²⁸⁸ Política Internacional, A economia na sociedade socialista, 450 RI 8, *Portugal, Congresso Nacional do Partido Socialista português*, dec. 1974, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

World and Europe. From this position, it could help to create a Euro-African space conceived in alternative terms to neo-colonialism. In order to achieve this aim, the PS proposed implementing co-operation with the Third World, and establishing economic, commercial and cultural agreements that would entail the free circulation of ideas and persons.

The PS programme shows the party's willingness to establish a new kind of Socialism in Portugal that would be unique, a specific Portuguese way to Socialism. It would be a third way between the bureaucratic Socialism implanted in Eastern Europe, and the Social Democrat model advocated in Central and Northern Europe. This kind of Socialism implied the rejection of Capitalism, although there would be some space in the economy for the private initiative, and the extension of democracy to all of the realms of social life. Thus, democracy was understood not only politically, but also economically. This means that the PS wanted to democratise the economy, and believed that it had to be done in two ways: first, planning the economy from the State, who would be the owner of a big amount of nationalised companies, and secondly, extending *autogestão* to all the companies as a way of allowing the workers to rule and decide the activities of these companies in the frame of the planned economy.

The combination of these two kinds of democracy, representative and grassroots democracy, was the ideal way to achieve Socialism. This achievement would entail the destruction of Capitalism and the establishment of a society without classes. This specific way of advancing towards Socialism was characterised by political pluralism and freedom, something that the PS programme emphasised, and that was opposed to the centralising bureaucratic ideas of the Portuguese Communists.

In this programme, it is possible to see many influences from the European Socialist parties, especially from the PSF. The very idea of establishing a unique way to Socialism is shared with the PSF. The characteristics of that specific way to Socialism are the same for the PSF and the PS. Furthermore, the stages of that path also coincided with the programmes of both parties. Therefore, since the PSF developed its programme about two years before the PS, it is possible to conclude that at the end of 1974, the French were still the main ideological point of reference for the PS.

2. The PSOE: A renovated Socialist party in Europe

The PSOE was renovated at the beginning of the 1970s as a response to the political, socio-economic, and cultural changes that Spain had gone through since the 1960s. The new atmosphere reigning in the West European Left at the beginning of the 1970s influenced this renovation. The fact that several European parties underwent similar transformations between 1971 and 1974 suggests that in order to explain the Socialist renewal in the Iberian Peninsula, traditional nation-based interpretations are insufficient. In addition to the national circumstances that prompted the Socialist renovation in Spain, it cannot be denied that the relative revitalisation of the European Socialist Left at the beginning of the 1970s, especially in France, had a part to play in this process, affecting both the timing and the nature of the renovation. Furthermore, I argue that the ideological renewal of the European Left provided the PSOE with a framework of concepts, discourses, and ideas that helped them to put forward an alternative to both Franco's regime and the other Leftist parties in Spain.

2.1. Antecedents of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party

The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español*, hereafter the PSOE) was founded in 1879. A group of twenty-five Madrid workers led by the printer and journalist Pablo Iglesias took the initiative with the aim of organising the Spanish industrial proletariat into a political party. The origin of the group was a small Marxist faction within the Spanish section of the International Workingmen's Association (IWA), which during the 1870s was dominated by Bakunin's ideas. They adopted Marxism via their contacts with Paul Lafargue and Jules Guesde, theorists who had reinterpreted and simplified Marx's analysis of society.²⁸⁹ They mixed Marxism with their own previous ideological assumptions, resulting in a peculiar ideological base for Socialist political culture in Spain. Although the PSOE considered itself Marxist, their faithfulness to Marx was superficial. Their incomprehension of the Marxist economic analysis led to Marxism becoming a rhetorical point of reference rather than a theoretical tool to be applied to analysing and criticising Spanish society.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ The interpretation of Marxism of Guesde and Lafargue was simplistic and schematic. They reduced the notion of class struggle to a dichotomous bourgeois-proletarian conflict, and mixed a fierce revolutionary rhetoric with a touch of millenarian promise. On the characteristics of the Spanish Marxism see: Pedro Ribas, *Aproximación a la historia del marxismo español (1869-1939)* (Madrid: Endymion, 1990).

²⁹⁰ Antonio Elorza and Michel Ralle, *La formación del PSOE* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1989), 121.

The first programmes of the party (in 1879, 1880 and 1888) were based on a mixture of Anarchist and Marxist ideas. The programme approved at the first national Congress in 1888 was divided into two parts: the maximum and the minimum programmes (*Programa Máximo* and *Programa Mínimo*). The objectives assumed in the maximum programme were the four highest ideals held by the party concerning the characteristics of a new Socialist society: “the possession of political power by the working class; the transformation of individual ownership of the means of production into common ownership by the whole society; the organisation of society on the basis of economic federalism, guaranteeing to all members of the workers’ collectives the full proceeds of their work; and the duty of the society to satisfy the needs of the aged and those afflicted by a handicap”.²⁹¹ It was also stated that the injustices present in society must be overcome by destroying or reforming the society that produces them, thus introducing a reformist possibility. The minimum objectives, in turn, consisted of the immediate political reforms considered necessary to advance towards the ideals of the maximum objectives. It is remarkable that the same kind of programme, divided into maximum and minimum objectives, was maintained during the whole history of the party.²⁹² This model of programme set the bases for the excision between reductionist revolutionary rhetoric and essentially pragmatic political practice that would characterise the party throughout its history.

During the 1880s, the party grew very little. One of the few remarkable events during this decade was the foundation of the journal of the party *El Socialista* in 1886, which aimed to be the major vehicle for the propagation of Socialist ideas in Spain. The journal was inspired by the French Socialist newspaper *Le Socialiste*. In fact, most of the contents of the PSOE’s journal during the early years of publication were copies or translations of texts taken from the French newspapers *Le Socialiste* and *L’Egalité*.²⁹³ This suggests that there were not many producers of intellectual work within the PSOE, and also that the influence of the French Socialist Party must have been important to the early development of the PSOE. However, the fact that the contents of *El Socialista* were mainly taken directly from France, a country that differed from Spain in its socio-economic and cultural characteristics, caused the contents to be out of context and thus of little help in Socialist analysis of Spanish society. Another

²⁹¹ Programa Máximo del PSOE, 1888. In http://www.pisa-bcn.net/blog/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=32&Itemid=57&bsb_midx=-1

²⁹² The maximum objectives adopted in 1888 were not changed until 2004.

²⁹³ Paul Heywood, *Marxism and the failure of organised socialism in Spain, 1879-1936* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 14.

significant event of this period was the founding of the trade union UGT (*Unión General de Trabajadores*) in 1888, a national union structure without any strict ideological definition to regulate political strike actions by the working class. It was to become PSOE's ally in the labour movement.²⁹⁴

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the party improved its electoral appeal, and its behaviour tended towards an ever-increasing moderation, accepting to do politics within the confines imposed by the Spanish institutions. In 1909, the Socialists agreed to a strategic coalition with the Republicans, which gave them their first parliamentary success (one seat in the parliament was occupied by Pablo Iglesias). This pragmatic decision was bound to further moderate the PSOE's political stance. However, the Revolution in Russia served as a stimulus to revolutionary Socialists in Spain. In 1919, the reformist and cautious leaders of the PSOE debated the question of whether or not to join the Communist International created by Lenin. The debate ended with the partition of the party in 1921. The Leftist pro-Comintern side of the party abandoned the PSOE and formed the Spanish Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Español*, PCE), leaving behind the more moderate faction of the party, which followed Kautsky's Social Democratic ideas in envisaging proletarian power as something established by free elections based on the use of parliament for Socialist purposes. It is important to highlight that the partition of the party shaped future attitudes towards minority rights in the PSOE. From this year onwards, the Socialists would regard Communists as a breakaway faction, and would be extremely wary of any signs of radicalism among their ranks.²⁹⁵

In 1923, when the constitutional regime in Spain was ended with a military coup, and General Primo de Rivera established a dictatorship, the Socialists cooperated with the regime, which tried to intervene in society to reconcile the interests of capital and labour. The regime fell in 1930, and although the Anarchists and the Communists, who had been outlawed by this regime, blamed the Socialists for betraying the working class, the workers did not repudiate

²⁹⁴ Some authors have considered the PSOE to be an extension of the UGT, as the Spanish Socialists considered that the bourgeois state would be eventually substituted by a state organised on the basis of the working class trade union. See: Luis Arranz Notario, "Entre el programa máximo y el programa mínimo, o cien años de socialismo en España," in *Las claves de la España del siglo XX. Tomo IV. Ideologías y movimientos políticos*, ed. Antonio Morales Moya (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal España Nuevo Milenio, 2001), 163-185. Also Juan Pablo Fusi, "El movimiento obrero en España, 1876-1914," *Revista de Occidente*, Tomo XLIV, 131 (February 1974): 204-237.

²⁹⁵ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 36-37. On the schism between Socialists and Communists in Spain see: Paul Heywood, *Marxism and the Failure of Organised Socialism in Spain 1879-1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

the Socialists for their collaboration. Furthermore, the PSOE gained support among the peasantry, especially in the southern regions of Andalusia and Extremadura.

During the 1920s and 1930s, three tendencies or factions developed within the PSOE. These could be broadly defined as the reformist tendency led by Julián Besteiro (the Right wing of the party), the Leftist revolutionary tendency led by Francisco Largo Caballero (the Left wing), and the Centrist tendency led by Indalecio Prieto. However, it is not possible to reduce internal antagonisms to simple ideological disputes, as there was a strong element of personal confrontation between the leaders of the party.²⁹⁶

By the time the Second Republic was established in 1931, the PSOE had become the most electorally important workers' party.²⁹⁷ Overall, the party could still be described as gradualist at the beginning of the 1930s—the prospect of gradual progress coming through social and economic reforms was welcomed by the vast majority of Socialists. However, the three factions outlined above clashed on several issues that led the party to internal conflicts during the whole of the Second Republic. The tendency led by Prieto was the one that worked the hardest to achieve and defend the Republic. Prieto was the Finance Minister and Minister of Public Works from 1931 to 1933, and was in favour of consolidating the Republic through an alliance with Leftist Republican parties both in parliament and office. Julian Besteiro, the head of the Right wing of the party, had Social Democratic ideas that put him politically close to Prieto. For Besteiro, Spain was not ready for socialism and it could only approach the agenda once a bourgeois revolution had been accomplished and capitalism had developed to the full. Largo Caballero, in turn, was the leader who most tried to base party activity on working-class and UGT interests. He became Minister of Labour in the Republican-Socialist coalition of 1931-1933. As a response to workers' discontentment with the insufficient reforming achievements of the new regime, he shifted to the Left with the aim of Bolshevising the PSOE.

Conflicts between tendencies emerged from these different approximations of the Spanish reality, but because they are a main characteristic of PSOE's political culture, it is important to stress again, that personality clashes also contributed to the lack of unity in the party. In this situation, the coup led by General Franco in 1936 unleashed the Civil War. The conflict

²⁹⁶ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 38.

²⁹⁷ In the elections of 1931, the PSOE was the most represented party in the Republican parliament with 117 seats out of 346.

deepened the divergences among Socialists and also enlarged the differences between them and the Communists. The latter became dominant in the Republican side owing to their control over Russian arms supplies, organisational effectiveness, and propagandist skills. When this happened, the Socialists considered that they were treated “disloyally” by the PCE. Instead of collaborating, the Communists disputed PSOE’s authority, and when their control grew in Republican zones, they removed their fellow Socialists from their institutional positions and even jailed some of them. By 1939, when the Civil War finished, all sectors of the PSOE had become anti-Communist. According to Richard Gillespie, “after the Civil War the memory of this whole factional episode was to leave the PSOE vigilant for the reappearance of tendencies and ever ready to stamp out signs of incipient organised dissidence.”²⁹⁸

After the end of the Civil War, Franco’s regime started the fierce repression of Anarchists, Communists, Republicans, and Socialists. This consisted of assassinations, executions, torture, imprisonment, and forced labour. At the same time, trade unions and political organisations were prohibited and their properties were seized. In this tough situation, many of the Spanish Socialists were forced into exile (mainly to France and Mexico). The Socialists had to fight for the survival of the group and it took some time to reorganise the PSOE. The reorganisation occurred in parallel within Spain in a clandestine manner, and in exile, where most of the party leaders found themselves.

As early as in April 1939, the Socialists remaining in Spain started to slowly recompose the group inside prisons and concentration camps. With the defeat of Mussolini and the expected victory of the Allies in the Second World War, the PSOE thought that the Allies would not allow Francoism to survive. However, the expected and desired help from the Western countries did not arrive.

The Socialists had to reorganise themselves in exile. The faction led by Indalecio Prieto, exiled in Mexico, reorganised the political strategy of the party. He tried to bring about a rapprochement with the monarchist forces in order to organise a wide anti-Francoist front, but the failure of this initiative, and the lack of intervention of the Western powers in Spain, caused Prieto to resign. The organic reconstruction of the PSOE took place in Toulouse, led by the faction exiled in France (headed by Rodolfo Llopis, Secretary General of the party from 1950). The faction exiled in Mexico recognised the primacy of their partners in France.

²⁹⁸ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 49.

The Socialists in Spain (although they kept an executive of the party inside Spain) also subordinated themselves to the faction of Toulouse for practical reasons.

The PSOE was very dependent on international support from the 1940s onwards. Their weakness made them rely on the Western powers to take on the responsibility of overthrowing Franco. All hopes of support from the Western democracies for overthrowing the regime were in vain. In 1950, the General Assembly of the UN revoked the 1946 recommendation to withdraw ambassadors from Madrid, thus internationally legitimising the regime of Franco. In the context of the Cold War, the anti-Communist Spain of Franco was not as uncomfortable for Western democracies to tolerate as it had been five years earlier. Thus, the Socialists' wishes for foreign support in overcoming the regime faced a dead-end. Discouragement spread among the members of the party.

In the 1950s and especially the 1960s, the PSOE was in decline. The most significant event in these decades was that the party was one of the founding members of the Socialist International in 1951. However, the PSOE began to decline and a new generation of young Socialists who were not linked to the party emerged inside Spain. They were mainly university students and professors, with a different perspective to the leaders of the PSOE on the Spanish situation, because they had not experienced the war or had been very young when the war finished. These academics formed several new Socialist groups in Spain. The gap between these groups in Spain and the executive committee of the PSOE in Toulouse widened progressively. While the Socialists in exile were immersed in debates about the institutional shape of the future Spain (Republic or Monarchy), in Spain itself the opposition to the regime among Socialists and others was focused on unity of action in the struggle against the regime. The PSOE in exile held the policy of waiting until the fall of Franco, which to those at home made them appear as old dogmatic Socialists who did not know anything about the situation of the country. The PSOE thus lost its appeal among the young democrats inside Spain.

2.1.1. The renovation of the PSOE

The PSOE was renovated²⁹⁹ between 1972 and 1974, but the origins of the renovation were deeper. The renovation of the party was a process that happened in three phases and began in

²⁹⁹ There are two interpretations regarding the renovation of the PSOE. The first one, held by the historian Santos Juliá, implies that the PSOE was newly founded between 1972 and 1974, using the Spanish word

the 1960s. In the first phase, the youth section of the PSOE renovated its leadership and moved it from exile to the interior of Spain. After that, it was the turn of the trade union UGT, which also renewed its executive committee, and moved it from exile to Spain. After these moves, it became the turn of the PSOE, which between 1970 and 1974 renewed the executive committee, moved the leadership to Spain, and updated the ideology and strategy of the party.

This renovation in phases was not orchestrated, but the renovators of the Youth, the UGT and the PSOE did base their claims on the same arguments, in some cases they were the same people in the three groups, and of course, the organisations influenced each other.³⁰⁰ The renovators realised that the changes that the Spanish economy and society had gone through since the beginning of the 1960s made it necessary to update the organisation, ideology, and strategy of the Socialist movement. This was essential in order to cope with Franco's regime in a new context, but also in order to avoid losing ground with other Leftist groups who had been very active in the opposition since the mid-1960s. The old leadership of the party in Toulouse could not carry out the required changes, because they had accepted that in order to overthrow Francoism it would be necessary to wait for the death of the dictator.³⁰¹ Therefore, the generational fracture, although not the only one, was a fundamental division in the process of renovation of the PSOE.³⁰²

From the beginning of the 1960s, the economic liberalisation and the consequent good performance of the economy in Spain had important social and political consequences for the

refundación to term this process. See Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*. The second one, defended by the historian Abdón Mateos, argues that it is more accurate to use the term *renovación*, which means renovation, to name the process experienced by the PSOE in the early 1970s. See Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*. Also see: Abdón Mateos, "La transición del PSOE durante los años setenta", in *Historia de la Transición en España. Los inicios del proceso democratizador*, ed. Rafael Quirosa-Cheyrouze y Muñoz (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2007), 285-299; Abdón Mateos, "El exilio y la política de la transición. Una reflexión sobre la continuidad de la izquierda parlamentaria," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, Serie V, 13 (2000): 169-188. This distinction is important because the word *refundación* implies rupture with the past of the PSOE, while *renovación* entails change in continuity. In this work I have adopted the second term, *renovación* or renovation, aware of its implications. This is important for my general argument, since I consider that PSOE's history and political culture help to explain the ideological transformation of the party in the 1970s, and especially the differences that emerge from the comparison between the case of the PSOE and the case of the PS.

³⁰⁰ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 255.

³⁰¹ Rodolfo Llopis, *emigración exilio y perspectivas del mañana* (Mexico and Paris: Tribuna, 1949). Quoted in Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 76.

³⁰² All the main historical studies on the PSOE agree regarding this issue. For Richard Gillespie and for Santos Julia, age difference between the renovators and the *históricos* was more important in order to explain the process of Socialist renovation than other sociological categories such as social class or exiled against interior. See Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 264-267; Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 397-404.

country.³⁰³ After the economic crisis at the end of the 1950s, Franco's regime abandoned the autarchic economic policy it had hitherto followed, and started a period of neo-capitalist liberalisation that brought about the so-called *milagro económico español* (1961-1973). Inspired by technocrats linked to Opus Dei, the economic reforms, which were carried out in an international context of unprecedented economic growth, helped to transform the rural Spain into an industrial and urbanised country. The Spanish economic development had several different repercussions on the society. On the one hand, although the Spanish development was unbalanced and economic growth³⁰⁴ was unequally distributed regionally and socially,³⁰⁵ it brought about the creation of a Spanish middle class and petit bourgeoisie that helped to stabilise Franco's regime. On the other hand, the emergence of a society that was progressively modern, urban, and industrial was in contradiction to the political rigidity and authoritarianism of Franco's regime. This contradiction was the origin of increasing political and social unrest in Spain, especially evident in the industrial regions where workers claimed trade union freedoms, and in the universities where students and professors claimed democratic rights and freedoms.

The change in Spanish socio-economic structures made the PSOE's traditional analysis of the Spanish situation out of date. This tradition consisted of considering the Spanish society as rural, agrarian, and backwards, deeply affected by the Civil War and the subsequent political repression, and therefore not ready to overthrow the dictatorship. The veteran leaders of the party viewed foreign intervention as the only solution for overthrowing Franco, even though this had not occurred after the Second World War. They believed that the regime was too solidly established in Spain, and that it would not be possible to overthrow it from within. At the end of the 1960s, therefore, the PSOE's leadership in exile was waiting for the natural death of Franco before trying to recover political freedom in Spain. This outdated interpretation of the Spanish situation and the subsequent passive behaviour of the veteran leaders of the party made it necessary to actualise the PSOE strategy.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ José María Jover Zamora, Guadalupe Gómez-Ferrer, and Juan Pablo Fussi Aizpúrua, *España: sociedad, política y civilización (siglos XIX-XX)* (Madrid: Areté, 2001); Enrique Moradiellos, *La España de Franco (1939-1975), política y sociedad* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2000).

³⁰⁴ The average annual growth rate in Spain during those years was close to 7%.

³⁰⁵ One of the worst social consequences of the Spanish development was the inability of the economy to absorb the surplus of the labour force that was generated by the mechanisation of the agricultural sector in particular, which led to the abandonment of rural areas and also to the spectacular increase of Spanish emigration to other European countries, especially to France, Switzerland, Germany, and South America.

³⁰⁶ On the history of the PSOE during the 1950s and 1960s, see: Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*; Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*; Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*; Paul Preston, "Decadencia y

From the beginning of the 1960s, the main group within the Spanish opposition to change its strategy and take advantage of the new context was the PCE. Taking advantage of the implantation of collective labour bargaining in 1958, the Communists began a strategy of *entrismo* that consisted of infiltrating the official trade union, *Sindicato Vertical*—a vertical trade union structure that included both employer and employee in the same organisation—and promoting strikes, actions against the regime, and solidarity among workers through institutional channels.³⁰⁷ Moreover, they combined this strategy with involvement in the university and in neighbours' committees. These activities gave the Communists a great deal of visibility, because since the beginning of the 1960s, the university had been the main focus of political protest against the regime. In addition, these activities granted the PCE support among the intellectuals, and sympathy at the social level. The combination of the Trojan horse strategy carried out through the *Comisiones Obreras* (CCOO)³⁰⁸ in the *Sindicato Vertical* with involvement in the university and the neighbours' committees granted the PCE a pre-eminent position within the opposition.³⁰⁹

Moreover, the PCE underwent an ideological renovation that moved the party away from Moscow's ideological line, which allowed the Spanish Communists to threaten the historical and political space occupied by the PSOE. The PCE, under the leadership of Santiago Carrillo, were evolving towards Eurocommunism, which implies that they proposed a democratic form of Socialism that would respect political pluralism, democratic freedoms, and the parliamentary institutions.

At the same time, in the 1960s, the PSOE was struggling, and it did not react to the socio-economic and cultural changes that Spain experienced under Franco's regime, or to the new

resurgimiento del PSOE durante el regimen franquista”, in *El Socialismo en España. Desde la fundación del PSOE hasta 1975*, Anales de Historia Vol. 1., ed. Santos Juliá (Madrid: Pablo Iglesias, 1986): 349-366.

³⁰⁷ On the workers' unrest during Franco's dictatorship see: Sebastian Balfour, *La dictadura, los trabajadores y la ciudad: el movimiento obrero en el area metropolitana de Barcelona (1939-1988)* (Valencia: Institucion Alfons el Magnanim, 1994); Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, *Productores disciplinados y minorías subversivas. Clase obrera y conflictividad laboral en la España franquista* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1998); Xavier Domènech, “El cambio político (1962-1976). Materiales para una perspectiva desde abajo,” *Historia del Presente*, 1 (2002): 46-67.

³⁰⁸ *Comisiones Obreras* were workers commissions organized and controlled by the PCE. However, not all the members were Communists, there were Catholics, workers not ideologised, etc. For the history of the CCOO see: D. Ruiz, ed., *Historia de las Comisiones Obreras (1958-1988)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1993).

³⁰⁹ Notwithstanding PCE's pre-eminent position among the opposition to the regime, it has to be noted that, according to official surveys in 1970 and 1971, in the hypothetical event of democratic elections in Spain, the difference between Socialists and Communists would not be that big. In fact, among university students, the PCE would get only a 2% of the votes. Although these surveys might be distorted by the circumstances in which they were done, they show that among the less politicised Spanish society, the Socialist option was more acceptable and appealing than the Communist. These surveys appeared in PSOE's newspaper *Le Socialiste* and are quoted in: Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 267.

activities of the Communist opposition. In the words of the historian Santos Juliá, in that decade the party was reduced to a historical memory.³¹⁰ The space left by the PSOE among the non-Communist Left in Spain was partially occupied by a plurality of small Socialist groups and parties that did not have any organic connection to the PSOE in exile. Among these groups, which were small and uncoordinated, the most important was the *Partido Socialista del Interior* (PSI). Its leader was renowned professor of the Universidad de Salamanca Enrique Tierno Galván, who had abandoned the PSOE in 1968 after a dispute with Llopis.³¹¹ He had created the PSI in Spain with some former members of the PSOE, lawyers, intellectuals; and university students. Tierno Galván had perceived the need to strengthen the Socialist party inside Spain, and by creating the PSI, he pretended to take the place of the PSOE in Spain, although he kept in mind the plan to merge on equal terms with the exiled PSOE when the right moment would arrive. In those years, Galván's party was perceived as the main Socialist option within Spain, which allowed him to establish fruitful international contacts, especially with the German Social Democrats.³¹² However, although Galván tried to get international recognition and gain entrance to the SI from 1971 onwards, he never became accepted in the International due to opposition from the PSOE's.

Other parties that challenged the PSOE's position in Spain were Socialist groups based on the Spanish historical regions.³¹³ Regional Socialist parties appeared in Catalonia, Galicia, and Valencia (the *Moviment Socialista de Catalunya* (MSC), the *Partido Socialista Galego* (PSG), the *Partit Socialista Valencià* (PSV) respectively). They were influenced by the change that the Spanish society was going through, but also by the international experiences of the Socialists in the 1960s and early 1970s. The emergence of the Third World countries, the triumph of the revolution in Cuba, the difficulties that the USA—despite being the main Capitalist power—was having in Vietnam against a popular army mainly composed of peasants, May 1968, and the Chilean experience galvanised and helped to radicalise the

³¹⁰ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 359-395.

³¹¹ On the relations between Tierno Galván and Llopis and the creation of the PSI see: Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*. Also: José Carlos Martínez Cobos, *La travesía del desierto. Intrahistoria del PSOE, 1954-1970* (Madrid: Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 1995), 172.

³¹² The PSI was receiving logistic and economic aid from the Ebert Foundation at the beginning of the 1970s and, although the SPD officially supported the PSOE (their sister party in the SI), they considered that it would be wise to keep contacts with the PSI without giving priority to any of the Socialist groups in Spain. See: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 80-84.

³¹³ The situation of the Spanish Socialist family in Spain before the death of Franco was quite complex and confusing. The historiography has named this situation a labyrinth. See: Abdón Mateos, "Del «labyrinth» socialista al «partido de la transición», in *Los partidos en la Transición. Las organizaciones políticas en la construcción de la democracia española*, ed. Rafael Quirosa-Cheyrouze y Muñoz (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2013), 221-234.

discourses, proposals and actions of these groups. Moreover, the *Alianza Sindical Obrera* (ASO), a trade union independent from the political parties appeared in the 1960s, occupying and challenging the positions of both the UGT and the PSOE.

In this complex context, the PSOE needed to react in order to avoid becoming the Spanish version of the Italian PSI—a small Socialist party in between two bigger Communist and Christian Democrat parties. This was the most likely position for the party according to the political observers at that time.³¹⁴ There was a reaction, however; it did not come from the executive committee, but from the Youth section of the party. Realising that the struggle against the regime had to take place in Spain, the Youth changed the balance of power between their sections in exile and those in Spain, privileging the latter ones. They did so with the aim of fighting the regime at home, and they considered that the best way to accomplish this aim was by cooperating with other working-class forces. Thus, the Youth section of the PSOE also called for cooperation with the PCE from 1967.

This proposition was anathema to the veteran leadership of the PSOE. One of the main characteristics of their political culture was strong anti-Communism. The relationship with the PCE had been a delicate subject in the PSOE practically since the Communist excision from the party in 1921. It was after the Civil War, however, when the Socialists thought they had been betrayed and manipulated by the Communists,³¹⁵ that the PCE became a main enemy of the PSOE, second only to Franco. This rivalry was even institutionalised, as the party statutes had prohibited the establishing of permanent coalitions with the Communists since the 1940s. Therefore, the PSOE's leadership in Toulouse rejected the proposal of the Youth section, and the Secretary General of the party, Rodolfo Llopis, accused the young of pursuing an alliance with the Communists. This was not completely true, since they had only proposed the possibility to occasionally cooperate with the PCE, but such an accusation granted Llopis the support of the PSOE's veterans for rejecting the proposals of the Youth. Notwithstanding this fact, the Youth of the PSOE, with the support of some prestigious Socialist veterans living in Spain such as Ramón Rubial, kept pursuing their objective of moving their leadership to Spain, which they actually accomplished in 1970. This opened a

³¹⁴ Antonio Santesmases Gracia, *Repensar la izquierda: evolución ideológica del socialismo en la España actual* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1993), 27.

³¹⁵ Helen Graham, *El PSOE en la Guerra Civil: poder, crisis y derrota (1936-1939)* (Barcelona: Debate, 2005).

conflict between the PSOE's leadership who condemned this adventurist movement, and the Youth section, which led to the suspension of financial aid from the party to the Youth.³¹⁶

The Youth set a precedent that would have greater consequences. They moved their leadership to Spain, renewing the members of their executive without the consent of the PSOE.³¹⁷ This opened a path that many within the party saw as necessary to follow. Only a year after the renovation of the Youth, the PSOE's trade union, the UGT, held its eleventh Congress in exile (August, 1971). The main issue discussed at this Congress was the need to move the leadership of the organisation to Spain, which was approved, and the renovation of all the members of the previous executive commission. Thus, the UGT also moved to the interior, as it elected a new executive composed of five members living in exile and nine members living in Spain, among whom there were some of the future renovators of the PSOE. The new executive worked as a collegiate organism, in which all the members had equal importance.³¹⁸ The positions of President and Secretary General were eliminated, which implied the fall of Rodolfo Llopis from the presidency of the UGT.

This renovation was especially relevant because before this congress, the leaders of the PSOE and those of the UGT in Spain were practically the same. Therefore, it was a prelude to the renovation that the PSOE would experience a year later. Moreover, the relevance of the renovation of the UGT lies in the fact that it also changed the political strategy of the trade union. At the congress of 1971, the UGT passed a political resolution in which they called for cooperation with all the anti-Francoist forces of Spain. Although it was not clearly expressed, this implied the acceptance of collaboration with the Communists and their related trade union CCOO.³¹⁹

With these precedents, the PSOE Congress had its turn in 1972, when changes in the party were also to be implemented. However, this time the veteran leadership in exile did not let changes happen as they had done in the case of the Youth and the UGT. Their resistance to the process of renovation and losing control over the party brought about the partition of the

³¹⁶ The paragraphs on the renovation of the Youth section here are mostly based on Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 244-255.

³¹⁷ The only member of the Youth Executive Committee that was still in exile after the renovation was Manuel Simón.

³¹⁸ The members of the collegiate executive were Nicolás Redondo, Felipe González, Eduardo López Albizu, Agustín González, Enrique Múgica, Pablo Castellano, Manuel Simón, Antonio García Duarte, José Mata, Paulino Barrabés and Juan Iglesias.

³¹⁹ On the renovation of the UGT see: Abdón Mateos, *Exilio y Clandestinidad. La reconstrucción de la UGT, 1939-1977* (Madrid: UNED, 2002).

PSOE into two. The basic arguments for the renovation of the PSOE were the same as for the renovation of the Youth and the UGT. The regime and Spain had changed since the 1960s, which was something that the veteran leadership in exile had failed to see. Therefore, in order to adapt to the new circumstances and fight against the dictatorship, it was necessary to move the executive committee from exile to Spain, change the strategy and the activities of the party, and consequently reconsider the possibility of cooperation between the PSOE and the Communists. In other words, the PSOE needed an organic, ideological, and tactical renovation.

These arguments mainly came from young members of the party who lived in Spain.³²⁰ It was the so-called Seville group³²¹ that defended these ideas most convincingly and persuasively. This group counted among them two young members, Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra, that travelled to France at the end of the 1960s letting the exiled leadership know of their existence and their claims. Felipe González is usually portrayed at that time as a young, brilliant and charismatic person who was gifted with extraordinary oratorical powers. He had arrived at Socialism via progressive Catholicism at university,³²² and although at that point he was one of the most radical members of the PSOE ideologically, he was also considered very pragmatic. He was a labour lawyer. Before starting his work he had enjoyed a scholarship to study for six months in Louvain (Belgium) in 1965, where he had learned French and become familiar with the difficult situation of the Spanish immigrants in Europe.³²³ Alfonso Guerra was also from Seville and only two years older than González; Guerra was born in 1940 and González in 1942. He graduated in philosophy, and he was an industrial expert. He was also among the most radical members of the party; at least according to the other party members, who named him and the Seville group in general the “Young Turks”.³²⁴

Already in 1970, González defended the necessity for an organic renovation within the PSOE, at the 11th Congress of the party in exile. This argument started to gain supporters in the PSOE in Spain, as well as in exile, which was reflected in the renovation of the UGT a year

³²⁰ Notwithstanding this fact, many PSOE exiles and the large federations of Asturias and Vizcaya in the north of Spain, were also responsible of the renovation of the party.

³²¹ The Seville Group or *Grupo de Sevilla* was a small group of Socialists from Seville that were the core of the non-recognised PSOE's Federation of Andalusia. It was composed of young university graduates and doctors such as Felipe González, Alfonso Guerra, Rafael Escuredo, Manuel del Valle, Guillermo Galeote, Luis Yáñez, and Alfonso Fernández Malo and of the veteran Alfonso Fernández Torres. They came to be known in the party at the end of the 1960s thanks to their dynamism and their travels around Spain and France.

³²² Alfonso Guerra, *Felipe González. De Suresnes a la Moncloa* (Madrid: Novatex, 1984), 23.

³²³ Guerra, *Felipe González*, 30.

³²⁴ Guerra, *Felipe González*, 28-29.

later, as we have seen above. However, another idea defended by González and the renovators from Seville did not attract the same support within the party. This was the proposal to establish contacts with the Communists in Spain. At that point, taking into account the relative strength and dynamism of the PCE, which was trying to bring together the opposition against Franco by organising the so-called *Mesa Democrática*,³²⁵ the group of Seville considered that it was necessary to open the possibility of negotiating with the Communists. However, the veteran members of the party and the resolutions of the previous PSOE Congress were against this possibility. According to these resolutions, the PSOE should favour cooperation with other political forces with the immediate aim of re-establishing democracy in Spain, but not with the Communists, who were considered anti-democratic. In 1970, the Congress of the PSOE clearly stated that the PCE was excluded from this call for cooperation.³²⁶

But, as I mentioned above, at their Congress of 1971, the UGT approved the same thesis that González defended at the PSOE Congress. In that year, the contradiction that existed between the resolutions of the PSOE and UGT Congresses regarding the cooperation with the Communists brought about a crisis in the party that paralysed its political action. This led the Executive Committee of the PSOE to call for an extraordinary Congress in February 1972 that would deal exclusively with the relations between Socialists and Communists. However, immediately after this call, the Director Committee, which was the highest organism of the PSOE between Congresses, decided to have an ordinary Congress, which would include not only the issue of the relations between Socialists and Communists, but also the re-election of the Executive Committee of the party. Foreseeing the danger that this implied to his position, Llopis did not organise the Congress, which had to be postponed until August.

Finally, the twelfth Congress of the PSOE in exile took place from 13th to 15th August 1972. This Congress was not recognised by the Secretary General of the party Llopis, and by part of the Executive Committee, who in turn organised another Congress in December 1972, without the participation of the renovators. This implied the split of the PSOE into two parts. On the one hand, the organisers of the August Congress comprised the renovators living in Spain and some members of the Executive Committee living in exile (in addition to the

³²⁵ On the unitary attempts of the anti-Franco opposition see: Gustavo Muñoz, “La Mesa Democrática, primer intento de unidad antifranquista de la oposición en los setenta”, paper presented in the II Congreso de la Asociación de Historiadores del Presente. De la dictadura a la democracia (Madrid, 5 May/Melilla 6-8 May 2005).

³²⁶ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 275; Mateos, *el PSOE contra Franco*, 429.

members of the important federations of Paris, Toulouse, and Zurich).³²⁷ On the other hand, the organisers of the December Congress included Rodolfo Llopió and his followers, who were the old leaders of the party (I. Torregosa, J. Martínez de Velasco, and J. Pallarés),³²⁸ and the members of some federations living in exile (especially in Mexico and France) and in Spain. In general terms, the renovators had more support than the group led by Llopió in Spain—although this support was not unanimous—and slightly more support in exile. Moreover, they counted the support of the UGT, which had more members and economic resources than the PSOE.³²⁹

The relevance of this Congress lies in the fact that it split the party, and not as much on the political resolutions themselves. Notwithstanding this fact, the Congress of August showed an increasing ideological radicalisation in the PSOE. The renovators approved a political resolution that considered the urgent necessity for establishing a democratic regime in Spain. They also stated that the conquest of a bourgeois democracy was only instrumental for the PSOE. Democracy was only a means that would allow the party to fight better for their final objective, which was to reach Socialism. Thus, the renovators stated that the tasks of the PSOE from that moment onwards would be to strengthen the party, unify all of the Spanish Socialist family, foment popular movements in the workplaces, universities, and neighbourhoods, and collaborate with other groups in the opposition in order to achieve the most immediate objective: hampering the continuity of the Spanish regime after the death of Franco. This time, the PSOE did not establish any restrictions regarding the collaboration with the Communists.³³⁰

Regarding economic policy, the PSOE was in favour of a democratically planned economy. The party proposed the nationalisation of private banks and the socialisation of mines, power sources, monopolies and the most important companies in heavy industry. These companies would work through the workers' self-management (*autogestión*), and would be directed by a democratically elected enterprise committee.³³¹ This was only a superficially sketched economic programme, but it implied a change from the former programmes of the party. The PSOE proposed massive nationalisations, and also used the concept of *autogestión* in their programme. Although this concept had its origins in Spain in the Second Republic and in the

³²⁷ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 281.

³²⁸ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 410.

³²⁹ Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 440.

³³⁰ "Posición Política," *Le Socialiste*, 537 (21/09/1972): 1.

³³¹ AE-115-1, Programa mínimo, XII Congreso del PSOE, Archive FPI.

self-management experiences of the Civil War, and from the 1950s onwards it was used in the frame of the university contestation to the regime, it only became fashionable at the beginning of the 1970s. As we saw in the previous chapter, it was the French Socialists who brought the concept back to Western Europe, although the Yugoslavian experience also had direct influence in Spain.³³²

As has been sketched above, the main reasons for the rupture between the renovators and the old leadership of the party were strategic, organisational, ideological, and personal. It is worth devoting some more space here to further explain these differences between the two factions of the PSOE, since in the nuances we can find clues to help us understand the political and ideological development of the PSOE during the transition to democracy.

The main difference between the renovators and the veterans (who would be called the *históricos* after this congress) regarding strategy was that the renovators wanted to get the party involved in the struggle against Franco's regime in Spain, while the *históricos* preferred to keep the PSOE alive and wait for Franco's death. The renovators believed that now that the dictator was close to death, the intensification of the struggle against his regime was necessary, in order to bring about the fall of the dictatorship. Moreover, as I mentioned above, the PCE was very active in the fight against the regime, and the renovators thought that occasional agreements with the Communists would be a wise tactical move for the PSOE for two reasons: first, to help with the immediate aim of overthrowing the dictatorship, and second, because it could help the PSOE not to lose ground to the PCE and the other Leftist groups in the opposition. On the other hand, the *históricos* rejected any kind of approach towards the Communists, and expected that when Franco passed away, the name of the party and its historical importance to the history of Spain's workers would be enough to grant the PSOE a preeminent position in post-Franco Spain.³³³ Their arguments against any rapprochement with the PCE were based on their experiences in the popular front during the Civil War. The veteran Socialists still regarded the PCE as an anti-democratic party,³³⁴ and they thought that an alliance between Socialists and Communists would be a tactical error,

³³² Francisco Fernández Buey and Jordi Mir García, "Apropiación del futuro: revuelta estudiantil y autogestión durante el tardo-franquismo y la transición," *Desacuerdos. Sobre arte, políticas y esfera pública en el Estado español*, 6 (2011): 161-181.

³³³ This idea was shared by both sectors of the PSOE. The renovators also believed that the initials PSOE would be very important during the transition due to the historical memory.

³³⁴ This was despite the fact that since 1956, the PCE had engaged in a *política de reconciliación nacional* that had led them to accept democracy.

because it would permit Franco's regime to promote propaganda against a new popular front.³³⁵

The differences between both factions of the PSOE regarding the organisation of the party were linked to their differences on strategy. For the renovators, it was essential to move the leadership of the party to Spain, since this would allow them to organise the struggle against the regime better. Moreover, the individualistic way in which Rodolfo Llopis had been running the party in the last decades, and the huge degree of power he had achieved in the party (personalism, or dependence on the leader of the party, is a characteristic that is continuously present in the history of the PSOE) were seen by the renovators as negative elements within a Socialist and democratic organisation such as the PSOE. Therefore, they considered that this was something to be avoided in the future. In fact, after the rupture of the party at the Congress of August 1972, the new Executive Committee abolished the position of Secretary General, and started to work as a collegiate organism, exactly like the UGT had done a year earlier. The renovators moved the leadership of the party to Spain and kept five out of the sixteen members of the Executive Committee who lived in exile. It is needless to say that regarding organisation, the *históricos* wanted to preserve their position of power within the party and that all their actions were aimed at making sure of this.

With regards to ideology, all the historiography on the PSOE assumes that the differences between the two factions of the PSOE did not determine the rupture of the party. Both factions based their actions on the same principles and shared the same final aim, namely "the conquest of the political and economic power by the working class and the radical transformation of the Capitalist society into a Socialist one through democratic means." However, there were some differences in the way that both groups interpreted ideology that are worth noting.

For the veteran leadership of the party, Marxism which was the cornerstone of PSOE's ideology, had become a rhetorical point of reference rather than a theoretical tool to be applied to analysing and criticising the Spanish society.³³⁶ In fact, they were very cautious

³³⁵ On the relation between PSOE and PCE in Franco's dictatorship see: Sergio Gálvez Biesca and Gustavo Muñoz, "Historia de una colaboración y competición política durante el franquismo. Las relaciones PCE-PSOE (1944-1974)" in *Historia del PCE. I congreso (1920-1977)*, Vol. 2, ed. M. Bueno, J. Hinojosa and C. García (Madrid: FIM, 2007), 45-58.

³³⁶ According to Antonio Elorza and Ralle Michel, who have studied the creation of the PSOE and the history of the party from the late 19th century to the Civil War, the PSOE considered itself Marxist from the beginning, but the faithfulness to Marx was superficial. The main reason for that was the strong anarchist tradition among the

and moderate in their political actions, avoiding any direct confrontation with the Spanish regime, which is explained by their tough experiences in the Civil War, in the first years of Franco's repression, and during the long exile. In order to understand the moderation and non-confrontational policies of the *históricos*, it is also important to note the fact that while in exile, they had socialised with the European Social Democratic parties of the Socialist International, which had progressively abandoned Marxism between the 1950s and 1960s.³³⁷ In fact, the PSOE's survival had depended to an important extent on the solidarity of their European counterparts.³³⁸

On the other hand, the renovators, who were younger and had not directly experienced the war, had a richer theoretical formation—acquired mostly in the universities—and were convinced Marxists. According to the biographies of Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra,³³⁹ the group of Seville had been influenced by several ideological tendencies, such as progressive Catholicism, the New Left (represented by the French Michel Rocard, or the Italian Lelio Basso), rediscovered classics, such as Rosa Luxemburg, and by the Marxist group CERES, which was an influential faction in the PSF. At the moment of the party rupture, they used Marxism to give a solid theoretical base to their plans for fighting more actively against the regime, emphasising the dialectic as an analytical method for understanding the Spanish reality, and proposing new ways of action. In the years between 1972 and 1977, theory and practice became intimately linked for the renovators of the PSOE, since they tried to establish a permanent link between immediate objectives (not necessarily leading to Socialism, although tactically important for the overall struggle for Socialism) and the final objective of reaching the Socialist society.³⁴⁰ This interpretation of Marxism gave the young renovators a lot of flexibility in their political action, and could justify almost any kind of contradiction between their immediate political behaviour and their theoretical final aim

Spanish workers and especially the incomprehension of Marxist economic analysis among the members of the PSOE. This led the concept Marxism to becoming a rhetorical point of reference more than a tool that informed action. See: Antonio Elorza and Michel Ralle, *La formación del PSOE* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1989), 121.

³³⁷ In 1959 the German SPD abandoned Marxism in their Bad Godesberg Congress. Previously, in 1956, the BLP had abandoned its main Marxist characteristics, although the party had never called itself Marxist. The Austrian SPÖ abandoned Marxism, although they kept linking the party with the Austrian-Marxist tradition, in 1958. The SFIO did not abandon the Marxist label, but in practice its political action was at odds with Marxism. On the revisionism of the Western European Socialist parties in the 1950s and 1960s see: Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, 241-273.

³³⁸ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*.

³³⁹ Alfonso Guerra, *Cuando el tiempo nos alcanza. Memorias 1940-1982* (Barcelona: Espasa Calpe, 2004); Guerra, *Felipe González*. Additionally: Alfonso Palomares, *Felipe González. El hombre y el político* (Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2005); José García Abad, *Las mil caras de Felipe González* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2006).

³⁴⁰ Julia, *Los socialistas en la política española*.

Finally, the personal differences between renovators and *históricos* are also important for explaining the rupture of the party. As I mentioned above, the concentration of power in the hands of Llopió created discomfort in some members of the party. The main differences existed mostly among the veterans of the party, which helps to explain that some of the veterans of both the interior and exile aligned themselves with the young renovators from Seville. Due to the control that Llopió had exerted over the party during the last decades, he was involved in the main quarrels. Moreover, Llopió practically monopolised the international relations of the party, and the renovators thought that he was losing the favour of their European counterparts, which was essential for the survival of the party. This made it compulsory to reactivate the PSOE in Spain, but also in Europe.³⁴¹

2.2. International mediation and how the SI recognised the renovators as the true PSOE

At the beginning of 1973, there were two PSOs: the renovated PSOE(r) and the historic PSOE(h). The first had moved the leadership of the party to Spain, counted on the support of 60 to 65% of the affiliates,³⁴² and had no formal leader, as the Executive Committee ruled the party in a collegiate manner.³⁴³ The historic PSOE kept the executive in exile; it was still led by Rodolfo Llopió, and enjoyed the support of 35 to 40% of the affiliates. Both the historic and the renovated PSOE claimed to be the legitimate representatives of Spanish Socialism in the Socialist International (SI), because being recognised by this organisation was a source of both legitimacy and political, material, and economic support that was crucial to their survival. According to the PSOE(r), their Congress in August 1972 was the legitimate one, and the group led by Llopió had not accepted the democratic rules of the party. On the other hand, the PSOE(h) presented the renovators as secessionists, and accused them of trying to put the party in the hands of the Communists. This accusation was not credible because the renovators included well-known anti-Communist veterans living both in Spain and in exile.³⁴⁴

³⁴¹ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 97-98.

³⁴² This is an approximate figure. See: Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 440.

³⁴³ The members of that executive included Juan Iglesias, Francisco López Real, Fernando Gutiérrez, Arsenio Jimeno, Carmen García Bloise (all of them living exile), Enrique Múgica, Felipe González, Nicolás Redondo, Pablo Castellano, Ramón Rubial, Luis Alonso, Eduardo López Albizu, Agustín González, Guillermo Galeote, Alfonso Guerra (all of them living in Spain).

³⁴⁴ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 410.

This double claim involved the SI directly within the Spanish conflict, as it had to act as arbitrator between the two factions of PSOE. For this purpose, the SI created a special commission in December 1972, which decided in January 1974 that the renovated PSOE(r) was the legitimate representative of Spanish Socialism. Until then, the main efforts of the PSOE(r) had been spent on being recognised by the SI; from that moment onwards, the task of the renovated PSOE would be different. In the context of the end the regime, numerous Leftist groups and parties emerged in Spain, and the PSOE had to promote and make credible a new image—that of a party well-placed in the Left, far from the reformist West European Social Democracy and from the Socialism that existed in Eastern Europe.³⁴⁵ In order to do so, it was necessary to update and radicalise the PSOE ideology. This was accomplished by emphasising the most radical aspects of the PSOE's ideology throughout its long history and incorporating new ideas and concepts borrowed from abroad.

The fact that the PSOE was a member of the SI, and that both factions were seeking the recognition of the International, would have been enough for the Western European Socialist parties to become interested in what was happening in the Spanish party, but the fact that the schism of the PSOE occurred in the context of *tardofranquismo*, (Franco was more than 80 years old and the only organised party in the opposition was the Communist party) increased the concern and the involvement of the European Socialism in PSOE's internal problems.

The split of the PSOE added complexity to the above-mentioned intricate panorama of the Spanish opposition. The PCE was the strongest organisation in the opposition to the regime, which was already a problem for the Socialists, but a potentially bigger problem for them was the factionalism of the Spanish Socialist family. Thus, immediately after the partition of the PSOE, the International created a special commission³⁴⁶ with the aim of reconciling both factions instead of recognising one faction over the other. At the beginning of the 1970s, members of the BLP visited Spain and noted that the main problem of the Spanish Socialists, even before the rupture of the PSOE, was the lack of unity. Based on that assumption, the SI believed that the Spanish Socialists should unify in order to face the situation that would emerge after the death of Franco.

³⁴⁵ This idea is stated by Felipe González: Pierre Guidoni and Felipe González, *Entretiens sur le socialisme en Espagne* (Tema: Paris, 1976), 40.

³⁴⁶ This special commission was composed of the PSF, the BLP, the Chilean Radical Party, the SAP, both the Italian Socialist and Social Democratic parties, and the vice secretary of the SI, Rodney Balcomb.

In the SI, this idea was especially supported by the SPD, the BLP and the SPÖ. These parties realised that the PSOE's split was a problem, but they also saw the opportunity for tackling the issue of factionalism within Spanish Socialism. Therefore, they proposed to work for the unification of the whole Spanish Socialist family, which meant reconciling the two rival factions of the PSOE, but not only these factions. They thought that the PSI of Tierno Galván should also be considered as a part of that union. The PSI was not a member of the SI, but it was looking for international recognition and support. Moreover, the PSI was attractive to the Europeans, because it was established inside Spain, its leader Tierno Galván was well known in Spain and abroad, and it was active within the Spanish university. All of these elements made the European Social Democrats believe that this party should merge with the two factions of the PSOE, in order to strengthen the Socialist alternative in Spain.

However, both factions of the PSOE rejected the idea of working in that direction, which made the SI realise as early as in March 1973 that working for the unification of the Spanish Socialists, and even for the reconciliation of the PSOE factions, was useless. Both PSOE factions rejected even the possibility of meeting with representatives of the PSI at the meetings of the special commission.³⁴⁷ At this moment, they wanted exclusive recognition by the SI, and they did not accept the recommendations of their European counterparts.

Both PSOE factions wanted the unification of the Spanish Socialists to happen on their own terms, and they specifically excluded the possibility of unifying the party with the PSI, the main reason being that Tierno Galván “[was] not a Socialist and he [was] determined to destroy the PSOE [...]”³⁴⁸ Thus, it became necessary for the SI to stop working for unwanted unification, and to choose the legitimate representative of the Spanish Socialism from among PSOE's factions. By mid-1973, most of the member parties of the SI and the special commission created for solving the PSOE's problems were in favour of recognising the Spanish renovators. However, the SPD and the SPÖ still had doubts.³⁴⁹ When it was clear that the renovators had better chances of being recognised as the legitimate PSOE by the SI, the sector of the PSOE led by Llopis forgot about the differences that had separated them from

³⁴⁷ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 112; Miguel Peydró Caro, *Las Escisiones del PSOE y los intentos de reunificación* (Esplugas de Llobregat: Plaza y Janés, 1980), 132-146.

³⁴⁸ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 120.

³⁴⁹ The failure of the reconciliation bothered some of the party members of the SI. The German and Austrian Social Democrats even suggested expelling the PSOE from the SI until they solved their internal problems. On the involvement of the SI in the resolution of the partition of the PSOE see: Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 45-54; also Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 444-455. On the stance of the SPD within the SI, see: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 110-123.

the group of Tierno Galván in the past. As a way of appearing to be the correct option in the eyes of the SI, Llopis and Tierno Galván began negotiations with the aim of merging both groups. In this unclear situation, a new visit by some members of British Labour to Spain was fundamental in August 1973.³⁵⁰ As we will see later in greater detail, the British favoured the renovators, and their report was very influential in persuading the Bureau of the SI to accept the PSOE(r) as the only representative of the Spanish Socialism in the SI.³⁵¹

For the final decision of the SI, it was also important that the PSOE(r), with the aim of being chosen as the legitimate Spanish Socialist party, began regularly providing information to their European counterparts in 1973. Felipe González was the person in charge of establishing contacts with the main European Socialist leaders and according to the memoirs of Alfonso Guerra, he soon gained a positive international reputation through his work in this field.³⁵² These activities were important since PSOE's European colleagues could thereby satisfy their need for information about the relatively unknown Spanish party.

At the same time, however, the collegiate Executive Committee of the PSOE(r) did not work very well. The party did not progress politically, which means that it did not increase its involvement in the anti-Francoist struggle in Spain, nor organisationally, as the party did not grow enough to even recover from the losses caused by the split.³⁵³ The only progress they made was achieving international recognition by the SI and the ideological definition of the party. However, internal differences in the party appeared even at the ideological level, which to some extent were clashes of personalities in the Executive Committee. The protagonists of these clashes were, again, the group from Seville.

Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra had become secretary of formation and press secretary respectively after the August Congress, and they were responsible for the content published in PSOE's newspaper *El Socialista*. Together with other members of the group of Seville, they wrote most of the content of the articles published. After their work, they had to send the content of the newspaper to Arsenio Jimeno, their colleague in the Executive, who published it in Paris. The problem emerged because Jimeno edited some of the contents that he judged too radical and theoretical. González and Guerra did not accept this interference, which they considered to be censorship. Thus, González and other members of *El Socialista*'s editorial

³⁵⁰ The BLP was the only party of the SI, apart from the Italian PSI, that visited Spain in these years.

³⁵¹ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 52.

³⁵² Guerra, *Felipe González*, 59

³⁵³ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 288.

staff resigned in 1973. Moreover, the Seville group was critical of how those responsible for the international relations of the party, Pablo Castellano and Enrique Múgica, were doing their work. All of these problems were not solved until the 13th Congress of October 1974, when a new Executive Committee emerged with Felipe González as a clear leader.³⁵⁴

The member parties of the Bureau of the SI announced on 6th January 1974 that the legitimate representative of Spanish Socialism within the SI was the PSOE(r)—hereafter called simply the PSOE. The whole process of evaluation and decision, which took a little longer than a year, served to attract international attention to the PSOE and the Spanish political situation. On the very day of the PSOE's recognition, the SI proposed the creation of the Spain Committee, which would work for the promotion of democracy in Spain and support the PSOE in this struggle.

2.3. The PSOE and the BLP in 1974

Together with the PSF, and perhaps the PSI,³⁵⁵ the BLP was the main European Socialist party to develop fruitful, although not too intense, relations with the renovated PSOE before its recognition by the SI. As we saw above, the British supported the renovators of the PSOE after the split of the party, because during two visits to Spain in 1973, they had realised that this faction was more politically active than the PSOE(h). Moreover, they noted that the renovators had greater support than the *históricos* among the workers, in the youth section of the party (important for the future), and in the trade union UGT, which was relevant because it was a channel for potentially influencing the Spanish working class, and because the UGT was already receiving the moral as well as financial support of the European trade union movement.³⁵⁶

Before starting to develop the narrative of the relations between the BLP and the PSOE, it is necessary to take the wider political frame into account, which means paying attention to the relations between the UK and Franco's Spain and their implications before the beginning of the transition to democracy. As the BLP was in government between 1964 and 1970, it is

³⁵⁴ See the main works on the history of the PSOE quoted above: Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*; Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*; Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*.

³⁵⁵ This is what some comments and information in the documentation consulted suggest.

³⁵⁶ On the International support of the UGT in the 1970s see: Manuela Aroca Mohedano, *Internacionalismo en la historia reciente de la UGT, 1971-1986. Del tardofranquismo a la estabilización de la democracia* (Madrid: Fundación Largo Caballero. Ediciones Cinca, 2011).

necessary to devote some space to the relations of the Labour leadership with the Spanish regime during those years. Considering the behaviour of the Labour Governments in the 1960s and 1970s with respect to Spain will help to trace continuities and discontinuities, and to analyse the most important factors and motivations that explain the actions of the BLP during the transition to democracy in Spain. Moreover, by attending to the behaviour of the Labour government towards Spain in the 1960s, we can appreciate the differences and similarities that existed between the objectives and actions of the Leftist rank and file of the BLP, to which the leaders of the party subscribed when in opposition, and those of the Labour government.³⁵⁷

Since the 1960s, the relations between Spain and the UK pivoted around two issues: Gibraltar and the Spanish attempts to get closer to the EEC. In this decade, the bilateral relations between both countries were very tense due to the issue of Gibraltar. The British emplacement at the south of the Iberian Peninsula was a thorn in the side of a proud nationalist regime such as the Spanish one, and Spain demanded the devolution of Gibraltar since the 1950s. At the same time, keeping Gibraltar was essential for the UK due to its crucial geo-strategic position, which allowed the British to control the entrance to the Mediterranean from the Atlantic.³⁵⁸ Thus, the interests of both countries in Gibraltar were irreconcilable. However, it was after 1964, after the victory of the BLP in the British elections, that the relations between Spain and the UK became more strained. Before achieving power, Harold Wilson had been publicly very tough against Franco's regime, and the rank and file of the Labour movement, for whom Spain was "more an emotion than a country",³⁵⁹ had campaigned against the regime on several occasions at the beginning of the 1960s. Consequently, the Spanish regime did not welcome the arrival of Labour to the British government, and this feeling was reflected in their bilateral relations.

³⁵⁷ The British-Spanish relations in the final years of Francoism and during the transition to democracy are, surprisingly, little researched. In the following paragraphs I have followed the main works in the topic, so far. Oscar José Martín García, "Gran Bretaña y España. Relaciones y estrategias para el fin de una dictadura (1969-1977)", in *Claves internacionales de la transición española*, ed. Oscar José Martín García and Manuel Ortiz Heras (Madrid: Catarata, 2010), 148-173; Carolina Labarta Rodríguez-Maribona, "Las relaciones hispano-británicas bajo el franquismo, 1950-1973," *Studia Histórica. Historia Contemporánea*, 22 (2004); Carolina Labarta Rodríguez-Maribona, "La política británica de venta de armas a España durante el franquismo, 1953-1973," *Historia Contemporánea*, 30 (2005): 205-216.

³⁵⁸ Notwithstanding this fact, the relations with Spain never were a priority for the UK, not even during the years of greater confrontation over Gibraltar. Labarta, "Las relaciones hispano-británicas," 88.

³⁵⁹ This was the opinion of a representative of the International Mineworkers when he visited Spain in 1977. Quoted in: Martín, "Gran Bretaña y España," 160.

Franco's regime showed its hostility towards the new British government by starting a diplomatic campaign against the UK in the UN because of Gibraltar,³⁶⁰ and imposing strict restrictions on the frontier between the Rock and Spain. The British response was a boycott of armament sales to Spain. However, the pressure exerted by the Spanish seemed to be more effective than the pressure exerted by the British, firstly because Spain could supply its army with American and French armaments, and secondly, because the Spanish claims against the British presence in Gibraltar found some support in the UN among the Third World countries concerned with decolonisation. This was an international embarrassment for the UK that led the British to try to improve their relations with Spain from the late 1960s onwards. From 1969, they avoided public criticism of Franco's regime, and tried to freeze the issue of Gibraltar. This realistic and pragmatic approach taken by the Labour government showed that Wilson's foreign policy towards Spain had to be adapted to the international, commercial, and strategic interests of the UK.

The British-Spanish conflict on Gibraltar receded in importance at the beginning of the 1970s, when the Conservatives again reached power in the UK. The main reason for this, beyond the reciprocal low-level hostility between the British Conservatives and Franco's Spain, was the renewed interest of Spain in the UK now that it began to approach the EC after De Gaulle's veto disappeared. The Spanish regime was very interested in approaching Europe, and better relations with the UK could facilitate this objective. The British, in turn, took the chance to freeze the dispute over Gibraltar, trying to keep it down.

In 1974, when Wilson regained the government, the Labour administration took a very similar line to the one followed by the Conservatives, aimed at keeping down the litigations regarding Gibraltar. However, the expected imminent death of Franco, the pressure coming from the increasingly important Left wing of the BLP, and the experience of the situation in Portugal, committed the Labour government to discreetly support the democratisation of Spain through several channels—namely diplomatic, party, and transnational channels. The PSOE would play an important role in the strategy of the Labour government for promoting a peaceful transition to democracy in Spain, and avoiding any radical shift towards the Right or the Left in Spain after Franco. Nevertheless, the Spanish regime was much more susceptible to British interference in Spanish affairs than to the activities of other European actors, and did not

³⁶⁰ The aggressive stance of Spain towards the UK on Gibraltar also has to be understood as a response to internal problems, and as a campaign for pressing the US to make a better agreement in the renovation of the defense Alliance between both countries.

hesitate to use the issue of Gibraltar against the UK in order to limit British political activities in Spain.³⁶¹

Since 1962, Franco's regime had been interested in joining the EC for economic reasons. Spain applied for association as a first step towards total integration in 1962 for the first time, and the only answer from the EC was an acknowledgment of receipt. Immediately after the first Spanish attempt to join the EC, Willy Birkelbach, who was a Socialist member of the European Parliament (EP), presented a report establishing some political and institutional conditions for the new members to be accepted in the Communities, the most important being to be a democratic State, to the political commission of the EP. Notwithstanding this fact, Franco's regime applied again in 1964, and Spain and the EC began negotiations that culminated in the signing of the Preferential Trade Agreement in 1970.³⁶² From this moment on, it became clear to the regime, especially to its young and reformist technocrats, that Spain's economic development and modernisation should be linked to greater integration into the EC.³⁶³ After the British accession to the EC, this trade agreement had to be renegotiated and in the eyes of the Spanish, the UK became a potential ally in their attempts to get closer to Europe. Thus, Franco's regime tried to cultivate better relations with the British after the UK's integration in the EC in 1973, and the British government publicly encouraged Spain's rapprochement with Europe.

On the other hand, for the Spanish opposition, it was fundamental to keep Franco's Spain away from Europe. The Spanish literature has tended to emphasise the idea that one of the ideological meeting points between all the political forces (both in the opposition and within the regime) in Spain at the beginning of the transition to democracy was the consensus on the need to integrate the country into the European Community.³⁶⁴ While this is an accepted interpretation, it has downplayed the fact that this shared Europeanist feeling had deep origins, and therefore different meanings for each of these forces.³⁶⁵

³⁶¹ Martín, "Gran Bretaña y España," 170.

³⁶² Víctor Fernández Soriano, "Las Comunidades Europeas frente al franquismo," *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 32 (2010): 153-174.

³⁶³ Raimundo Bassols, "Europa en la Transición española" in *La política exterior de España en el siglo XX*, ed. Javier Tusell, Juan Avilés and Rosa Pardo (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2000).

³⁶⁴ This interpretation can be found in Berta Álvarez-Miranda, *El sur de Europa y la adhesión a la Comunidad. Los debates políticos* (Madrid: CIS, 1996); Julio Crespo MacLennan, *España en Europa, 1945-2000. Del ostracismo a la modernidad* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2004); Miguel Ángel Quintanilla, *La integración europea y el sistema político español, 1979-1999* (Madrid: Congreso de los Diputados, 2001).

³⁶⁵ This reflection is present in: Maria Elena Cavallaro, "El europeísmo y la oposición desde el franquismo hasta la Transición democrática", in *Historia de la Transición en España. Los inicios del proceso democratizador*, ed.

In the case of the PSOE, the party was seduced by both the Federalist idea of Europe and its democratic character from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s.³⁶⁶ It was one of the founders of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement, and it was a protagonist at the meeting of the European Movement International in Munich in 1962, when the different tendencies of the Spanish opposition demanded that the EC refuse to admit Franco's Spain into the organisation.³⁶⁷ However, the development of the EC in a Capitalist liberal sense alienated the PSOE, which in the 1970s clamoured for the transformation of the EC in a more social sense, as we will see more in detail in the last point of this chapter.

For the PSOE, therefore, Europe represented an opportunity for democratising Spain, as well as a threat that could allow the regime to survive after Franco. The moderate opposition within the regime argued in favour of promoting the entrance of Spain to Europe, based on the idea that, once in the EC, the regime would suffer enough European pressure to democratise Spain. However, the Socialists were not convinced. They believed that joining the EC would be detrimental to democracy, because Spain's integration in the Community would entail the strengthening of the dictatorship thanks to the international legitimisation and economic development that could follow. The PSOE took into account the historical precedents that indicated that the regime was always strengthened by international recognition (as was the case after the signature of the defence agreement with the US and the agreement with the Holy See in 1953, and Spain's acceptance to the UN in 1955), and therefore fought against the integration of Franco's Spain in the EC.³⁶⁸

The relations between the Spanish Socialists and British Labour developed against this backdrop. The British started to follow and support the Spanish opposition at the end of the 1950s. Between 1956 and 1959, Franco's regime began to face social unrest and open

Rafael Quirosa-Cheyrouze y Muñoz (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2007), 381-394; Antonio Moreno Juste, "El proceso de construcción europea y las relaciones España-Europa," *Circunstancia* 25 (May 2011). On the development of the democratic discourse in the process of Europeanisation, see: Martin Conway and Volker Depkat, "Towards a European History of the Discourse of Democracy in Western Europe, 1945-1960", in *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century. Historical Approaches*, ed. Martin Conway and Kiran Klaus Patel (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 132-156.

³⁶⁶ See: Bruno Vargas, "El movimiento socialista español en el exilio y la construcción de Europa (1946-1972)" in *El socialismo español en el exilio y la construcción europea*, ed. Alonso Puerta et al. (Madrid: Fundación Indalecio Prieto, 2003), 41-62; Carlos López Gómez, "Europe as a symbol: The Struggle for Democracy and the Meaning of European Integration in Post-Franco Spain," *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 10, Issue 1 (2014).

³⁶⁷ Maria Elena Cavallaro, *Los orígenes de la integración de España en Europa. Desde el franquismo hasta los años de la transición* (Madrid: Silex, 2009).

³⁶⁸ "España y Europa. Dimensiones de un conflicto," *El Socialista* (August 1972): 3; Carlos López Gómez, "Visiones de Europa. Cambio y continuidad en el discurso europeísta del PSOE (1976-1985)".

contestation, mostly in the universities,³⁶⁹ for the first time since the 1940s. As a response to this situation, the regime intensified repression, which affected the PSOE's clandestine organisation in Spain. In 1958, the regime arrested 50 Socialists among whom were the leaders of the party in the interior. The PSOE in exile asked the BLP for material and moral support, and as a result, the British Labour movement that included the BLP and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) created the Spanish Democrats Defence Committee (SDDC) in 1959. This committee was composed of the middle ranks of the party and trade unionists, and it was mainly funded by the TUC.³⁷⁰

From this moment on, the SDDC would be in charge of the relations between British Labour and the Spanish opposition. This Committee had the aim of helping and defending the Spanish Socialists (not only members of the PSOE) and democrats in general who suffered from the political repression of Franco's regime. This means that the SDDC was keen to support the PSOE, but also other people or organisations not linked to the Socialist party and ideologically diverse. During the 1960s and 1970s, the SDCC tried to give as much publicity as possible to the repressive situation in Spain, and it raised funds for helping the victims of Franco's political repression. There is also a sentimental factor that accounts for the willingness of British Labour to support all the Spanish democrats. Many British Labour supporters felt a kind of guilt about the issue of democracy in Spain, a feeling that had its origin in the Spanish Civil War. Many had gone to Spain with the International Brigades to fight on the side of the Spanish Second *Republica* against Fascism, and after Franco's victory they became irreconcilable enemies of the regime. Moreover, the feeling of guilt in the Labour movement was because in the 1930s, the BLP had accepted the Conservative government's policy of non-intervention in the Civil War, and later, when in government in the 1940s, had not attempted to overthrow Franco after World War II.³⁷¹

Initially, the British initiative faced opposition from the PSOE. The fact that the SDDC was open to all of the democratic opposition did not please the PSOE leader in exile Rodolfo Llopi. He wanted to be the intermediary between the PSOE in Spain and the international solidarity of the SI member parties, thus keeping control of both the party and the

³⁶⁹ Pablo Lizcano, *La generación del 56: La Universidad contra Franco* (Madrid: Saber y Comunicación, 2006).

³⁷⁰ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 96; Pilar Ortuño Anaya, "El movimiento laborista británico y España 1974-1977," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, Serie V, H. Contemporánea, t. 9 (1996): 279-293; Pilar Ortuño Anaya, "The Labour Party, the TUC and Spain, 1959-1977," *Labour History Review*, Vol. 64, Issue 3 (1999): 269-286.

³⁷¹ Tom Buchanan, *The Spanish Civil War and the British Labour Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Enrique Moradiellos, *La perfidia de Albión: el gobierno británico y la guerra civil española* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2010).

international support. For this reason, he protested against the creation of the SDDC to the general secretary of the SI at that time, Albert Carthy.³⁷²

Notwithstanding this fact, the BLP carried on with its original plan. Immediately after the creation of the SDDC, the party began to provide legal assistance to imprisoned Socialists and trade unionists, which led the British to travel to Spain several times from 1959 onwards. This is how they came to know the main characteristics of the Spanish Socialist opposition before any other European party. The British already noticed in the early 1960s that the Spanish opposition was stronger and more active among the young intelligentsia than among the working class, and they found out that the PSOE was greatly divided between the members living in Spain (younger, usually Catholic, and from varied social backgrounds) and those in exile (older, anti-clericalist, and working class). Moreover, they discovered that the PSOE did not represent the whole of the Spanish Socialist family, and that it was very atomised.³⁷³ Thus, when the split in the PSOE occurred in 1972, the BLP had the advantage of being able to provide a reliable opinion on which faction should be chosen as the legitimate representative of the Spanish Socialists in the SI.

The activities of the SDDC show the increasing commitment of the Labour rank and file to the Spanish opposition in the 1970s. This meant that the SDDC was a very important source of information on Spain for the BLP before it came to power again in 1974. As I mentioned already, following the recommendation of the SI, three members of the SDDC, Michael Foot (MP), Jenny Little (joint secretary of the SDDC), and Will Paynter (ex-General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers), travelled to Spain in March 1973 to study the situation in the PSOE after the rupture of the party. However, the British also used this trip “to build up a picture of the Spanish political situation.” Beyond the fact that this trip helped them to decide on supporting PSOE’s renovators, it was also useful for them to know the social, economic, political, and trade union situation in Spain. The aim of gathering this information was to study the possibilities for political evolution in Spain after Franco. As a result of the conversations that the British held with many members of the Spanish opposition, they produced a document in which they expressed their belief that they had a clear picture of the situation.

³⁷² Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 98.

³⁷³ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 95-102.

First of all, the British were convinced that the regime continued to be “as repressive as ever”, and that despite its attempts to gain a respectable image abroad, “it is still a fascist government.” Moreover, they were told that the unprecedented growth of the Spanish economy was very dependent on foreign factors. Spain had a structural deficit in its international balance of payments that was compensated for thanks to the earnings provided by tourism, the remittances of the exiled Spanish workers, and investments of foreign capital. The regime was concerned with this dependence on external factors, which led it to believe that for the sake of its future development, it was vital to join the EEC.³⁷⁴

This ambition of the regime was widely known. But the British understood that the possibility of Spain entering the EC, or even the possibility of making a better trade agreement without entering the Community, was a nightmare for the Spanish Socialists, who thought that any of these options could help the regime to survive after Franco. In fact, the Spanish opposition could not be sure about the intentions of the EC regarding Spain. Although the democratic principle had been crucial in the origin of the European integration process, the truth is that the functioning of the EC was clearly technical and economic, and the political condition necessary to get in the club was not as clear as it had been before.³⁷⁵ Thus, the delegation of the SDDC that travelled to Spain was convinced that “maximum pressure [should] be exerted within the member countries of the EEC to keep Spain out until such time as democracy should be restored.” This measure would go against the interests of the regime, and it could be good leverage for pressing the Spanish business community to view democracy as the best framework within which they could best pursue their own objectives.

The British also studied the situation of the trade union movement in Spain. Aware of the conflicted situation in Spanish labour relations, they learned that the UGT and the CCOO were following different strategies, and that they normally did not cooperate. The CCOO were controlled by the PCE, and they infiltrated and tried to exploit the official *Sindicatos* for their own ends. The UGT, in turn, rejected working through legal channels. Instead, it tried to spread its influence among the workers via networking, and aimed to hamper the official institutions through parallel, clandestine organisation. It was less active and less popular than the CCOO, however.

³⁷⁴ Spanish Democrats’ Defence Committee. Mission to Spain, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973.

³⁷⁵ Fernández, “Las Comunidades Europeas.”

The overall conclusion of Labour was that “[a]fter visiting Madrid and talking with many people there one is left with the clear feeling that one must give the situation in Spain the maximum possible publicity. We in the rest of Europe must support those who oppose the Spanish regime. [...] Until [basic human and political] rights are granted [to] the population Spain must at all costs be kept out of the EEC.”³⁷⁶

After the visit of the SDDC delegation to Spain, Michael Foot tried to promote what was probably the most ambitious initiative of the Labour movement against Franco’s Spain. It consisted of establishing a Commission of Inquiry in 1973 to examine the Franco regime’s record with regard to violations of the UN’s Chapter of Human Rights. The aim of this Commission was “to undermine the international acceptance of Franco’s Regime by making public the repressive attitude of the Spanish regime regarding the right of freedom and association, the right to strike, the freedom of speech and press and the offences against the Chapter of Human Rights occurred in trials and detentions where there were cases of torture”.³⁷⁷ This was seen as a very important issue at that specific moment because the Spanish government was renegotiating the preferential trade agreement that they had signed with the ECC in 1970—precisely to adapt it to the entry of the UK in the European Community – and renegotiating military pacts with the USA.³⁷⁸ Franco’s health was deteriorating, and these international agreements could help increase the international legitimacy of the regime, and thereby further its continuation after Franco’s death. The SDDC thought that bringing out the regime’s human rights offences could be an ineffective counter-strategy. However, despite some work carried out in this direction, the Commission was dismantled in 1975 without reaching its main objective. The project was too ambitious, and the SDDC lacked the funds for carrying it out.³⁷⁹

Apart from this fruitless initiative, the BLP helped the working class movement in Spain by giving them legal, financial, and political support. In January 1974, MP Bob Howard summed up the activities of the SDDC in Spain to his colleague Bill Howard of the Maghull Labour Party (who had previously written to Bob demanding more support from the Labour Party leaders and the NEC for the struggles of the working class movement in Spain). According to

³⁷⁶ Spanish Democrats’ Defence Committee. Mission to Spain, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973. This document has already been used by Ortuño Anaya, Pilar, although she has focused especially on the British reflections on the partition of the PSOE.

³⁷⁷ Letter from Jenny Little to Clive Jenkins, 22 October 1973, BLP Historical Archive, BOX 43/7.

³⁷⁸ See, Viñas, *En las garras del águila*. See also: Powel, *El amigo americano*.

³⁷⁹ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 127-129.

Bob Howard “[the SDDC was] very much involved in the struggle for Spanish freedom. Last year [1973] we sent two delegations to Spain [...] Apart from this we have arranged for frequent visits of representatives of the Spanish Trade Union Movement, Socialist Party and Young Socialists to visit this country for talks as our guests.” He also informed his colleague about the preparation of the Judicial Commission of Enquiry against Franco’s government, and added “the continuous campaign of our Young Socialists who themselves have raised over £6.000 for assistance to Spanish Young Socialists.”³⁸⁰

This wave of solidarity with Spain reached the leadership of the BLP. In October 1973, the BLP held its annual party conference in Blackpool. There Harold Wilson delivered a speech which devoted some space to Spain. Wilson touched upon an issue that very much concerned the Spanish Socialist opposition, as well as the British Labour movement, namely the prospects of the Spanish association with the EEC. Wilson stance was clear:

I want on behalf of this movement also to serve a further notice on the Six about the attitude of the next Labour Government in relation to the admission of Spain. [...] No Labour Government will have any truck with a European Common Market which accepts Franco’s Spain as a member or even as an associate.³⁸¹

This public statement was probably aimed at enhancing Wilson’s Leftist profile in a context in which the Left wing of the Labour Party, as we have already seen, was increasing its influence over the NEC and over the party’s programme. Furthermore, it was probably a concession to the increasingly anti-Europeanist Left wing of the party, which at that Conference supported the withdrawal of the UK from the EC and eventually, after Wilson’s threat of resignation, accepted a middle-of-the-road solution.³⁸² This solution was to call for a referendum in which the British people could decide whether they agreed to the terms accepted by the Tory Government to enter the Common Market in 1973, and if the result was negative, to withdraw Britain from the EEC.³⁸³ However, this statement was an important sign of solidarity with the Spanish opposition, since in theory it linked the future of the UK in

³⁸⁰ Letter from Bob Howard to Bill Howard, 8 January 1974, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

³⁸¹ Extract from Harold Wilson’s speech to the party conference concerning Spanish association with the EEC, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973.

³⁸² Matthew Broad, “Awkward partners? The British Labour party and European integration in the 1970s” in *European Political Parties and the First Direct Elections to the European Parliament*, ed. Guido Thiemeier and Jenny Raflik (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2015), 119-141.

³⁸³ “The Common Market,” *Let us work together. Labour’s way out of the crisis*, February 1974, Labour Party Manifesto.

the EC under a Labour government to the exclusion of a non-democratic Spain from the European institutions.

Moreover, the timing of Wilson's statement was very convenient, as some European conservative governments were publicly supporting Spain joining the EC. In September 1973, immediately before the BLP party conference, the French Foreign Affairs Minister Michel Jobert, visited Spain and he stated that France would favour the Spanish entrance into the Common Market. Some days later, the French President Georges Pompidou confirmed his words.³⁸⁴

The renovators of the PSOE were thankful for Wilson's intervention in Blackpool, and they also tried to exploit a sign of solidarity that was directed to all the Spanish democrats for their own benefit. They made Labour's support of the PSOE(r) public in their newspaper *El Socialista*, emphasising Wilson's rejection of the Spanish dictatorship as much as the support of the BLP for the PSOE(r). The Socialists had been invited to attend the conference, and they said that the BLP wanted "to express solemnly the firm resolution to reinforce the PSOE in [this] moment in which it is attacked with the more ignoble weapons," referring to the accusations of secession by the PSOE(h).³⁸⁵

Moreover, the Socialist journalist Carlos Zayas sent a letter to Wilson, "in the name of the Spanish Socialists" giving him "many thanks [...] for your clear and determined defence of our fight."³⁸⁶ Zayas enclosed a document in the letter sent to Wilson. It was a report made by the PSOE on the Spanish economic relations with the EEC, dated September 1972. The document analysed the political implications of the Spanish closeness to the EC, and confirmed the PSOE's opposition to the European soft stance regarding the renewal of the trade agreement between Spain and the EEC.

According to the PSOE, the Spanish economy had benefited greatly from the preferential trade agreement signed with the EC in 1970. Spanish exports to the EEC countries, especially in the industrial sector, had increased more than the imports. Regarding agriculture, Spain had retained its share of the market with the EEC. However, the entrance of the UK, Denmark,

³⁸⁴ "Francia, España y Europa," *El Socialista*, 6 (27/09/1973): 8.

³⁸⁵ "Presencia internacional del PSOE. Congreso nacional del Partido Laborista británico," *El Socialista*, 8 (26/10/1973): 4.

³⁸⁶ Letter from Carlos Zayas to Harold Wilson, 06/10/1973, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973.

and Ireland into the Community in 1973 made it necessary to update the existing trade agreement between Spain and the EC.

The Spanish Socialists had become aware of a plan of the EEC for dealing with the agricultural production of the Mediterranean countries outside its orbit. It would consist in granting them customs reductions of a uniform nature, which would especially benefit Spain. In fact, according to the sources of the PSOE, Spain had already drawn up a proposal asking the EEC to integrate its agriculture into the Common Market economy.

The Socialists thought that the Spanish regime wanted the following:

These are Spain's twin aims: incorporation into the free industrial trading zone and fitting into the agricultural mechanism of the EEC for an eventual role as a trading partner. When these goals are reached then Spain has obtained from Europe all possible economic concession. This would permit the regime to play a waiting game for the EEC to one day accepting it as a full member!³⁸⁷

This plan could be successful, as the regime, with the support of the some newspapers, such as "*La Vanguardia* and *Informaciones*," and some big international companies, such as "Krupp, Dessault, Shell, Philips, Fiat, among others," was internationally propagating the idea that "liberalism was being cultivated in Spain." This was creating a misleading perception that could shape the foreign policy of the EC member States for the benefit of the regime.

In this regard, the PSOE was critical of the mild responses given by the European Social Democrats to Franco's attempt to gain international respectability. As the document stated: "the Socialist International is limiting itself to low key denunciations. And the financial aid offered by some brother socialist parties in Europe to the suppressed social democrat groups in Spain has been of little significance." This apathy on the part of the European Socialists had led the regime and the big Spanish businesses to think that when the moment arrived, the European Socialist parties would not be an obstacle to bringing Spain closer to the EC. "In the last resort they are confident that Europe will not allow a victorious Leftist coalition in Spain which could mean the end of private ownership of the means of production."³⁸⁸

³⁸⁷ Spanish Socialist Party, *The political scene in Spain as the Franco regime bids to integrate into the Common Market*, 29/09/1972, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973.

³⁸⁸ Spanish Socialist Party, *The political scene in Spain as the Franco regime bids to integrate into the Common Market*, 29/09/1972, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box43/7 SDDC Mission to Spain March 1973.

Thus, the PSOE let Wilson know about the situation in Spain, the main Socialist concerns, and the intentions of the regime, according to the party. Moreover, Wilson came to know that the Spanish Socialists were disgruntled with the support that the SI and its member parties had provided so far. This revelation poses the question of how far the PSOE renovators in the interior of Spain, who had not enjoyed European solidarity as much as the PSOE in exile, had become alienated from their European Social Democrat counterparts as a result of the timidity of the latter.

At this stage, it is noticeable that PSOE's renovators were interested in cultivating their contacts with the BLP, but they did not consider the Labour party as a model to be followed. Despite the Spanish interest in British support, the PSOE did not consider the BLP or the European Social Democracy ideologically inspiring. The overall feeling of the PSOE towards the Social Democrat line of the Labour Party can be seen in a note published in *El Socialista* after the victory of the BLP in the general elections of October. The Spanish Socialists celebrated the victory, interpreting it as the victory "of the Left wing of Labourism." They highlighted that the Leftist programme of the BLP had been popularly endorsed, and they noted that the TUC and the small British Communist party had supported Labour. Under these circumstances, the PSOE considered that "the perspectives for fighting for Socialism, for fighting for the worker's power, begins to have some content in a country where the marasmus and the ambiguity of the social democracy had driven the working class to despair time ago."³⁸⁹

And yet, the PSOE had strong reasons cultivating as good a relationship as possible with the BLP. One of these motives was that before the SI had made the decision about which faction of the PSOE would be accepted as the legitimate one, the PSOE(r) was interested in getting the support of the BLP and all of the other parties who were members of the SI. Moreover, the renovators could use their relations with the British to legitimate and reinforce their claim to be the real PSOE internally at a moment when this was under discussion. Additionally, despite their dissatisfaction, PSOE's renovators needed the moral and economic support that they received from the British, especially from the SDDC. Finally, the Spanish Socialists were very interested in the influence that British Labour could exert over their government regarding the renegotiation of the preferential trade agreement between Spain and the EC. The fact that the Community could accept or benefit the regime without political conditionality

³⁸⁹ "Gran Bretaña: Victoria del ala izquierda del laborismo," *El Socialista*, 30 (first half of December 1974): 3.

was considered something to be avoided at all costs, and the PSOE sought to make the BLP, and the West European Socialists in general, into allies who could prevent this possibility from taking place.³⁹⁰

The Socialist need for legitimacy, as well as moral and economic support, can be perceived in the twelfth Congress in exile of the UGT, and the Congress of the TUC; both were held in September 1973. In the UGT Congress, which was held in France, the Socialist trade union confirmed its line of action. It consisted in fostering workers' assemblies and councils in the workplaces, in order to discuss the needs and problems of the working class and put forward plans and actions against the entrepreneurial power and Capitalism. These assemblies and councils were meant to be the seeds for the future Socialist *autogestión* of the economy. The UGT confirmed its decision not to participate in Spain's official vertical trade unions, but it proposed collaborating with other political parties and trade union representatives of the working class—the PCE and the CCOO—in everyday actions against the regime inside and outside the working places. The aims of this collaboration were the overthrowing of the dictatorship and achieving the union of the whole working class. Regarding the international dimension of the struggle of the Spanish Socialists, the UGT found it necessary to fight against international Capitalism within the frame of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). It also considered this frame essential to exert international pressure against the entrance of Franco's Spain in the EEC.

The UGT Congress attracted international attention and representatives of the biggest European trade unions were present. One of them was Jack Jones, the general secretary of the British Transport and General Workers' Union. He was invited to deliver a speech at the Congress. Jones expressed the continuous support from the TUC to the UGT throughout the years of the dictatorship—support that had been channelled through the SDDC, because the UGT and the TUC did not have bilateral relations until the early 1970s.³⁹¹ His tone was very touching; he even remembered that “thirty-five years ago, my own blood was shed on Spanish soil.” He expressed the commitment of the British trade unionists to keep supporting the

³⁹⁰ The last idea of this paragraph is borrowed from: Crespo, *España en Europa*, 77.

³⁹¹ Aroca, *Internacionalismo en la historia reciente de la UGT*, 60.

UGT, their solidarity, and because “we have the same principles regarding freedom, democracy and independence.”³⁹²

In October 1973, soon after the UGT Congress, the TUC held its own Congress in the UK, and a representative of the UGT was invited to attend. This international event was exploited by the PSOE(r) propaganda. The Spanish highlighted the treatment received; “[the British awarded us] the maximum attentions” and considered this hospitality “evident proof of the quick recovery of the lost prestige [that was result of] the maintenance of theses purely based on nostalgia, sentimentality and the ignorance of today’s reality.” This last sentence referred to the previous leadership of Llopis.

Moreover, the Socialists added: “It is notorious that the new and realist orientation of the UGT has aroused passionate interest in the world of the trade unions, that is why [our] presence is required and our analysis and thesis studied as never before.”³⁹³

The international support of the UGT is very relevant to understanding the role and development of the PSOE during the years of the transition to democracy in Spain. First, because the Socialist trade union was able to draw on more economic resources than the party, due to continuous international support. Thus, the UGT’s support for the renovators of the PSOE was very important for making their project viable. However, it was especially important in the period of transition to democracy because, as Pilar Ortuño and Manuela Aroca argue, the support received by the Spanish trade union was “crucial” to the consolidation of the UGT in Spain after Franco. This implies that the international solidarity favoured the establishment of free trade unionism in Spain under the leadership of the UGT, thus reducing the influence of the initially stronger CCOO, which aimed to inherit the trade union structure of the regime in the same way as the PCP did in Portugal. They also argue that this helped to ensure social stability during the years of transition.³⁹⁴

³⁹² “Jack Jones, Secretario General del Transport and General Workers’ Union de Gran Bretaña, representando a la Federación Internacional de Obreros del Transporte (ITF),” *El Socialista*, 5 (13/09/1973): 7. The attachment of the UGT to these values made of it the best option in Spain to be supported by the TUC. If we attend to the reasons and previous examples of international involvement of the British trade unions, determined by the dynamic of the Cold War, the UGT represented the best option to spread the interests of the TUC leadership. See: Peter Weiler, *British Labour and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

³⁹³ “Presencia internacional de la UGT. Gran Bretaña. Congreso de los sindicalistas británicos,” *El Socialista*, 8 (26/10/1973): 6.

³⁹⁴ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*. See also: Pilar Ortuño Anaya, “Partidos socialistas europeos y sindicatos. La transición democrática española 1959-77,” *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*. Serie V. H.^a Contemporánea (2002): 495-523; Aroca, *Internacionalismo en la historia reciente de la UGT*; Haruko Hosoda, “The American and

The existence of the UGT, a trade union linked to the PSOE, and the important international support that it received is a big difference between Spain and Portugal, and between the initial capacities that the Socialists had in each country when the dictatorships disappeared. In Portugal there was political rupture with the previous regime, but there was trade union continuity. The PCP occupied the trade union structure that existed during the *Estado Novo*, and the PS had to fight with the Communists to exert some influence over the workers through trade union channels until 1979, when they created the *União General de Trabalhadores* (also known as UGT) together with the PPD. In Spain, in turn, there was no political rupture, as the regime transformed itself—albeit as a result of international, social and political pressure—but there was trade unionist rupture. The official trade union during Franco’s regime disappeared and trade union freedom was established. This gave the UGT and to the PSOE the possibility of exerting greater influence over the Spanish workers than the Socialists in Portugal had, which was an important factor determining the relations between Socialists and Communists in Spain.³⁹⁵

2.3.1. 1974. The PSOE’s renovators accepted in the SI. A new phase in their relations with the BLP

At the beginning of 1974, several events changed the dynamics in the relations between the PSOE and the BLP. In January 1974, the SI considered the renovated PSOE as the legitimate representative of the Spanish Socialism in the organisation. The International also proposed creating a special committee to promote democratisation in Spain; this was formed at a Bureau meeting on 31st March 1974. This Spain Committee of the SI was composed of the British, Chilean, French, Italian (PSI), Swedish, Belgian, and German member parties, as well as the PSOE.³⁹⁶ In February 1974, the BLP won the elections in the UK, forming a minority government that became more solid in October, when the party again won the elections with a wider margin.

From this moment on, the relations between the PSOE and the BLP would take place at three different levels. First, the already existing relations between the Socialists and the SDDC would continue, but they would become less relevant towards the end of 1975. Second, there

British Labour Union’s Policy towards the Spanish Democratic Transition, 1962-1977,” presentation at the Japanese Society of the History of Spain on the 18 December 2010.

³⁹⁵ This idea is borrowed from the former International Secretary of the UGT (1976-1986), Manuel Simón. Interview with Manuel Simón, 06/02/2015.

³⁹⁶ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 55.

would be contacts at a multilateral level within the SI. These contacts, set up with other member parties, would acquire greater relevance for the Socialists than the contacts through the SDDC. They would be focused on providing financial, economic, and educational support exclusively to the PSOE and its militants. Finally, in the second half of 1974, the British Labour government's interest in the Spanish opposition would increase. Although direct diplomatic relations with the PSOE would not happen until the beginning of 1976, the British started to plan a way of discreet involvement in Spain that included supporting the PSOE in the second half of 1974, when the Portuguese Revolution started to radicalise and the dictatorship of the Colonels fell in Greece. Thus, from the beginning of 1976 onwards, the British government, diplomats, and officials would be the main interlocutors of the Spanish Socialists. This means that the leading Labour politicians, who were mostly in the Right wing of the party, and British officials would replace the more militant SDDC in dialogue with the PSOE.

Notwithstanding all of this, the SDDC was still dynamic in 1974. In that year, they increased their activities in Spain, which were not directed to exclusively supporting the PSOE, but also other groups and individuals in their struggle against the dictatorship. At this time, the British trade unions played an important role by raising funds for the SDDC that were later sent to Spain. To give some examples, on 28th August 1973, the Fire Brigades Union gave £20³⁹⁷ to the SDDC to support its intention of setting up the International Tribunal on Spain.³⁹⁸ Similarly, on 1st February 1974, the Transport & General Workers' Union donated £158 to the SDDC to assist ten members (*Los Diez de Carabanchel*)³⁹⁹ of the Communist trade union CCOO who had been sentenced to an average of 16 years in prison after being accused of being the leaders of this illegal trade union.⁴⁰⁰ There are many other documents in the historical archive of the BLP that show that the trade unions were the most active members of the British Labour movement in raising funds for the Spaniards during 1974. However, these documents also show that the donations, a symbol of goodwill and solidarity, were not very

³⁹⁷ The documents on this donation show two different figures: £20 and £20.000. I have considered accurate the figure £20 taking into account that in general the donations given to the SDDC between 1973 and 1974 were never bigger than some hundreds of pounds. The document where the figure is £20.000: letter from Jenny Little, Joint Secretary of the Spanish Democrats' Defence Committee to Terence Parry, General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, 19th November 1973, BLP Historical Archive. Box 43/7.

³⁹⁸ Letter from Terence Parry, General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union to the Spanish Democrats' Defence Committee, 28 August 1973, BLP Historical Archive. Box 43/7.

³⁹⁹ On the involvement of the British Labour Movement in the trial of *Los Diez de Carabanchel*, see: Ortuño, *Los Socialistas Europeos*, 131-132.

⁴⁰⁰ Letter from J. L. Jones, General Secretary of the Transport & General Worker's Union to R. Hayward, General Secretary of the Labour Party, 1 February 1974, BLP Historical Archive. Box 43/7.

large, and were not exclusively directed towards the PSOE. Although I will not go into details here, it is fair to say that apart from the trade unions, financial donations were made by individuals, regional sections of the party, and as we saw above, by the youth section of the Labour Party.⁴⁰¹

The fact that the SDDC also offered their support to the Communist-led CCOO was consistent with their analysis of the Spanish situation. In their view, there were “important changes taking place in the Social and Economic structure of Spain, while the regime continues to display few signs of liberalization, let alone any development of real democratic institutions.”⁴⁰² This meant that the growing tension between a changing socio-economic structure and political stagnation in Spain was provoking an unsustainable situation that created the optimal circumstances to overthrow the out-of-date regime. In order to make the most of this opportunity, the SDDC thought that no one in the Spanish democratic opposition should be marginalised from British support, an argument that will be taken to some degree, with some nuances by the Labour Government in 1975. The legal observer Jeremy Smith, sent by the BLP to the trials organised by Franco’s regime against some members of the Carabanchel ten, reported to the party:

[...] it is difficult to assess what degree of support any of the opposition groups have in the country at large, and in particular amongst the Spanish working-class. [...] Clearly there are likely to be in the next few years (some would say months) considerable upheavals of one kind or another which, to succeed in bringing about a fundamentally democratic change in Spain, will require much co-operation between at least all progressive organisations in the labour movement. There is therefore a strong argument for giving such support as is possible to as broad a section of that movement as one can. [...] For each of them to attain their maximum potential strength would be, I believe, the surest way of realising those changes in Spain which all of us wish to see.⁴⁰³

The SDDC also assisted the Spanish by providing legal support, or simply by participating as observers, in the trials that involved members of the opposition to Franco. This was the case with the trial of the Carabanchel ten, and with the trial of five members of the PSOE (Enrique Múgica, Nicolás Redondo, Felipe González, Cristóbal Caliz and Ambrosio Gutierrez), who also accused of illegal association in April 1974. They had been arrested and liberated in 1971, and now the postponed process was about to restart. In this case, the SDDC sent observers (Jenny Little and Neville Sandelson) to the trial and asked the British Foreign

⁴⁰¹ Internal Memorandum, from Jenny Little to John Pittaway, 4 April 1973. BLP Historical Archive. BOX 43/1

⁴⁰² Spanish Newsletter No. 1, SDDC, BLP Historical Archive, Box 43/7.

⁴⁰³ “Report on: 1. The appeal on the “Carabanchel ten”, 2. The trial of Edo, Burro, Urbano and Ferran”, Jeremy Smith, March 1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

Secretary James Callaghan to send a plea to the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs Pedro Cortina, and to the Spanish Ambassador in London Manuel Fraga. Moreover, they asked Callaghan to send a member of the Embassy staff to the trial in order to increase the pressure on the Spanish government.⁴⁰⁴ This was an efficient way of influencing Franco's regime, since it was very sensitive to pressures from the European governments, especially in a situation such a situation; Spain was negotiating the conditions of the preferential trade agreement signed with the EEC in 1970.⁴⁰⁵ The international pressure overwhelmed the regime, which postponed the trial until October. That month, Jenny Little and MP Greville Janner again went to Madrid to attend the trial, but according to Little "owing to the great interest shown by the European labour movement the Franco regime had found themselves in a difficult position and at the last minute had postponed the trial."⁴⁰⁶ The opportunity had been taken for lengthy discussions with the PSOE on the whole political situation."⁴⁰⁷

On 13th September 1974, the first meeting of the Spain Committee of the SI took place. There it was decided that Jenny Little, who was a member of the British Labour Party and the SDDC, would be the chairman. Moreover, the SI set the basis for cooperation with the PSOE. First, it was considered that the international support should be exclusively focused on the PSOE, as otherwise the unification of the factionalised Spanish Socialist family could be hampered. This implies that the SI accepted that the whole of Spanish Socialism should be united within the PSOE, excluding other options previously considered. Second, the member parties were encouraged to provide financial assistance to the PSOE, which had requested this kind of support from the SI in July 1974. Third, member parties and trade unions should give assistance to the PSOE and its militants who had emigrated to their countries.

The decisions of the SI were very influenced by a report that Abel Hervás (the pseudonym of Pablo Castellano during the clandestine years) of the PSOE executive committee sent to the SI before this Bureau meeting. Castellano said that there would be major political changes in the near future in Spain. The regime was crumbling; in July, Franco was hospitalised with phlebitis and Prince Juan Carlos temporarily became the Head of State. However, at the

⁴⁰⁴ Letter from Jenny Little, Acting International Secretary to Tom McNally, political advisor to James Callaghan MP, *Spain*, 8 April 1974, BLP Historical Archive. Box 43, International Department, Spain 1970-1981.

⁴⁰⁵ See: Fernando Guirao, "The European Community's Role in Promoting Democracy in Franco's Spain, 1970-1975", in *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community's Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion. 1969-1975*, ed. Jan Van Der Harst (Brussels: Nomos, 2007), 163-193.

⁴⁰⁶ Eventually it would never take place.

⁴⁰⁷ Spanish Democrats Defence Committee, minutes of the meeting on December 2, 1974. BLP Historical Archive, Box 5, Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1967-1987.

beginning of September, a healthier Franco resumed power. This situation had “radicalised the political situation in Spain”, not only among the opposition, but also within the regime that saw the end of Franco to be close and wanted to ensure its future in one way or another. Castellano believed that the PSOE “could be a government party within six to twelve months.”

In this context, the PSOE was “doing everything possible to increase the strength of its organisation; it was considerably hampered in its efforts by shortage of funds, however.” This contrasted with the situation of the Communist party, which, according to Castellano, was “in a much better financial position.”

The efforts carried out by the PSOE to strengthen the party included the attempt to unify the Spanish Socialists. As we will see in more detail in the next section, the Spanish Socialist parties had met in Paris in order to work towards unity, and although the results were not too heartening, they would soon meet again. However, Castellano showed the ambition of the PSOE that the unification of the Spanish Socialists should happen within the structure of their party, as he complained about the fact that the SI had met with other Spanish Socialist parties. He asked the SI to restrict its contacts with other groups, as otherwise it would make “more difficult the PSOE’s efforts to unite the Spanish Socialists.” He said that “the Executive Committee of the PSOE took this matter very seriously, and hoped that such a thing would not happen again.”

Finally, the Socialists were concerned because many Spaniards did not have any knowledge of political freedoms, democracy, and trade union activity, so the PSOE needed as much support as its European Socialist partners could provide to educate emigrant Spanish workers in democratic Socialist and trade union activity.⁴⁰⁸

Now that we have seen the British initial engagement with the PSOE through the SDDC and the SI, in the last pages of this section, I will focus on the diplomatic level. In the last months of 1974, some suggestions of the British Embassy in Madrid were taken by the Foreign Office, and they would begin to change the nature of the relations between Labour and the PSOE. When the Labour party reached government in Great Britain, the Foreign Office was aware of the fact that Franco’s health had greatly deteriorated and that he would pass away soon. They considered that the dictatorship had very little chance of surviving after Franco.

⁴⁰⁸ IISH, Socialist International Archives, 812, Minutes of the first meeting of the Spain Committee of the Socialist International, 13/09/1974.

The big question was whether the peaceful transition to democracy that seemed to be possible due to the fact that Spain had a wide and consolidated middle class could be hampered by the increasing political manoeuvring taking place both within the regime and among the opposition while Franco languished.

The international events at the end of 1974 added more uncertainty to this question. As we have already seen, Spínola resigned from the presidency of Portugal in September 1974, and the Revolution of the Carnations underwent a shift to the Left that worried the Labour Government. This event led the British to wonder about the possibilities of a Left wing shift in the near future in Spain that could favour the presence of Communists in the Spanish government, jeopardising the chance for a peaceful change of regime.

With this concern very present, in September the British wanted to test the intentions of the USSR regarding the future of Spain. A subtle change in how the Soviet central press treated Spain made the British think that perhaps the Soviet Union was changing its position regarding the maintenance of the international status quo and détente. According to the British, Moscow would be interested in the situation in Southern Europe as it appeared “to offer good opportunities for the enhancement of Soviet influence with relatively little risk or even expenditure of diplomatic effort.” As I discussed in chapter one, the British were concerned by the political development in this region where the Communist parties seemed to enjoy a good deal of popularity, and this concern started to gain importance in Spain. At this moment, the British were not sure about how the situation would look like in Spain after the death of Franco, but they considered that the PCE “must presumably have some chance of achieving popular recognition [...]”⁴⁰⁹

In December 1974, a new British ambassador to Spain was appointed. He was Charles Wiggin, who had previously been private secretary to the Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath. Soon after his arrival in Spain, he wrote a letter to James Callaghan in which he expressed his first impression of the situation. He considered the political future of the country to be uncertain, but he was leaning towards the belief that the future would not include a Leftist or Rightist authoritarian government. His reasoning was that economic development of the country and the liberalisation of the regime had put already a *de facto* end to the regime as traditionally conceived. Moreover:

⁴⁰⁹ Letter from Mr. Cartledge (Moscow) to Mr Bullard. Soviet/Spanish Relations, Moscow 20/11/1974. Document published in Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas. Series III, Volume V, The Southern Flank in Crisis, 1973-1976* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006), 382-384.

[t]here are certainly lessons for Spain in what has happened in Portugal but the two countries and peoples could hardly be more different given that they share the same peninsular [sic] and nearly the same language. There is by now a vast middle class here [...] with a lot to lose. And [...] the Spanish Army have not had to endure a colonial war of Portuguese proportions.

Notwithstanding these reassuring facts, he also recognised that there was a clear trend towards the Left throughout the country that had to be watched. “Unfortunately the democratic Left is fragmented [...]. The Communists have kept their discipline and seem to be playing their hand quite cleverly. They have had some success in wooing democratic oppositionists, not only of the Left, into a degree of ‘co-operation’.”

Then he summarised his recommendation for the priorities of the British Government regarding Spain. “[...] we want to see as soon as possible a democratic Spain, or at least a Spain progressing towards real democracy, while at the same time seeking to develop our trade relations and trying to keep Gibraltar in the background [...].”

He also suggested that the time had arrived to “be somewhat more adventurous in our contacts with Spaniards than we have tended to be hitherto [...]. This Embassy already has quite extensive contacts with members of ‘illegal’ democratic groups, and a few members thereof have been sponsored visitors to the UK lately. This process should be discretely intensified.” Wiggin thought that contacts with the opposition should be intensified, but he also considered that the British should expand their contacts with the reformists of the regime, the big business and to strengthen relations with the military.⁴¹⁰

To summarise, the support of the BLP for the PSOE from the beginning of the 1970s up until 1974, the year before the beginning of the Spanish transition to democracy, leads to several conclusions regarding the relations between the PSOE and British Labour and with regards to the strategy followed by British Labour in Spain.

This point shows that the relations between the PSOE and British Labour were not very intense during this period, and that they mostly occurred via the SDDC. This Committee was built to support the struggle of all the Spanish democrats, and although it supported the PSOE, this support was not exclusive. The SDDC was more concerned with denouncing the Spanish regime and indirectly helping to overthrow it than with supporting the PSOE, a strategy that

⁴¹⁰ Confidential letter from Mr Wigging (Madrid) to Mr. Callaghan, ‘Whither Spain? First Impressions from Madrid, 10/12/1974. Document published in Hamilton and Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, 384-389. This document has been partially used in: Rizas, *The rise of the Left*, 113.

was delineated by trade unionists and middle ranks of the party, who were the most left-leaning members of the BLP.

It was after the PSOE renovators were recognised in January 1974 as the legitimate representative of the Spanish Socialists in the SI that the channels for relations between the Spanish and British Labour widened. Although the relations between the parties did not dramatically increase, the SI provided a frame through which the BLP started to support the PSOE more exclusively than before. Indeed, as we will see later, the relevance of the decision taken by the SI in January 1974 was not only that it started to provide several kinds of support to the PSOE, but also that it decided that the international Socialist support would go exclusively to the PSOE. A third channel that began to open at the end of 1974 was the governmental/diplomatic channel. The arrival of the BLP to the British government at the beginning of 1974, and the context of political turmoil in the south of Europe, especially in Portugal, created the conditions for greater involvement at a governmental level for the British in Spain. However, at the end of 1974, the British will to outline an official strategy towards Spain was only tentative, and it was constrained by the poor relations that Her Majesty's Government had with the Spanish regime due to Gibraltar. Nevertheless, at the end of 1974, the British ambassador to Spain recommended more decisive engagement in Spain, which included strengthening contacts with the PSOE.

As a recently-renovated clandestine party, the PSOE welcomed any kind of support. In this sense, the relations with the BLP were important to the Socialists. Firstly, they were important before 1974 because the PSOE(r) needed to be recognised by the SI. Secondly, they were relevant for the Spanish because the party needed economic support, as they claimed when making a petition to the SI in July 1974. Moreover, the signs of moral support and public visibility that the British provided, although limited, were valuable for the PSOE. Finally, the relations with Labour were important because the PSOE could use them to exert some pressure over the EC to keep the Spanish regime away until democracy was established in Spain.

2.4. The PSF and the renovated PSOE from the 12th Congress (Toulouse, August 1972) to the 13th Congress (Suresnes, October 1974)

If there was a European party that supported the Spanish Socialist renovators from the very beginning, it was the PSF. This is a fact that is usually overlooked in the studies on the PSOE.⁴¹¹ Although the main studies of the PSOE's international relations during this period mention that the French Socialists supported the Spanish renovators in the SI,⁴¹² they have not gone any further in enquiring how this support happened, and what effects it had on the PSOE,⁴¹³ and they have not reflected on the relevance of this support to the ideological and political development of the PSOE during the transition.⁴¹⁴ Instead, the literature on the PSOE has focused mainly on the role of the BLP, which was a very important factor in the recognition of PSOE's renovators within the International, as we have already seen, and on the role of the SPD, which at that time was reluctant to recognise the young Spaniards.

The stance of the PSF at this crucial moment for the PSOE is relevant for my general argument, because the French were the only European party interested in supporting the Spanish renovators from the beginning, and because that interest was based on ideological affinity. At this early stage, the support that the French gave the renovators of the PSOE helped to make them a viable alternative. Moreover, the PSF became an international point of reference for them that would be maintained during the process of regime change. Notwithstanding this fact, from this moment onwards, it is also possible to observe a

⁴¹¹ Pilar Ortuño Anaya has shown the initial support of the PSF to the renovators of the PSOE, but she has not gone further than pointing out an ambiguous support of the French to the renovators. See: Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 157-161.

⁴¹² See: Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*; Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*; Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*; Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*; Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*.

⁴¹³ One of the few exceptions is a book that appeared as the last pages of this thesis were being written. Especially see the introduction and the following chapter: Abdón Mateos, "La transición del PSOE en perspectiva europea: socialismo y modelos de partido en el sur de Europa" in *Transición y democracia. Los socialistas en España y Portugal*, ed. Abdón Mateos and Antonio Muñoz Sánchez (Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesias, 2015), 27-45.

⁴¹⁴ The predominant interpretation in the Spanish literature is that of Abdón Mateos, who says that the French Socialists and British Labour were in favour of the renovators because of their dynamism and their presence in Spain, and that this support was not evaluated in ideological terms. Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 445. Although I generally agree with Mateos' interpretation, I consider that the ideological factor was also important. I completely accept the analysis that says that the SI did not base its choice on ideological affinity—as Andrade Blanco has pointed out, the PSOE(h) or the PSI were ideologically closer to the SI than the PSOE(r) Andrade, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición*, 121 – but I consider that this statement has to be nuanced in the case of the individual parties that composed the SI. I do not attempt to establish the primacy of one factor over the other, but I believe that statements such as this one have prevented the Spanish literature from exploring further the importance of ideology in the international relations of the PSOE. One of the repercussions of this fact is that the relations between the French and the Spanish Socialists have not been investigated in depth beyond 1974.

characteristic that would remain constant in the relations between the PSOE and the PSF during the Spanish transition, which was the inconsistency of the French support.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the French Socialists had renovated their party only a year before the schism in the PSOE. The new leaders of the PSF were less in tune with the veteran leadership of the PSOE in exile than with the renovators. The international secretary of the PSF Robert Pontillon considered that Rodolfo Llopis (who was born in 1895) was in a similar position to Guy Mollet in France, representing for their parties a kind of Socialism that was out-of-date.⁴¹⁵ The PSF showed this preference by supporting the renovators even before the partition of the PSOE. According to Llopis, who sent a memorandum to the Secretariat of the SI explaining the internal situation of the PSOE in 1972, – the French Socialists favoured the renovators, leaving the PSOE(h) without means of communication before the Congress of August 1972. Gaston Defferre, the Socialist Mayor of Marseilles and president of the company where the newspaper of the PSOE *Le Socialiste* was published, suspended its publication until after the Congress, and once the Congress was finished, he gave the right of editing *Le Socialiste* to the renovators.⁴¹⁶

Llopis' memorandum implies that the PSF clearly took side in PSOE's quarrel even before the split was official. The action of the French damaged Llopis' group, making the communication between this faction and the rest of the PSOE militants difficult, as in the context of exile and being in a clandestine position, the newspaper was the most important means of communication between the executive and the militants of the party. PSF's support of the renovators bothered the veteran leader of the PSOE a great deal. The French Socialists had been the main supporters of the PSOE in exile for decades, and now Llopis felt betrayed by them. The PSOE's premises, equipment, and publications in France depended on the support of the French Socialists, and after years of solidarity with Llopis, it was difficult for him to digest the fact that now the PSF's support was for the renovators. The anger experienced by Llopis perhaps led him to exaggerate what he considered a French betrayal; however, it is relevant to note that in 1973, when the split in the PSOE was official, he

⁴¹⁵ Alicia Heras Quintano, "L'influence du Parti Socialiste français Dans le role du Parti Socialiste Ouvrier Spagnol pendant la transition democratique spagnole (1970-1982)" (MA diss., Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, 1998), 12-22. The *Nouvel observateur* made the same paralelism between the Spanish and French renovations and between Llopis and Guy Mollet. See: "Renovation Dans le PSOE," *Le Socialiste*, 538 (5/10/1972): 2.

⁴¹⁶ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 158-159.

accused Mitterrand and the PSF of having intervened in PSOE's internal affairs on the side of the renovators.⁴¹⁷

However, the support of the PSF for the renovators of the PSOE probably had little to do with personal sympathy towards one or other faction of the Spanish party. Instead, it was mainly a matter of political strategy and ideological affinity. The renovation of French Socialism brought about a change of strategy in the PSF that was reflected at the international level. As we saw in chapter one, the PSF wanted to promote their model of Socialism abroad as a way of counterbalancing the predominance of Nordic Social Democracy in the SI, and as a way of extending their ideological influence over the future construction of Europe. In this light, the emergence of the PSOE's renovators, who were dynamic and had propositions and ideas very similar to their own (such as the commitment with the rupture with Capitalism, self-management, and an open attitude towards the Communists), was welcomed by the French party. Therefore, my argument is that the PSF's early support of the Spanish renovators has to be understood in strategic and ideological terms.

We can get more clues about the stance of the PSF vis-à-vis the renovation of the PSOE, and about the importance that the supportive attitude of the French had for the Spanish renovators, by analysing the articles that appeared in the newspapers of both parties between 1972 and 1974. On the one hand, they show that PSF felt supportive towards the Spanish renovators due to their greater dynamism compared with the PSOE's veteran leaders, and also due to ideological affinity (especially important in this sense was the willingness of the Spanish renovators to collaborate with the Communists). On the other hand, these articles show that PSOE's renovators saw the PSF and their strategy of forming a union of the Left as an inspiring example for them in their attempt to establish relations with the PCE. They also show that the renovators tried to exploit the French signs of support as a way of legitimising their renovation of the party.

Some weeks before the PSOE Congress, the PSF's official newspaper *L'unité* advanced the renovation of the Spanish in an article called *Espagne: La renaissance des socialistes*. The PSOE was portrayed as a party that had been "powerful during the *Republica*, but badly prepared in clandestinity" and that was in need of new "efficient structures". In the article, the French showed their preference between the PSOE groups. The authors of the text considered that the clandestine militants "who fought on a daily basis in Spain" were already offering this

⁴¹⁷ Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 446.

new efficiency. However, another important reason why the French preferred the Spanish renovators of the interior was that they wanted the “union of action [with the Communists].” The relations with the Communists did not imply a political accord, they acknowledged; cooperation would be focused on “precise objectives” and would take place “at the grassroots level”.⁴¹⁸

When the PSOE Congress took place in August 1972, the PSF sent a representative, Bernard Montanier,⁴¹⁹ who also acted as a representative for the SI.⁴²⁰ He delivered a speech at the Congress on behalf of both the PSF and the SI, where he showed again the French support of the renovation of the Spanish party. He considered the Congress “historic due to the important representation of the Federations from the interior [of Spain].” Then he added: “[b]e persuaded that I will faithfully inform those responsible in the Socialist International of everything that I have heard and understood during these three days of Congress. [...] We will say that the PSOE continues the tradition of the democratic socialism. [...] I am persuaded that [...] you have worked for the PSOE, for a democratic Spain, for liberty and for Socialism.”⁴²¹

Montanier was not the only French Socialist who was supportive of the renovators in the Congress. Gilbert Sans, a representative of the French Socialist Youth, also considered the Congress as “historical”, and wished to “define the rapport and links tightly bounded between the youth organizations of our respective parties.” Moreover, he congratulated the Spanish on their renovation, which was “evidently [...] similar to the renovation carried out a year ago by our own party...”⁴²² He underlined the significance of the renewal because it brought the Spanish and the French Youth movements very close ideologically. According to him, the renovations of the French and Spanish Socialism in 1971 and 1972 “[...] respond[ed] to the revival of the European Socialism.”⁴²³

⁴¹⁸ Nicolas Brimo and Gilbert Sans, “Espagne: La renaissance des socialistes,” *L’Unité*, 27 (28/07/1972): 10-11.

⁴¹⁹ It has to be noted that, despite the support of the PSF for the Spanish renovators, the French tried to be prudent, as shown by the fact that the representative to the PSOE’s Congress was Bernard Montanier, assistant to the international relations, and not Robert Pontillon or Françoise Mitterrand, the international secretary and the first secretary of the PSF respectively.

⁴²⁰ He was the delegate representative of the SI due to a misunderstanding. The SI wanted him to be present in the Congress on its behalf as observant, but the French misunderstood the letter of the SI and he presented himself as a delegate of the SI. Heras, “L’influence du Parti Socialiste,” 30-31.

⁴²¹ “Intervención de Bernard Montanier en nombre del Partido Socialista Francés y de la Internacional Socialista,” *Le Socialiste*, 537 (21/09/1972): 8.

⁴²² “Gilbert Sans. Mouvement de la Jeunesse Socialiste de France,” *Le Socialiste*, 537 (21/09/1972): 7.

⁴²³ “Gilbert Sans, en nombre de las JJ.SS. francesas,” *Le Socialiste*, 540 (02/11/1972): 4.

Immediately after the celebration of the Congress, the Paris Federation of the PSF issued a letter to its sections in which they made clear their recognition to the new executive committee elected in PSOE's 12th Congress, emphasising that "our party is engaged [with the renovators] to provide them all the possible support." Thus, they recommended not keeping contacts with the sector of the PSOE led by Llopis, which they considered an "ultra minority group" that was "abusing of the name Spanish Socialist Worker's Party."⁴²⁴

The gestures of solidarity made by the PSF towards the renovators of the PSOE continued after the Congress, as the French invited the Spaniards to several international events where they could meet other Socialist parties of the SI. On 27th September 1972, the French invited the PSOE to send representatives⁴²⁵ to the celebration of the one hundred anniversary of Leon Blum in the Sorbonne. That was the first opportunity for the renovators to meet with other European Socialist parties and inform them about the internal situation of the party.⁴²⁶ On 21st October, the PSF and the PSOE(r) held a public meeting in Alfortville, a town close to Paris, with the aim of giving information to the French citizens on PSOE's position regarding the Spanish regime, and to discuss the possibility of the European integration of Franco's Spain.⁴²⁷

As we have seen in the previous section of this chapter, the PSOE was worried about the possible entrance of Spain into the EC. This concern was increased by the fact that the President of the French Republic Pompidou had implied in a public statement in October 1972 his support of the entrance of Spain into the EC.⁴²⁸ Thus, PSOE's renovators were very interested in explaining their position to the French and getting the support of the PSF, which would be able to exert pressure in France against Spanish integration into the EC.

One more gesture of solidarity was the invitation the PSF extended to the PSOE(r) to a colloquium on Czechoslovakia and the Prague spring celebrated on 25th and 26th of November 1972 in Paris.⁴²⁹ Finally, both parties met again in Paris on 31st May 1973. This time the Spanish renovators were invited by the 11th section of the PSF in Paris to talk about the history of the Spanish workers' movement. According to PSOE(r) this meeting "show[ed] the

⁴²⁴ Jacques Guyard, "El PSF y el XII Congreso," *Le Socialiste*, 541 (16/11/1972): 5.

⁴²⁵ Goizalde, Juan Iglesias, Arsenio Jimeno and C. García.

⁴²⁶ "PSOE. Reuniones de la Comisión Ejecutiva" and "Commemoración del centenario de León Blum," *Le Socialiste*, 538 (5/10/1972): 2-3.

⁴²⁷ "Acto público PSF y PSOE," *Le Socialiste*, 541 (16/11/1972): 6.

⁴²⁸ "España y Europa," *Le Socialiste*, 538 (5/10/1972): 1.

⁴²⁹ "Coloquio sobre Checoslovaquia," *El Socialista*, (December 1972): 8.

tight collaboration that exists between the PSF and the PSOE in this region, as well as at the national level.”⁴³⁰

The PSF’s initial support and sympathy for PSOE’s renovators was clear, and as it appears, the main reason for this was that they felt ideologically close to the renovators. The PSOE(r) established its provisional headquarters in Paris while they were building a basic infrastructure in Madrid, which also allowed the renovators in exile to have frequent contact with the French. However, the leadership of the PSF was cautious, and avoided relating too closely to the young Spanish renovators. Most of the renovators lived in Spain and were personally unknown to the French, which imposed prudence on the PSF’s executive. Moreover, the fact that the SI and its member parties had not taken sides regarding the PSOE conflict as clearly as the PSF had made the French reconsider their initial stance soon after the Congress of August 1972. The PSF did not want to upset its sister parties in the SI by supporting the Spanish renovators so early on, especially taking into account the weak position of the French within the SI. This weakness came from the reluctance of the Social Democratic parties who led the International to accept the French strategy of alliance with the Communists, as was made evident in the SI’s Congress of Vienna in June 1972.⁴³¹

Thus, from September onwards, the PSF avoided making public statements of support for the Spanish renovators. Moreover, there were internal divergences in the PSF that made the French temper their attitude towards the PSOE(r). If in the PSF there was a general feeling of support for the renovators, the leader of the party François Mitterrand was not sure about supporting them exclusively, since he had established personal relations with Tierno Galvan, the leader of the PSi.⁴³² Antoine Blanca, the secretary general of the national federation of the clubs Léo Lagrange, was also upset by the PSF taking sides with PSOE’s renovators so soon. He denounced this factionalist stance, and proposed the establishment of a commission to try to help the PSOE to overcome its internal problems and stop favouring one faction over the other.⁴³³ Another factor that led the PSF to temper their supportive stance towards the renovators was the fact that after the celebration of the Congress of December 1972 organised by the Llopis faction, the French were included in the special commission created by the SI to work towards the resolution of the PSOE’s conflict. Thus, the PSF started to work for the

⁴³⁰ R.R., “PSOE. Actividades en el exterior. Sección de París,” *El Socialista*, 2 (28/06/1973): 5.

⁴³¹ Hugues Portelli, *L’internationale socialiste* (Paris: Editions ouvrières, 1983), 138-139.

⁴³² Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 158.

⁴³³ Heras, “L’influence du Parti Socialiste,” 33.

reconciliation of both PSOE factions along with their counterparts in the special commission, which as we saw above, was not possible, and ended with the recognition of the PSOE(r) in January 1974.

Although it seemed to be inconsistent, the French demonstration of support for the PSOE(r) was very important for the renovators, and they tried to exploit it to their advantage. At that time, international recognition was crucial for legitimising the renovated faction in the eyes of PSOE militants, and by showing the French support, the PSOE(r) sought to gain this legitimacy before the decision of the SI was taken. Immediately before the August Congress, the PSOE(r) published a translation of the text quoted above published by Nicolas Brimo and Gilbert Sans in *L'unité* in the second page of *El Socialista*.⁴³⁴ Similarly, *El Socialista* published the speech delivered at their Congress by Bernard Montanier and by Gilbert Sans, which I also noted earlier.

Of course, the renovators tried to exploit all the signs of support coming from Europe as much as possible, not only from France. Thus, the presence of representatives of international Socialist parties at their Congress was interpreted as an “unequivocal manifestation of International solidarity.”⁴³⁵ Furthermore, the initiative taken by Swiss Socialist Party in creating a solidarity fund (which was not exclusively for the PSOE, but also for the Portuguese and Greek Socialists), and a campaign of solidarity with Spanish workers initiated by the British Youth, the Trade Unions, and some members of the British Labour Party, were also exploited as a sign of international support.⁴³⁶ The invitation from the Italian Socialist Party to its 39th Congress was also highlighted in *El Socialista*, where PSOE’s representative Juan Iglesias had the opportunity to deliver a speech.⁴³⁷

However, I will focus exclusively on references to the French Socialists in the PSOE newspaper, which between 1972 and 1974 were greater in number than the references to any

⁴³⁴ Nicolás Brimo and Gilbert Sans, “El renacimiento de los socialistas,” *El Socialista* (August 1972): 2.

⁴³⁵ “XII Congreso del PSOE. Inequivoca manifestación de Solidaridad Internacional,” *Le Socialiste*, 540 (02/11/1972): 1-5.

⁴³⁶ “El partido Socialista Suizo crea un fondo permanente de solidaridad,” *Le Socialiste*, 541 (16/11/1972): 2; “Solidaridad Obrera. Campaña Socialista en Inglaterra,” *El Socialista* (October 1972): 3-6. However, these articles deal with the general support of Swiss and British to the Spanish Socialists, and not with the support or recognition to PSOE renovators.

⁴³⁷ “Presencia internacional del partido en el 39º Congreso del PS italiano,” *Le Socialiste*, 543 (14/12/1972): 4-7. For more information on the relations between the PSOE and the PSI, and on the ideological influence that the Italians exerted over the Spanish Socialists in these years see: Abdón Mateos and Luca Costantini, “El sueño de un socialismo «mediterráneo». Encuentros y desencuentros entre los socialistas de España e Italia.” Access: https://www.academia.edu/10360142/El_sue%C3%B1o_de_un_socialismo_mediterr%C3%A1neo._Encuentros_y_desencuentros_entre_los_socialistas_de_Espa%C3%B1a_e_Italia

other foreign party. The greater number of references to the PSF shows two things; on the one hand, before the recognition of the PSOE(r) by the SI, the French were the most supportive European party with the renovators. On the other hand, the renovators especially appreciated, and gave greater importance and publicity to the manifestations of support coming from France than those from any other party. I argue that this was due to the fact that already at this early moment, the renovators of the PSOE felt that they identified with ideology of the French Socialists, and were inspired by them. Although at this point this was not said bluntly, the analysis of these references shows that to an important extent this was the case. Moreover, the analysis of these references shows that the PSOE was adopting, adapting, reflecting, and mirroring the ideas and strategies of the PSF.

In the context of renovation, internal competition, and international helplessness, the PSOE(r) needed to update the ideology and the strategy of the party. As I already sketched above, the necessity for ideological actualisation responded to the challenges that the PSOE had to face in the opposition, and to the need for reasserting the identity of the group in the context of increasing competence in the Left, but there were other reasons. The ideological updating was also a response to the need to legitimate the actions of the renovators who had contributed to the partition of the party, and to the need for inciting the party to action. Taking these needs into account, the references to the PSF show that the PSOE(r) was looking for international models and examples that could be useful in orientating the renovation of the party, a renovation that aimed to establish the party in the far Left, and differentiate it from the Communists and from Social Democracy.

However, although the PSOE paid attention to the political, ideological, and strategic development of the French Left, importing and adapting some of these developments to its own circumstances, the Spanish had a complementary, and perhaps more important, way of obtaining legitimacy. This was to relate their political proposals to the traditional thinking of historical leaders of the PSOE. In this sense it is important to note that the PSOE followed a different legitimising strategy to the PS in Portugal before the change of regime in both countries. The Portuguese, as we saw in the first chapter, wrote their programme in 1973 very influenced by the French Socialists. Moreover, the PS emphasised its ideological affinity with the PSF, and praised the French union of the Left and the Chilean Socialist experience as the models to be followed. This was in part a strategy of legitimisation among the Portuguese Left in a radicalized context in Portugal. The PSOE in turn, despite showing sympathy and

ideological proximity to the French, did not seek to reassert themselves within the Left, or to legitimise their decision of renovating the party, solely by using this affinity. Instead, they used their own history.

If we take the issue of the relations with the Communists—the main strategic difference between the factions of the PSOE and a highly divisive issue within the party in general—as the object of analysis, we perceive the appearance of new forms of language and discourse in the PSOE's official newspaper. This new language reveals that the French union of the Left was an influential model for the PSOE in these years. This does not imply that the Spanish Socialists tried to literally copy the French strategy; in fact, the PSOE(r) had a rather original idea about the relations between Communists and Socialists. They believed in the usefulness of occasional collaboration with the PCE in the context of the crisis in Franco's regime, but they did not want a programmatic union. However, the French model, which in 1973-74 was showing a positive balance for the Socialists in France, helped the Spanish to reflect on their relations with the PCE, and the adoption of the French model was considered to be an option that could be adapted to the Spanish reality.

The different approaches to the union of the Left in Spain and France in the first half of the 1970s has to be understood in the light of the diverse historical experiences of the French and Spanish Socialists. For the Spanish Socialists, collaboration with the PCE was a delicate subject. Their last experience of collaboration with the Communists had come to a dramatic end. In 1936, the PSOE, the PCE and other Republican progressive parties, joined together in a Left wing coalition, the Popular Front,⁴³⁸ that allowed them to win the elections in Spain. As it is well known, the infuriated Spanish conservative forces could not stand the victory of the Left, and rebelled against the legitimate government of the *República*, which led to the Civil War. Now, in the context of the end of Franco's regime, this memory was an argument strong enough to avoid any coalition that resembled the Popular Front of the 1930s. However, there were other reasons for the Socialists to think twice before cooperating with the Communists.

⁴³⁸ Although Spain is one of the countries where the Communist strategy of the Popular Front had success, and also the most dramatic consequences, the PCE was a minor partner in the Leftist coalition of 1936. The main partners were the PSOE – internally divided – and the Republicans, who had been working on that union before the launching of the Popular Front strategy at the seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935. It was after the rebellion of the Right wing forces led by Franco that the PCE became a key actor in the coalition. This was so because the lack of support from the Western democracies to Spain made of the Soviet Union the main international partner of the *República*. See: Paul Preston, "The Creation of the Popular Front in Spain" in *The Popular Front in Europe*, ed. Helen Graham and Paul Preston (Houndmills and London: Macmillan Press, 1987), 84-105. Also see: Helen Graham, "The Spanish Popular Front and the Civil War", in *The Popular Front in Europe*, ed. Helen Graham and Paul Preston (Houndmills and London: Macmillan Press, 1987), 106-130.

During the Civil War, the support of the USSR for the *República* enhanced the role of the PCE in the Republican side, and the Socialists thought that the Communist behaviour—first co-opting the Youth section of the PSOE, then being obedient executors of the dictates of the Soviet Union—could be considered as sectarian and traitorous.

The French Socialists and Communists had also collaborated and reached power in a Popular Front in the mid-1930s. Their experience was also conflicted, but not as dramatic as the Spanish situation. In fact, after the Popular Front, Communists and Socialists collaborated again in France between 1944 and 1947, first in the Resistance and later in a tripartite government with the Popular Republicans. However, the rise of the Cold War affected the relations between Socialists and Communists, making them hostile until the establishment of the Fifth Republic in France, which made the union of the Left necessary if Socialists and Communists wanted to reach power.⁴³⁹

However, despite these historical differences, the national and the international circumstances in which the Spanish and French Socialist parties lived in the 1970s seemed to make the union of the Left plausible again. The presidentialist Fifth Republic of France and the agonising Spanish dictatorship, made some kind of union of the progressive forces necessary for the Socialists if they wanted to achieve power, as in the case of the PSF, or to overthrow the dictatorship, as in the case of the PSOE. This union seemed to be facilitated by the international détente and by the ideological renovation of the Communist parties of Southern Europe.

In December 1972 and January 1973, *El Socialista* published a couple of articles in which PSOE members mentioned and reflected on the French union of the Left. The first article (already mentioned above) was about the celebration of a colloquium on Czechoslovakia held in Paris, to which the PSOE was invited. There, the Prague spring was praised (especially for its democratic character and for having spread workers' self-management) and the role of the USSR and the Czechoslovakian Communist Party in it was criticised. The reaction of the French Communists was to disapprove of the celebration of this meeting, and consider it inopportune.⁴⁴⁰ According to the PSOE, this was a sign of the independence of the parties that

⁴³⁹ Bernard E. Brown, "The Common Program in France", in *Eurocommunism and Eurosocialism. The Left Confronts Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York: Cyrco Press, 1979), 19-33.

⁴⁴⁰ The PCF had ambiguously condemned the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, and this issue brought about internal conflict within the party until the beginning of the 1970s. Moreover, the PSF was giving a lot of attention to the issue of Czechoslovakia, putting into question the PCF's commitment to political freedom. Thus, in December 1972, only four months before the French legislative elections, the meeting organised by the PSF

composed the union of the Left. The PSOE considered that Mitterrand was following an electoral strategy that aimed at gaining the support of part of the anti-Communist electorate, which would eventually be positive for the union of the Left. Thus, “to show the independence of each party, without betraying the Common Programme” was the best way for the united Left to reach power in France.⁴⁴¹

The second article analysed the French political situation before the legislative elections of March 1973, and discussed the possibilities of the Left winning. According to the PSOE(r), the French Left had real possibilities because it was using a very clever strategy: “without betraying what has been pact in the Common Programme, the parties keep their independence.” This would help them to attract the petit bourgeoisie whose vote was usually anti-Communist. The conjunction of Communist and anti-Communist voters in the union of the Left was favoured by the new international context of détente, which “favoured the possibilities of the Left [in Europe].” Therefore, the PSOE considered that “our position as Socialists, therefore internationalists, is [...] to be together with our French comrades in favour of the triumph of the united Left.”⁴⁴²

These two articles show a rather positive view of the French union of the Left in the PSOE(r). However, it is interesting to note that both articles emphasise the following idea: the possibilities that the French union of the Left had for succeeding, and therefore the union’s desirability, lay in the fact that, without being disloyal to the Common Programme, both the Socialist and Communist parties kept their independence. The emphasis on this idea suggests two things. Firstly, the analysis of the PSOE was made with an eye on Spain. Thus, while preaching the French union of the Left, the Spanish emphasised the independence of both parties and the fact that this union did not imply to losing the independence of the parties. This was important for the renovators because the historic members of the party had accused them of trying to give the PSOE to the Communists. Second, the PSOE seemed to interpret the union of the Left in an instrumental way that was closer to the electoral interpretation of Mitterrand than to the dialectical revolutionary perspective of the CERES.

was very uncomfortable for the PCF. See: Valentine Lomellini, *Les relations dangereuses. French Socialists, Communists and the Human Rights issue in the Soviet Bloc* (Brussels: Peter Lang, International Issues 22, 2012), 25-36 and 78-86. Also, Michael Scott Christofferson, *French Intellectuals Against the Left: The Antitotalitarian Movement of the 1970s* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), 116.

⁴⁴¹ “Coloquio sobre Checoslovaquia,” *El Socialista* (December 1972): 8.

⁴⁴² “Política Internacional. Francia,” *El Socialista* (Enero 1973): 4.

In April 1973, the PSOE published another article reflecting on the same issue—the French union of the Left. This time, the context was different, since the legislative elections had already taken place in France. Although the Gaullist Right won, the results of the Left were positive compared to the previous elections. The Left received 46% of the votes, and within the Left, the Socialists made a very positive improvement. The PSF received 19% of the votes, a great result taking into account that in the Presidential elections of 1969, the representative of the old SFIO Gaston Defferre had received only 5% of the votes, and considering that in the previous legislative elections in 1967, a federation of Socialists and Radicals had got a slightly worse result than in 1973. In this new context, *El Socialista* considered that “the French Left—Socialists and Communists, essentially—have realised in 1973 an experience practically without precedents in European politics. The signing of a common programme of government and the coalition in the legislative elections [...]” As a result, the French Left had modified the balance of power in the French National Assembly in their favour. The conclusion drawn by the PSOE from this experience was that the Left in France had received an important boost, and that the future task of the Left was “to keep the opposition united, coherent, with a class approach that demand the increasing power of the workers in the companies, the popular control of the means of diffusion [...]” because in this way it could be possible to reach Socialism in France.⁴⁴³

In this article, the appreciation for the French union of the Left is neatly positive. The electoral results of the Left were better than in the previous elections, and the cooperation with the Communists had paid off for the PSF. In this new light, the PSOE(r) considered that the French Left should remain united, and use their parliamentary force as leverage to press for reforms that could eventually lead to Socialism in France. They did not establish direct links between the Spanish and the French situations, but they praised the union of the Left. Furthermore, it should be noted that by describing the French Common programme as “an experience practically without precedents” they were avoiding any link between this experience and the Popular Fronts of the 1930s, and avoiding reminders of a strong argument against the collaboration between Socialists and Communists in Spain.

Although in this period (1972-1973) the PSOE did not openly propose the union of the Left in Spain, the abovementioned articles enable the argument that the PSOE(r) and their proposal for establishing contacts with the Communists, and perhaps collaborating with them, was to

⁴⁴³ “La oposición en Francia,” *El Socialista* (April 1973): 4.

some extent influenced and legitimised by the French experience. The combination of factors such as international détente, the superior strength of the Communists in both Spain and France, the imminent death of Franco, and the revival of the Left in both countries set a framework very different from the 1930s, the previous time when the PSOE and the PCE had collaborated. Therefore, the possibility of cooperating with the Communists also seemed to be open in Spain, and in light of the results that the union of the Left was having in France, it even seemed desirable.

This argument would be strengthened at the thirteenth PSOE Congress in October 1974, when a change of attitude towards the Spanish Communists would be made official, as we will see later in this chapter. This was an important transfer from the French to the Spanish Socialists, but the PSOE's process of adoption and adaptation eventually transformed the transferred idea. The Spanish adopted the basic idea of the union of the Left under the conditions of their own reality, their own system of values, and their own history. They received and adapted this idea to their own circumstances in a political culture that had anti-Communism as one of its main characteristics. Therefore, the PSOE's way of adopting the strategy that the French Socialists were implementing in France was unique due to their own, unique, circumstances. As we will see in the last point of this chapter, the PSOE asked for collaboration with the Communists, but without compromising its independence and its own programme.

The PSF was an example for the PSOE(r) not only because of the union of the Left, but also because of how they had united the whole French Socialist family into one party, and for their absorption of radical Leftist groups who had their origins in progressive Catholicism. As we saw above, the emergence of several radical parties in the Spanish opposition that claimed to be Socialists was a big problem for the PSOE, and examining at the French experience could also be helpful for the PSOE for reflecting on how to deal with this issue. However, the example of the PSF was valid to a limited extent, since the formula followed by the French (liquidating the historic SFIO and creating a new party) was against the aspirations of the PSOE of unifying the Spanish Socialists by incorporating them into the party.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the PSOE had an internal debate about how to deal with the progressive Catholics that had come ideologically closer to the Socialists since the beginning of the 1960s, after the Second Vatican Council. There was disagreement within the party on

the part that these newcomers to Socialism should play within their strategy, and the French experience was a valuable point of reference.⁴⁴⁴

The PSOE had a traditional anti-clericalist culture that caused some of the members of the party to downplay the legitimacy and the role that the progressive Catholics could play in the fight against the dictatorship.⁴⁴⁵ However, the PSOE also had members who were in favour of the collaboration between the progressive Catholics and the Socialists, and even in favour of absorbing the former into the party. The supporters of this stance focused on the example offered by the French experience. The contribution that the progressive Catholics made to the rebirth of the PSF was considered “an example that should be studied in our country.”⁴⁴⁶ Furthermore, it was considered that:

The strengthening of Socialism in Spain can be achieved in record time if we know how to attract to our [party] these Catholics [...]. We have to do in Spain what our Socialist French comrades have realized so successfully in their country. A big part of the dynamism and of the electoral base recovered by the French Socialist Party comes from the enthusiastic contribution of the progressive Catholics.⁴⁴⁷

So, as we have seen, in these months the PSOE(r) was trying to achieve legitimacy and to reassert their identity, and meanwhile they showed their sympathies and interest to the PSF and on the French union of the Left. However, as I said above, the international references, although important, were not the only way the renovators looked for ideas and sought to legitimise their propositions and their actions. Another useful way of doing so was the use of the history of the party.

Between August 1972 and January 1974, the renovators published many quotations from some historical personalities linked to the party in *El Socialista*. They also quoted some historical European Socialists—theorists as well as politicians. It is very interesting to analyse who they were quoting, and what quotations they chose, because this reveals the ideological

⁴⁴⁴ The experience the French Socialists had when incorporating some progressive Catholics into the party was not the only international reference for the PSOE. For the Socialists, and for the Spanish Left in general, the relations between Catholics and Marxists in Italy was also influential. This idea is implicit in Feliciano Montero, “Iglesia y política en la transición: Los católicos ante la transición política,” *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie V. Hª Contemporánea*, 12 (1999): 335-356.

⁴⁴⁵ This stance can be seen in an article on the French trade union of Catholic origin Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT): J., “En el XXXVI congreso de la CFDT, Edmond Maire afirma: «no aceptamos el dogma y el sectarismo del PC»,” *El Socialista*, 1 (14/06/1973): 5. Also: Anibal, “Tribuna Libre. El Socialismo y los católicos,” *El Socialista*, 14 (2nd half of January 1974): 5.

⁴⁴⁶ Tomás Hernández, “Acotaciones no marginales a «El Socialista» sobre la CFDT,” *El Socialista*, 4 (26/07/1973): 5.

⁴⁴⁷ J. Borrás, “El socialismo y la renovación de la Iglesia católica,” *El Socialista*, 10 (second half of November 1973): 4.

and political stance of the PSOE, and how the renovators legitimised it. During this year and a half, they quoted or reproduced the *Programa Máximo* of the PSOE in almost every number of *El Socialista*. Moreover, they published articles or excerpts from articles and speeches by Pablo Iglesias and Jaime Vera, founders of the PSOE, Francisco Largo Caballero, and Indalecio Prieto. Among the Socialist international personalities, they quoted Rosa Luxemburg, and to a lesser extent Karl Kautsky and Jean Jaures.

Pablo Iglesias was the person most commonly quoted in *El Socialista*. The use of quotations from the founder of the party was the best way to link the renovators to the deeper roots and traditions of PSOE, and establish a sense of continuity between the original ideas of the party and their own ideas, giving them legitimacy and also invalidating the critics of the exiled veteran leaders. The quotations that I have chosen show the attachment of the party to Marxism, but at the same time they show that the PSOE's seemingly orthodox understanding of Socialism as a theory and model of society was closely linked to parliamentary democracy and liberal freedom. The fact that Pablo Iglesias had chosen to accept the bourgeois legality with the aim to transform it from inside at the end of the nineteenth century nuanced the meaning of the radical quotations chosen by PSOE's renovators. They were willing to show that they did not exclude any form of action depending of the circumstances and that is how these quotations have to be understood. As an example, they quoted Pablo Iglesias' discourse in 1908 in which he stated:

We, the socialists, aspire to transform property, to conquer the political power and we understand that that conquer and that transformation should not be done through evolution, but through a revolution [...]. When we have been labelled as a party of government and we have been criticised for living within legality, we have said that while we do not have the strength to win the revolution and we are allowed to live legally, we will use the legality to educate and organise our working partners. But if you close our way now, [...] we will follow other paths, we will be terrorists [...].⁴⁴⁸

Another excerpt from the quotations of Pablo Iglesias in *El Socialista* is useful for clarifying the idea that the renovated PSOE wanted to transmit: "The revolution does not mean the bloody craziness of the mutiny [...]. The Revolution [...] is the one made by the [use of] propaganda, with the education and the organisation of the masses, with the infiltration in [the

⁴⁴⁸ Discourse pronounced by Pablo Iglesias against the Project o anti-terrorist law proposed by Maura in 1908, quoted in: "Doctrina Socialista," *El Socialista*, (February 1973): 8. It should be noted that the word terrorist used in the discourse of Iglesias has to be understood in the context of the proposal of an anti-terrorist law by the government of Antonio Maura. Therefore, it can be understood as a rhetorical choice to give more strength to the Socialist rejection to that law.

masses] of the rebel spirit against injustice [...] with the creation of a force that will be constantly willing to impose the respect for freedom and rights [...].”⁴⁴⁹

Through these and other similar texts, the PSOE(r) was communicating something. They were using the excerpts to place themselves in the Left, which was necessary for competing with the PCE and with the other Spanish Socialist parties. The PSOE(r) was self-proclaiming to be a revolutionary party, but they were renouncing the use of force. They were accepting the bourgeois democracy, although to fight against it from inside, and they were establishing a link between themselves and the founder of the party, which was useful in order to compete with the PSOE(h).

Another historical member of the PSOE quoted several times in *El Socialista* in these years was Francisco Largo Caballero. Caballero was perhaps the most radical leader in the history of the PSOE, a person that embodied the two souls of the party, the reformist and the revolutionary. He was secretary general of the UGT, Labour Minister with the PSOE in the first government of the Second *República*, and president of the *República* during part of the Civil War. As we saw above, he had been a reformist who in the 1930s advocated and tried to implement a revolutionary way to Socialism. Later, during the Civil War he defended the union between Socialists and Communists until the complex situation on the Republican side and the struggles between Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists led him to resign. Despite having a tough experience collaborating with the Communists, he was pragmatic and did not exclude the possibility of working together with them again after the war.

In March 1973, *El Socialista* quoted a text written by Caballero in 1945, in which he said: “not always we can make politics according to our feelings and wishes, but on the base of reality, and this one will sometimes impose to us, against our will, the collaboration with the communist party.”⁴⁵⁰ There was a double significance to the fact that several Caballero quotations were chosen, as well as their content. On the one hand, he was the main revolutionary leader in the history of the party, and quoting him was a way of establishing a link between him and the renovators. In this way, the renovators showed that they were more clearly placed in the Left than the previous leaders in exile. On the other hand, quoting a text

⁴⁴⁹ “La obra revolucionaria”, *El Socialista*, 12 (second half of December 1973): 1. Text by Pablo Iglesias originally published in *El Socialista* in July 1914.

⁴⁵⁰ “Francisco Largo Caballero y los «comunistas»,” *El Socialista* (March 1973): 6. This text was written by Largo Caballero in 1945, after the end of the Second World War.

in which Caballero, who had experienced the roughness of the Communists in the Civil War, defended the possibility of collaborating with them, was a way to legitimise the most controversial proposal of PSOE's renovators, namely to open a collaboration with the Communists.

Finally, the PSOE(r) also quoted Indalecio Prieto, who had been the rival of Largo Caballero within the party during the Civil War. He had several ministerial positions in the first government of the Spanish *República* and during the War. Within the PSOE he represented a liberal faction that was against the radicalism of Largo Caballero and against the moderation of Julián Besteiro, and he became a convinced anti-Communist after the War, transferring this feeling to the whole party. Moreover, he was the person who led the PSOE in exile during the 1940s. He was quoted very few times in *El Socialista* in the period between August 1972 and January 1974. One of the quotations chosen by PSOE's renovators is very relevant because it legitimises another one of their most important claims, which was to move the leadership of the party from exile to the interior of Spain. Thus, *El Socialista* quoted a short excerpt by Prieto, in which he said: "It is time for Spain to lead the emigration, and the emigration should not be obstinate trying to lead Spain. [We] the expatriated should be led and not leaders."⁴⁵¹

I argue that the quotations from Largo Caballero and Prieto, two historical leaders of the PSOE who had divided the party in the 1930s, could be also interpreted as an attempt to avoid taking clear side on the historical divisions of the party. Thus, despite the fact that the link that the renovators established with the revolutionary Largo Caballero is greater than with Prieto—Caballero is quoted more times than Prieto and his texts are much richer in content—they probably quoted both as a way to avoid identifying with one of the historical factions of the party exclusively. This is important because after the partition of the party in 1972, the renovators probably did not want to appear as secessionists. Quoting both Caballero and Prieto reinforced the feeling and idea that the renovators completely accepted the history of the party, and that they were the heirs to the whole tradition of the Spanish Socialism.⁴⁵²

The renovators of the PSOE also quoted some Socialist international personalities. These personalities were not quoted as often as PSOE's historical leaders, but one of them appeared

⁴⁵¹ Indalecio Prieto, *El Socialista*, 1 (14/06/1973): 7. Also in *El Socialista*, 2 (28/06/1973): 3.

⁴⁵² The factionalism of the PSOE during the 1920s and 1930s has been difficult to assimilate by the PSOE. Marta Bizcarrondo, "La Segunda República: ideologías socialistas" in *El Socialismo en España. Desde la fundación del PSOE hasta 1975*, *Anales de Historia* Vol. 1, ed. Santos Juliá (Madrid: Pablo Iglesias, 1986), 256.

in *El Socialista* several times—Rosa Luxemburg. She had strong symbolic significance for the PSOE, since she had been committed to the revolution in Germany, while at the same time she had been critical of the Communist experience in Russia and the centralist and authoritarian character of the vanguard Communist party. Thus, in a context in which Social Democracy and Communism were not valid points of reference for the PSOE, Luxemburg provided an ideological point of reference far from reformism, but different and contrary to Soviet Communism, that coincided with the image that the PSOE wanted to project. Moreover, she provided the young renovators with a theoretical tool that they adopted and adapted in the 1970s, namely the dialectic of spontaneity and organisation, that the PSOE renamed as dialectic Marxism. For the young Spanish Socialists, this theoretical tool was a way to link theory and praxis, providing them with great flexibility of action under a Marxist theoretical umbrella.

2.4.1. From January 1974 to the PSOE's 13th Congress in Suresnes

As it was mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, once the PSOE(r) was recognised as the legitimate representative of the Spanish Socialism within the SI, the principal task of the party before the celebration of the 13th Congress was to improve its national implantation, to update its organisational structure, and to clarify its ideological position. Regarding its implantation and organisation in Spain, the PSOE did not make a lot of progress between 1972 and 1974. The number of militants increased, but the party did not grow enough to recover from the losses caused by the split, and the collective way of running the executive was not very effective. Regarding the latter issue, the ideological clarification, the party experienced a period of reflection and debate that consolidated the positions sketched in 1972. Although the historiography of the PSOE has portrayed the period between the congresses of 1972 and 1974 as period of paralysis,⁴⁵³ these years were essential to reasserting PSOE's identity and making its new image as a party well placed in the Left credible. The key for the Socialists was to occupy an ideological niche that would be fresh but linked to the origins of the party; that would also be decisively Leftist but different from Communism and Social Democracy.⁴⁵⁴ In order to do so, the PSOE kept emphasising its ties with its historical roots,

⁴⁵³ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 288. Juliá, *Los socialistas*.

⁴⁵⁴ This idea is stated by Felipe González in: Pierre Guidoni, and Felipe González, *Entretiens sur le socialisme en Espagne* (Paris : Tema-éditions, 1976), 40. Also in Felipe González, "El Socialismo ayer, hoy y mañana," *Leviatán. Revista de Pensamiento Socialista*, II Epoca, 1 (Tercer trimestre 1978): 26.

and started to refine its ideological position by paying attention to the experiences and the theoretical developments of the French Socialists.

The PSF responded timidly to the PSOE's interest in French Socialism. The French, aware of their influence over their Spanish counterparts, were interested in patronising the PSOE, but without compromising their scant economic resources. Thus, they provided modest help to the PSOE. Both parties collaborated to organise courses for the formation of PSOE's militants in France, and the PSF tried to help to re-unify the Spanish Socialist family. Although the French support of the PSOE was not exceptional, the PSF's theoretical developments and their experiences in achieving the union of the Left were very influential in Spain. In the words of Felipe González, in these years the PSOE lived focused on international references. "We followed more the evolution of some French theoreticians such as Touraine, Mallet or Gorz, than our French counterparts did. This is, we were making an internal ideological accumulation not based on the social model in which we lived, [...] but on the political model that we advocated."⁴⁵⁵

The evolution of the political context in Spain also contributed to this approximation to the ideological position of the PSF. If in 1972 the feeling of crisis in Franco's regime was strong, in 1974 this crisis had intensified and it became clear that the regime could not survive without substantial political changes after the death of the dictator, which seemed to be coming closer. In December 1973, the Basque extreme Leftist group ETA assassinated the recently appointed Prime Minister⁴⁵⁶ Luis Carrero Blanco, which interrupted Franco's plans of succession (consisting of the Prince Juan Carlos as the Head of the State and Carrero Blanco as the Prime Minister). This event was a very strong indicator of the difficulties that the regime would have to survive after the death of its leader.

Carrero Blanco was replaced by the more moderate Carlos Arias Navarro. At the beginning of his presidency, Navarro made some gestures that seemed to imply a timid political liberalisation. One of these gestures was to relaunch the Law of Political Associations, which would admit the existence of different political associations, not political parties, within the regime, under the condition that they would respect the basic principles of the Francoism. Everyone from the opposition to the diehards of the regime, the so-called bunker, rejected this

⁴⁵⁵ González Felipe, "El Socialismo ayer, hoy y mañana," *Leviatán. Revista de Pensamiento Socialista*, II Epoca, 1 (Tercer trimestre 1978): 13. Felipe González also mentioned the contribution of the Italian Lelio Basso to the ideological development of PSOE.

⁴⁵⁶ In Spanish *Presidente del Gobierno*.

proposal. The Prime Minister had to give up his initiative, especially after April, when the Portuguese Revolution started.

Moreover, the PSOE had to respond to the initiatives of the PCE, which was very active and interested in promoting the union of the democratic opposition. At the 8th Congress of the Communist Party, held in July 1972, a proposal of collaboration was sent to the rest of the opposition to the regime. The aim of this collaboration was to put an end to the regime after Franco's death and to start working on the new government that would succeed Francoism.⁴⁵⁷ In 1974, the issue of the relations with the PCE acquired even greater relevance, and it became unavoidable for the PSOE. The Communists, implementing their strategy, created the *Junta Democrática* in July 1974, which was a coalition of several political forces and personalities opposed to the regime. The *Junta* included the *Partido Socialista Popular* (former PSi)⁴⁵⁸, the *Alianza Socialista de Andalucía* (ASA), the *Partido del Trabajo de España* (PTE), CCOO, the *Partido Carlista*, and some individual personalities, such as the intellectual José Vidal Beneyto, the Right wing aristocrat José Luis de Villalonga, and the monarchist and member of Opus Dei, Rafael Calvo Serer. Moreover, it included neighbours' committees and professional associations.

Beyond aggregating part of the opposition to the regime from Left to Right, the creation of the *Junta* by the PCE had other objectives. One of these was to create a platform that would coordinate the daily democratic struggle at the grassroots level in Spain, hampering the continuity of the regime and starting to implant democracy from the ground up. The other was to ensure the presence of the PCE in future Spanish democracy. The Communists were convinced that the union of the opposition would be essential for them to avoid being marginalised in the future process of political change. They feared a pact between the regime and other illegal political forces to exclude them from the future democratic regime, and by promoting and leading this united platform, they intended to prevent this from happening.⁴⁵⁹ Moreover, the PCE was trying to occupy the traditional political space of the Socialists, similarly to what the PCI had done in Italy, which implied reducing the possible influence of the PSOE, who did not join the *Junta*. The PSOE rejected the *Junta* mainly because they

⁴⁵⁷ J. Sánchez Rodríguez, *Teoría y práctica democrática en el PCE (1956-1982)* (Madrid: FIM, 2004).

⁴⁵⁸ The PSi led by Tierno Galván changed its name in 1974 after the PSOE moved its Leadership to the interior of Spain. The new chosen name was *Partido Socialista Popular* (PSP).

⁴⁵⁹ Andrade, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición*, 59-61.

would have to enter in it in a subaltern position, as the platform was created and led by the PCE.

In a context characterised by the crisis of the regime and by the leading role of the PCE within the still illegal Left, the unity of the anti-Francoist forces was at the core of the debates and discussions held by the Spanish opposition. This is reflected in the most progressive of the journals that could publish legally in Spain, and in the illegal newspapers of the main political parties, the PSOE and the PCE. The progressive sectors of the Spanish media, taking advantage of the greater freedom that they enjoyed after the 1966, when there was a relative relaxing of the censorship, discussed the future of Spain now that the death of Franco seemed to be close.⁴⁶⁰ Although they could not publish with total freedom, they echoed the reality existing in the opposition and reflected on the issue of the unity of the Left as a plausible way out of the dictatorship, and as a way of constructing a future Socialist Spain.

As the censorship in Spain was more relaxed about foreign affairs than domestic issues, the journalists were allowed to reflect on the political situation of neighbouring countries. A non-exhaustive analysis of *Triunfo* and *Cambio 16*, the main progressive journals that were published legally in Spain during those years, and were both referents and platforms for the opposition to the regime,⁴⁶¹ show that they very often reflected on the situation of the opposition and on the necessity for achieving some kind of unity. While doing so, these journals focused with particular interest on the closest international example that could provide an answer to the situation of the opposition in Spain, namely the French union of the Left.

The magazine *Cambio 16* published a special report in July 1974 on the situation of Socialism in Spain that was very influential at that time. *Cambio 16* had made their own survey about the political preferences of the Spaniards, and the result had been that the majority who had political interests were in favour of Socialism and/or Social Democracy.⁴⁶² Therefore, this magazine tried to clarify what the situation of the clandestine political forces that claimed to

⁴⁶⁰ In July 1974 Franco suffered phlebitis and had to be hospitalised.

⁴⁶¹ Another referent for the opposition was the Christian Democrat journal *Cuadernos para el diálogo*. This magazine tried to promote ideological debate and in the 1970s it became a referent for the opposition. On the role played by *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* in the transition to democracy undermining the legitimacy of Franco's regime and facilitating the non-traumatic political change in Spain, see: Javier Muñoz Soro, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo, (1963-1976): una historia cultural del Segundo franquismo* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2006).

⁴⁶² Since the difference between Socialism and Social Democracy was ambiguous and not very clear, *Cambio 16* decided to consider them synonymous. "Informe Especial. El Socialismo en España (I)," *Cambio 16*, 139 (15/07/1974): 26.

belong to this ideological trend. In this report, the author Carlos Zayas named the different groups that had tried to fill the vacuum left by the exiled PSOE in Spain. He devoted some attention to the group of Tierno Galván, but his focus was on the renovated PSOE.

Regarding the recent renovation of the party, Zayas said that the new leadership that emerged at the Congress of August 1972 “seems to be committed to making a serious effort of ideological renovation and organic restructuring.” Regarding the ideological renewal, Carlos Zayas saw some tensions between a those of a reformist and moderate tendency and “the young Turks” (meaning the group of Seville), who had positions more “radical Leftist”. However, for Zayas the main problem of the PSOE at that point was organic. The party had to face several different problems in this field. Firstly, they had to make the party work in a democratic way in the context of their clandestine and illegal status, which posed serious problems for efficient democratic practices. Moreover, they had to look for cooperation and coordination with the several Socialist groups that existed in Spain. The coordination and reinforcement of the Socialist realm was necessary in order to take another step that seemed to be essential, namely entering into formal alliances with other forces (which implied the PCE).⁴⁶³

This analysis was complemented by another article that appeared in the August-September 1974 issue of *Cambio 16*. The author this time was Enrique Barón, a member of the PSP. He noted that in Spain, the Socialism brand was very attractive. However, according to him, there was a problem with the Socialist option; this was that its potential could not be exploited in Spain because there was not a predominant unique Socialist party. “How to build it?” he wondered. Despite the difficulties that the context of illegality posed, he proposed to initiate a debate among the several existing Socialist groups on the kind of Socialist movement to be built in Spain, and also, “as experiences very close to us show [the union of the Left in France and the Portuguese Revolution], [the debate] should be about the participation of the Communists in the Socialist plan.”⁴⁶⁴

In 1974, therefore, the Socialist alternative seemed to have a great potential in Spain. However, the context of lack of freedoms and clandestine position, as well as the factionalism of the Socialist forces, had provoked the perception that there was no Socialist party that could claim to be the only representative of this ideological trend. Moreover, given the

⁴⁶³ Carlos de Zayas, “El Socialismo en España (yII),” *Cambio 16*, 140 (22/07/1974): 25.

⁴⁶⁴ Enrique Barón, “Nuevas generaciones socialistas,” *Cambio 16* (August-September 1974).

specific political, historical, and socio-economic conditions of Spain, there was a need to define a Socialist model that would be suitable for the country. The Spanish Socialism had to articulate its own way of transforming the society, and as a part of that project, they firstly had to put an end to Franco's dictatorship. This situation made the union of the Leftist opposition to the regime into an overriding necessity.

In this overall context, the PSOE had to fight against this relative irrelevance, and at the same time face the tasks described above.⁴⁶⁵ They were well aware of the need to work for the union of the opposition, and their task was not easy, as they still had to consolidate the group after the schism of the PSOE(h). Thus, they intensified their relations with the Communists in 1973. The relations between the PCE and the PSOE became intensified due to the trial of the Carabanchel ten mentioned above. Communist members of the CCOO had been imprisoned in June 1972, but the trial started some weeks after the assassination of Prime Minister Carrero Blanco. In this context, they were accused of illicit association, and were condemned to disproportionately harsh sentences. As we have already seen, a wave of national and international solidarity with the CCOO members emerged, and the PSOE offered legal support to the condemned. This support had the double aim of providing legal defence to the imprisoned, and initiating a process of unification of the Spanish workers' movement; however, the Communists rejected the offer.⁴⁶⁶

Collaboration at the grassroots level had started between Communists and Socialists—a kind of collaboration that entailed potential benefits as well as risks for the Socialists. The potential benefits were that they could claim to be involved in the fight against the regime at the grassroots level, profiting from the better organisation and greater activity of the Communists. The risks were the possibility of being absorbed by the Communists. This did not imply an organic absorption, but the absorption of the Socialist image, meaning that the PSOE could be overshadowed by the Communists, and appear merely as sidekicks of the Communists who tried to occupy a hegemonic position in the Left.

With these risks very present, in 1974 the PSOE showed its willingness to start collaborating with the Communists in *El Socialista*. However, there was no unanimity within the party regarding this issue. Three lines of thought or opinion about the relations between Socialists and Communists emerged. Firstly, there were members of the party who were opposed to

⁴⁶⁵ See the response of Pablo Castellano to the article of Enrique Barón: Pablo Castellano, "Polémica y política socialista," *Cambio* 16, 166 (20/01/1975): 31.

⁴⁶⁶ Arevalo, "Las relaciones con el Partido Comunista," *El Socialista*, 22 (second half of May 1974): 7-8.

collaborating with the PCE; secondly, there were militants in favour of collaborating with the PCE exclusively, without taking into account other bourgeois groups; and finally, there were members who accepted this collaboration within the frame of a wider anti-fascist coalition. The tension created in the party by these different opinions would be temporarily resolved at the Congress of October 1974, when a vague statement in favour of collaborating with all the forces of the opposition was passed, leaving the issue of the relations with the Communists exclusively in the hands of the executive committee.

The “objective analysis” of the situation in Spain that the PSOE carried out basically coincided with that of the PCE. They believed that in the context of political and economic crisis, the regime had lost the support of the middle classes and the petit bourgeoisie and the Church. It had even lost the support of the section of the grand bourgeoisie that would need a Spain integrated in Europe to keep expanding their businesses. This created an optimal situation for the working class. Since there were several social classes interested in putting an end to the regime and establishing democracy, the working class should seek interclass alliances in order to achieve this immediate aim. Moreover, the example of the recent overthrowing of the Portuguese dictatorship, which no one had tried to save because it lacked support, led the PSOE to think that now the union of the Spanish working class and its representatives, the PSOE and the PCE, was necessary and more acceptable.

However, there were militants in the PSOE who were still reluctant to collaborate with the Communists.⁴⁶⁷ Their reasons for rejecting this collaboration varied, but they usually distrusted the PCE due to their hegemonic ambitions, as well as being sectarians and intransigent. Another reason for avoiding the Communists, argued some in the PSOE, was that the party still had to work on its own cohesion, on the formation of the militants and strengthening its organisation before seeking to establish pacts with other forces.⁴⁶⁸

In spite of this disagreement, those that considered it necessary to establish relations with the Communists were the majority in the PSOE. In the articles published in *El Socialista* in 1974, some PSOE members argued for exclusive relations with the PCE, and others argued for relating to the Communists within the wider frame of an anti-fascist coalition that would include other social and political forces as well. They tended to converge in their analyses. The defendants of the first option argued that relations with the PCE should be maintained at

⁴⁶⁷ F.P de Alicante, “Aclarando conceptos,” *El Socialista*, 25 (first half of July 1974): 3.

⁴⁶⁸ Márquez, F., “Nuestra opción,” *El Socialista*, 24 (second half of June 1974): 2..

the political level, as the ideological and tactical differences between both parties were not that vast, but particularly at the grassroots level, where the fight against the dictatorship had to take place.⁴⁶⁹ The cooperation of the forces representing the working class would be enough to hamper the continuation of the regime because as in the case of Portugal, this one would not have anyone to defend it.⁴⁷⁰ These relations should be established between equals, however, without Socialist subordination to the Communists.⁴⁷¹ The supporters of the second option argued that it was necessary to relate to the PCE within an interclass coalition in order to put an end to the regime. The main objective of that coalition would be to overthrow the regime and to establish democracy. However, after that, the representatives of the working class (PSOE and PCE) should remain united in order to overcome Capitalism and implant Socialism in Spain.⁴⁷²

The feeling in the PSOE about collaboration with the Communists is very well synthesised in an anonymous article that appeared in *El Socialista* a month before the celebration of the 13th Congress of the party. The article was in favour of the collaboration with the PCE within a wider anti-Fascist frame, and emphasised the above-mentioned division that existed within the PSOE regarding the union of the Left. “Some partners defend a true isolationism of the party, maintaining that this has been the traditional tactic in the PSOE [...]. At the other extreme we also have in the party defendants of the so-called *Frente Unico*, as the most efficient tactic for overthrowing the dictatorship [...] and to make possible the “qualitative leap”, this is the direct pass to the socialist revolution.”⁴⁷³

In these months, between the recognition of the renovated PSOE by the SI and the 13th Congress of Suresnes, the bilateral relations between the PSOE and the PSF increased. They were not very intensive, but they were important since the French tried to help the Spanish to overcome some of the problems of their party, namely the ideological formation of their cadres and the factionalism of the Spanish Socialist family. Both parties established a fruitful collaboration in this year, especially taking into account the fact that other European Social

⁴⁶⁹ Roque, “Pensando en el XIII Congreso,” *El Socialista*, 26 (second half of July, 1974): 4.

⁴⁷⁰ Arevalo, “Hay que estar preparados,” *El Socialista*, 25 (first half of July, 1975), 5.

⁴⁷¹ Arevalo, “Las relaciones con el Partido Comunista,” *El Socialista*, 22 (second half of May 1974): 7-8.

⁴⁷² This idea is implied in M. Zamorano, “Reflexiones acerca de «El pacto para la Libertad»,” *El Socialista*, 17 (first half of March, 1974): 7. The same idea is openly stated in M., “Acción conjunta democrática y antifascista,” *El Socialista*, 21 (first half of May 1974): 7.

⁴⁷³ “Las posiciones esterilizantes en el PSOE,” *El Socialista*, 27 (first half of September 1974): 7-8.

Democrat parties, namely the SPD and the BLP, had not yet started to support decisively the PSOE.⁴⁷⁴

The PSF was not in a position to offer what the PSOE probably needed most by 1974, which was economic and material support.⁴⁷⁵ However, the French support in the areas mentioned above was welcomed by the Spanish party. The PSF assisted the PSOE in a field that was very important for the ideological orientation of the party—the training and education of militants. In 1974, the Spanish party was still defining its ideological position and many of its increasing numbers of militants were not familiar with ideology, theory, or political practice. Thus, the training of the militants turned to be an “essential” task.⁴⁷⁶

The PSOE organised several training courses in France and Belgium during the summer of 1974 with the purpose of dealing with this shortcoming. The PSF, together with the Belgian Socialist Party (PSB), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), and the French trade union *Force Ouvrière* (FO), helped the PSOE to organise courses in Liège, Lyon, Pau, Carmaux and Paris between June and August.

The PSF provided some material support (mainly venues for the courses and accommodation for the Spanish participants), as well as teachers for some of the courses. The French Socialists lent the PSOE venues in Pau, Lyon, and Paris.⁴⁷⁷ Practically all of the teachers of these courses were Spanish members of the *Federación Española de Trabajadores de la Enseñaza* (FETE), which was a federation of the UGT, but the PSF’s secretary for international relations and member of the CERES Pierre Guidoni delivered a lecture on *autogestion* during the course held in Paris in August.⁴⁷⁸ The number of participants was around 110, which was a high figure when taking into account how low the members of the PSOE were,⁴⁷⁹ and the contents of the courses were noticeably Marxist. The main contents were Marxist theory and its evolution, the history of international workers’ movements, the history of the Spanish workers’ movement, (Marxist) analysis of the current Spanish

⁴⁷⁴ The SPD did not start their decisive support of the PSOE until April/May 1975, when the radicalisation of the Revolution in Portugal and the stagnation of the Spanish regime under the leadership of Arias Navarro led them to intervene in the Spanish situation through the PSOE. See: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*. The BLP did not focus its support on the PSOE until the end of 1975, as we will see in the following chapters.

⁴⁷⁵ 424 RI3, Antoine Blanca, *A propos des socialistes espagnols et de leurs rapports avec le P.S. français*, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁴⁷⁶ “Las exigencias de la formación,” *El Socialista*, 21 (first half of May 1974): 4.

⁴⁷⁷ AE-628-8, Secretaría de Formación del Militante, Cursillos realizados en 1974 (exterior), Archive FPI.

⁴⁷⁸ AE-628-8, letter from the *Comisión de formación* to José Riera, 24 July 1974, Archive FPI.

⁴⁷⁹ The most optimistic estimations talk about 1000 members in exile and about 2500 members in Spain. See: Guerra, *Felipe González*.

situation, the current understanding of the concept of social class, the concept of ideology (from a Marxist point of view), current trends in Marxism, and the organisation of the PSOE and the UGT.⁴⁸⁰

Although it is very difficult to measure the influence of these courses, they were probably important in shaping how political issues were approached by the Spanish members of the PSOE. The contents of the courses show the party's new commitment to theoretical education and instruction, which fomented Marxism as the base of the ideological framework of the PSOE's militants, something that had not been a point of emphasis. In these courses, the Spanish Socialists familiarised themselves with concepts recently adopted by their French counterparts, such as *autogestion*, a concept that the PSOE adopted at their Congress of 1972 and developed during the whole decade, as we shall see later. The militants who participated in these courses were asked to give feedback, and almost everyone emphasised the usefulness of the contents. As one of the participants wrote, he had "got in touch for the first time with new words very necessary for the working class to clarify many doubts about the ideological construction of this society".⁴⁸¹

The PSF also tried to actively help the PSOE to deal with the issue of factionalism of the Spanish Socialist family. As in the case of the relations with the Communists, the French also provided an influential example to the PSOE in their attempt to unify all the Spanish Socialists. However, as in the case of the collaboration with the Communists, the PSOE did not follow the French path. The Spanish paid attention to the French experience in bringing together all of the Socialists under the PSF at the beginning of the 1970s, but when they had to do the same, the Spanish social, political, cultural, and historical circumstances influenced the way the PSOE tried to achieve the union of the Socialists.

The French realised the need for uniting the Left after the establishment of the Fifth Republic, but it was only after the disastrous electoral results of the SFIO in the late 1960s that they renovated Socialism by creating a new party, the PSF, which was a convergence of most of the Socialist parties and groups that existed in France at that time.⁴⁸² Thus, several groups, parties, and clubs composed the new PSF under the leadership of François Mitterrand, although they kept diversity and their organisation within factions in the party. In the case of

⁴⁸⁰ AE-628-8, Secretaría de Formación del Militante, Cursos realizados en 1974 (exterior), Archive FPI. This document has been published in Andrade, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición*, 235-238.

⁴⁸¹ Carpeta Archivo FPI 06/2012, foto 16.

⁴⁸² An important Socialist party, the PSU led by Michel Rocard, did not join the PSF until 1975.

the PSOE, its situation of crisis derived from the fact that it had been in exile for too long after their defeat in the Civil War. However, before the Spanish war, they had been the biggest working class party in Spain. In 1974, they needed to achieve the union of the Spanish Socialists in order to be ready for the changes that the death of Franco would bring about, but as they were in a clandestine position, the difficulties in measuring the strength and social support of the various Socialist groups that existed in Spain, and above all, the consciousness and intentions of the PSOE had of being the home of all the Spanish Socialists, prevented the union of all of them to happen at this early stage.

Notwithstanding these facts, the PSF helped to actively promote the reunification of the Spanish Socialists. After the outbreak of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal on 25th April, the French Socialists realised that the Spanish regime could end sooner and under more unpredictable circumstances than they had thought. The Portuguese experience suggested that the Socialists in the Iberian Peninsula could reach power very soon. This possibility implied two things; first, the PSF could be influential through the PSOE in post-Franco Spain and to strengthen its position in the SI; second, in order to make the PSOE a real alternative in Spain in the short term, the Spanish Socialist family had to overcome its atomisation. The Socialists in France had experienced a recent process of disintegration and renovation that had convinced them of the need to unite different Socialist groups into one party. With this objective the PSF sponsored the unification of the Spanish Socialists and together with the SPD, organised the *Conferencia Socialista Ibérica* (CSI) in the summer of 1974.⁴⁸³

The first meeting of the CSI took place on 28th June in Paris, at the headquarters of the PSF. The stated objective of the conference was to create a platform for discussing future Socialist unity. This reunion was attended by the regional parties *Partido Socialista Gallego*, *Mouvement Socialista de Catalunya*, *Secretariado de Ordenación Democrática*, *Partit Socialista del País Valencià* and the PSOE. The other significant Socialist parties from Spain—the PSOE(h) and the PSP—were absent. The PSF, the SPD, the SI, the Portuguese PS, and the Greek PASOK were invited as foreign observers.⁴⁸⁴ This first conference did not have significant immediate results. As the historian Richard Gillespie has noted, although the

⁴⁸³ “Les socialistes espagnols a Paris,” *L’unité* (05/07/1974): 8..

⁴⁸⁴ “Importante reunión socialista,” *El Socialista*, 26 (second half of July, 1974): 1.

Sevillian leaders of the PSOE were ideologically closer to all these groups than the old leadership of the party, the PSOE's line regarding the unity of the Socialists hardened.⁴⁸⁵

The second meeting of the CSI took place in September 1974 in Bonn, and was financed by the Ebert Foundation.⁴⁸⁶ Once again, the results were not very significant. The union of the Spanish Socialists did not succeed in 1974 because the PSOE wanted to include all of the other groups within its organisation, thus making of these groups regional federations of the party,⁴⁸⁷ and because the other parties wanted the PSOE to join with them in a new party, which implied giving up the historic initials, and sharing a treasury and international relations with the other groups. Since this proved to be impossible because the other parties did not accept PSOE's conditions, the PSOE eventually abandoned the CSI in April 1975 without having achieved the unification of all the Spanish Socialists within a single political party. The PSOE held to the conviction that they were the legitimate representatives of Spanish Socialism. This belief made them refuse any initiative that would imply the integration of the party inside a coalition with a name other than PSOE. This historical acronym was the most valuable asset of the party at that time, and its members were not willing to renounce it, which provoked the failure of the CSI.

2.4.2. PSOE's last Congress in exile, October 1974, Suresnes

The 13th Congress of the PSOE was celebrated between 11th and 13th October 1974 in Suresnes, at a venue offered by Robert Pontillion, the Socialist mayor of this town in the outskirts of Paris. It was the last Congress of the party in exile, and the culmination of the process of renovation that had begun in 1972. There the PSOE renovated its ideology, strategy and internal organisation. It attracted more international attention than any of the previous Congresses in exile, because it was believed that the end of Francoism was near and the chances of the regime's survival were scarce, especially after the fall of the fascist regimes in Portugal and Greece in April and July respectively. The international attendees included the leader of the PSF *François* Mitterrand, the General Secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party Carlos Altamirano, and representatives of the Socialist parties of Switzerland, Norway,

⁴⁸⁵ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 310.

⁴⁸⁶ AE-629-10, *Nota para los participantes en la Conferencia Socialista Ibérica, segunda sesión*, Archive FPI.

⁴⁸⁷ Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*, 452.

Sweden, Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, and Portugal, as well as representatives of the SI.⁴⁸⁸

The first official meeting between PSOE's leadership and the first secretary of the PSF, François Mitterrand, took place at this Congress.⁴⁸⁹ The leader of the PSF was the only head of a European Socialist party to attend the Congress,⁴⁹⁰ and he was invited to deliver a speech.⁴⁹¹ In the tribune he publicly showed his support of the PSOE for the first time. Beyond his demonstration of support, he delivered a radical speech that pleased the audience. His speech had two main ideas; firstly, he stated that class struggle was still the motor of history. Secondly, he considered that, in the context of détente and economic international crisis, it was necessary to internationalise the struggle of the Socialist parties, which implied greater collaboration between the PSF and the PSOE, but not only this. He also argued for greater collaboration between the Southern European Socialist Parties. In his own words:

[...] [I]t is indispensable to retake the issues and methods for the internationalisation of the struggle [...]. We are training our militants with the aim that they will know you, that they will organise meetings with you [...] We will help you [...] this implies many aspects: the economic, always difficult, but possible, the organisational field, the formation, the technical [aspect], in public meetings, by the way, we have to organise public debates in 1975 in different places in Europe, including France, where the leaders of the Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian Socialism could meet, not with the aim to realise a, let's say, Latin union, but because we are near to live unique experiences and it is in Europe where it just has been born this new strategy of the union of the Left that pretends that the Socialists, refusing to be inserted in the Social Democracy [...] work for the total union of workers [...].⁴⁹²

With these words Mitterrand galvanised the Spanish Socialists, and he clearly expressed his desire to build closer relations between the Socialist parties of Southern Europe. As I mentioned in the first chapter, these parties shared some characteristics and problems (they coexisted with strong Communist parties; the conservative forces in their countries were reactionary; they belonged to Catholic societies; they had little implantation among the working class; in general, they had weak links with the trade unions) that made it interesting to discuss approaches and experiences among them. However, beyond this reality, there lay

⁴⁸⁸ "Espaldarazo internacional del socialismo español," *El Socialista*, 29 (second half of October, 1974): 3.

⁴⁸⁹ Other members of the PSF who were present at the Congress were R. Pontillon, A. Blanca, J. Sarre, L. Jospin, M. Tahauvin, J. P. Chevenment, B. Montanier, P. Guidoni.

⁴⁹⁰ The Spanish literature on PSOE has often assumed that Willy Brandt was present in this Congress, but he was not. See Muñoz, *El Amigo Alemán*. Also: "Espaldarazo internacional del socialismo español," *El Socialista*, 29 (second half of October 1974): 3.

⁴⁹¹ Carlos Altamirano, the leader of the Chilean Socialist Party also delivered a speech at the Congress.

⁴⁹² "Palabras de Mitterrand, primer secretario del Partido Socialista Francés, al XIII Congreso: HAY QUE INTERNACIONALIZAR LA LUCHA," *El Socialista*, 29 (second half of October 1974): 2-3.

the French intention of establishing a new trend that would make their strategy of union with the Communists more acceptable at the international level. As I also mentioned above, this strategy responded to different objectives in the PSF. For CERES, it was the best way to advance towards Socialism without renouncing freedom and democracy, while for Mitterrand, it was the best way for the Socialists to neutralise and profit from the electoral appeal of the Communists.

Regarding the resolutions approved in the Congress, the PSOE began confirming, as it had done traditionally, the historical final aim of the party, its *Programa Máximo*—the conquest of political and economic power by the working class, and the radical transformation of the capitalist society into a Socialist one. As at the Congress of 1972, the PSOE claimed the necessity of implanting a bourgeois democratic regime in Spain as a means for reaching the final aim of the party. This means that the attainment of bourgeois democracy would only be a preliminary, instrumental phase on the longer way to Socialism.

The PSOE's analysis of the Spanish situation was that the regime was in its final crisis as a consequence of its internal economic and political contradictions; the fascist regime had ceased to be the best frame for the development of the Spanish bourgeoisie. These contradictions were aggravated by international circumstances, as the crisis of international capitalism had begun in 1973. In the view of the party, this problem could not be solved by continuing or reforming the regime, because the existing contradictions within the regime would make it impossible, and also because the international crisis was the proof of the historical intensification of the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system that, due to these contradictions, was condemned to disappear.⁴⁹³

Consequently, as they considered the situation of the regime to be critical, the PSOE brought forward its programme of transition. Its main novelty was the conviction that the only way out of this situation was the adequate formulation of a democratic rupture,⁴⁹⁴ the restoration of a system of liberties, and the construction of a system of government that would be democratically chosen by the people. This democratic rupture was understood as the rejection of any kind of reformist alternative proposed by the regime, such as the plan of Franco's prime minister, Carlos Arias Navarro, to legalise certain political associations within the framework of the regime in the future. The strategy of action for achieving the rupture was

⁴⁹³ FBB 431, *Resoluciones Políticas del XIII Congreso del PSOE*, 4. Archive FPI.

⁴⁹⁴ In Spanish *ruptura democrática*.

the extension and generalisation of mass contestation (in factories, universities, and neighbourhoods).⁴⁹⁵ Considering that mass organisations were prohibited by the regime, and that the PSOE did not have a great capacity of mobilisation, the PSOE called for cooperation with all other anti-Francoist forces, especially with those in the Left, which means that a potential agreement with the PCE was considered acceptable. The Congress granted the Executive Committee total freedom to carry out this task.

The willingness to collaborate with the PCE was a novelty in Socialist strategising. The idea was officially proposed for the first time in 1972, and it has to be understood as the Socialist response to being in a situation of inferiority to the Communists in the context of the leftist opposition.⁴⁹⁶ Building on this interpretation, I would argue that the open attitude towards this possibility must also be understood as the result of the influence of the PSF over the Spanish party, and its strategy which was based on the union of Socialists and Communists. The French showed that such an alliance was possible and that it was fruitful for the Socialists, which was that was inspiring for the Spanish Socialists. The PSOE received and adapted this idea to its own circumstances via a political culture that had anti-Communism as one of its main characteristics. Therefore, the PSOE's way of adopting the strategy of the French Socialists was specific to it. The PSOE asked for collaboration with all of the Left, but without compromising its independence and its own programme. The party stated that any agreement reached with other groups would be valid only until the re-establishment of the democratic freedoms. After that, the PSOE would call an extraordinary Congress to decide whether their relations with other groups would continue or not.⁴⁹⁷ To sum up, the PSOE did not propose a common programme with the Communists as the PSF had done two years ago and the PS of Portugal a year before, but instead it proposed to collaborate with them in overthrowing the dictatorship only.

Once the rupture with the regime would be reached, the PSOE considered that there were some essential prerequisites to re-establish democracy in Spain. These were freedom for all political prisoners, the dissolution of all the repressive institutions of the regime, the recognition of freedom for political parties and trade unions, the freedom of reunion and speech, the right to strike and demonstrate, a call for free elections, and recognition of the

⁴⁹⁵ FBB 431, *Resoluciones Políticas del XIII Congreso del PSOE*, 6. Archive FPI.

⁴⁹⁶ Mateos, *El PSOE contra Franco*; Andrade, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición*; Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*; Juliá, *Los socialistas*.

⁴⁹⁷ FBB, 431, *Resoluciones Políticas del XIII Congreso del PSOE*, 4-6. Archive FPI.

right of self-determination for all Iberian nationalities (this was meant especially for the Basques, Catalans and Galicians). However, it was not specified how and in what kind of institutional frame (monarchy or republic) these prerequisites would be reached after the rupture with the regime and before the establishment of democracy.

In terms of international policy, the party was guided by the principle of international solidarity. It focused on two aspects; outlining an international programme, and how the international frame could help the party to overthrow the Spanish regime.

The final international aim of the PSOE was to reach worldwide Socialism, which meant a world without frontiers and without classes, and the main principle that guided its action was international solidarity. Thus, the objectives accepted at the Congress were quite idealistic, vague, and to some extent naïve. This is understandable because in 1974, when the PSOE was still a clandestine party, it could afford to propose a programme of international policy based on the principle of international justice and solidarity without taking into account the constraints that a legally established party has to face.

The main features of PSOE's international policy programme were as follows: the party rejected the Spanish integration into the EEC while Franco's regime persisted, and asked the European governments to oppose it because otherwise the regime would be strengthened. Notwithstanding this fact, the PSOE was in favour of the European integration process, but considered that this integration should not be based on political and economic institutions that served international capitalism. This means that the Spanish party was in favour of the democratisation of European institutions and a European community that was more focused on the interests of workers. The PSOE also stated its opposition to every kind of hegemonic imperialism. It was against the division of the world in two blocs, because under this *status quo* many countries in the world remained oppressed. This also meant that the party was against the entry of Spain into NATO. Consequently, the PSOE expressed its solidarity with the proletariat of every country and encouraged Third World liberation movements, congratulating the former Portuguese colonies Guinea Bissau, Angola and Mozambique. It criticised the colonial policy of the Spanish government towards the Saharai people, and supported their right of self-determination. As a way of keeping the equilibrium in the Middle East, the PSOE defended the right of the Palestine people to have a national identity, and at the same time, the right of the Israelis to exist within secure and recognised frontiers. Finally,

the Spanish party condemned the *Junta Militar de Chile*, and expressed its support and congratulations to the Portuguese and Greek people for their recent liberation from fascism.⁴⁹⁸

From the 13th Congress onwards, anti-NATO feeling and neutralist tendencies, together with pro-Europeanism, were the main characteristic of the PSOE's international policy. This was the PSOE's distinctive characteristic—at least with respect to its West European counterparts—that would remain until the mid-1980s. Although both the BLP and the PSF shared the stance of opposing the division of the world in two blocs with the PSOE,, neither of them was against NATO. The French party was in favour of France adopting an international line independently from Washington and Moscow, but it was not keen to withdraw France from the Atlantic alliance, partly due to the fact that France was not part of the military integrated command. The BLP, in turn, was more committed to NATO than its European neighbours, and its main objective was the promotion of détente. As the party stated in its 1974 programme, “the Labour Government will maintain its support for NATO as an instrument of détente, no less than of defence”. However, they also recognised that “the ultimate objective of the movement towards a satisfactory relationship in Europe must be the mutual and concurrent phasing out of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact”.⁴⁹⁹

As I said above, during the Congress, the PSOE also focused on how the international frame could help the party to overthrow the Spanish regime. The PSOE considered that in the current international context, the support of the other member parties of the SI, especially those who were in government, was crucial to stimulate the fall of the Spanish regime—mainly through international isolation—and to establish a new frame of democratic freedoms. The PSOE called for this support in the name of proletarian internationalism.

The PSOE did not reflect too much on economic policy, which is understandable because the party was still illegal, and at this moment developing an economic programme was not a priority. Besides, the opacity of the regime could not allow the Socialists to make an accurate analysis of the economic situation in Spain and of the impact of the international crisis in the Spanish economy.⁵⁰⁰

Finally, regarding the internal organisation of the party, the 13th Congress finished with the collegiate leadership established in 1972. It had been an inefficient way of leading the party

⁴⁹⁸ FBB, 431, *Resoluciones Políticas del XIII Congreso del PSOE*, 8-10. Archive FPI.

⁴⁹⁹ “Policy for peace. International Co-operation and Security,” *Let us work together. Labour's way out of the crisis*, February 1974, Labour Party Manifesto.

⁵⁰⁰ FA, 2483, *Propuestas. Política. XIII Congreso del PSOE*, 5-6. Archive FPI.

and the election of a First Secretary seemed necessary. The Sevillians argued that in a clandestine context, a clear leader could be projected as the public image of the party, which was easier than using PSOE's initials in public, and the Congress elected the young Felipe González as the First Secretary.⁵⁰¹ The PSOE changed the denomination of the leader of the party from Secretary General to First Secretary, just as the PSF had done in 1969.⁵⁰² The PSOE argued that the change of name for this position was due to the necessity of mitigating the traditional personalism that had always characterised PSOE's political culture. The renovated party considered that the traditional reliance on the leader of the party did not fit in very well with the democratic purposes of the party; therefore, they acknowledged that they took the new denomination of the leader of the party from the PSF.⁵⁰³ However, this was only a rhetorical change that did not preserve the PSOE from experiencing many years the great influence of its leaders, Felipe González and Alfonso Guerra, over the party.

The resulting executive committee was composed of Felipe González as First Secretary, Nicolás Redondo as Organisation Secretary, Enrique Múgica as Coordination Secretary, Alfonso Guerra as Press and Information Secretary, Guillermo Galeote as Propaganda Secretary, Pablo Castellano as International Secretary, Francisco Bustelo as Formation Secretary, Eduardo López as Administrative Secretary, Agustín González as Sindical Secretary, José María Benegas as Youth Secretary and Juan Iglesias as Emigration Secretary.

The special context that determined the PSOE's Congress was the decline of the dictatorship, which made it difficult to analyse the programme of the Spanish party compared to that of the PSF and the BLP. The PSOE had to emphasise its strategy of rupture with the regime and its programme of transition towards attaining democracy, instead of focusing on the issues under discussion in the European parties, which were the development and extension of democracy and the planning of the economy in order to reject or regulate capitalism. However, it is possible to connect some aspects of the PSOE's Congress with its European counterparts, especially with the PSF. For instance, the PSOE's call for collaboration with the Communists in its strategy to overthrow the regime, and also in the transitional period that would lead to democracy. As I argued above, the open possibility of collaboration with the PCE was influenced by the PSF's strategy of the union of the Left.

⁵⁰¹ On the election of Felipe González as First Secretary see: Juliá, *Los socialistas*; Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*.

⁵⁰² D.S Bell and Byron Criddle, *The French Socialist Party. The Emergence of a Party of Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 55.

⁵⁰³ Guerra, *Felipe González*, 76-77.

This argument challenges the hitherto accepted interpretation of the external influences on the PSOE during the 1970s. The idea that the parties with the most influence parties on the PSOE all along the 1970s were the Social Democrat parties of Central and Northern Europe has been accepted among scholars, and the importance of PSOE's period of radicalisation has commonly been downplayed. In this chapter, I have defended a different interpretation: from the beginning of the 1970s until 1974 and beyond, the PSF was the European Socialist party that most influenced the ideological line of the PSOE. This is something that will become more nuanced in chapter four.

3. The BLP, the European Social Democracy, and the Portuguese Revolution

3.1. The PS and the British from January 1975 to the end of the Revolution

3.1.1. From the PS Congress to Spínola's attempted coup on 11th March

In the first three months of 1975, the PS started to prepare for the elections of the Portuguese Constitutional Assembly, which were supposed to be held in March. This event would clarify the definitive shape that the Portuguese Revolution would take, and the relation of forces among the political parties. This relation was not yet clear, as in the autumn of 1974, the PCP and their supporters in the MFA started occupying key positions in the State apparatus and taking control of the media. Therefore, the elections became essential for the Socialists to contest the predominance of the Communists in the Revolution in the polls. For the same reason, the British Government and the BLP considered the elections to be crucial. They continued to work on two levels—formal and informal, or governmental level and party level—in order to ensure the best possible result for the Socialists. Furthermore, from January onwards, the British adopted a multilateral approach towards their relations with the Portuguese. This implied close cooperation with the US and the main Western European governments, especially the FRG, and also working together with other European Social Democratic parties through the SI. In these months, the British decided to take soft measures regarding Portugal, such as giving economic support to Portugal in a gesture of goodwill that could restore the confidence of foreign investors, but also shape the path of the Revolution, and maintain support of the PS. However, none of these plans had the desired result because between January and March, the division between Socialists and Communists in the government grew to the point that the elections were cancelled and there was an attempt at a counter-revolutionary coup led by Spínola on 11th March.

As we saw in the first chapter, the PS Congress held in December showed the commitment of the party to the achievement of parliamentary democracy and freedom, but also to Socialism. From that moment onwards, the Socialist discourse started to emphasise their image as “the party of freedom” and the “party of a democratic way to Socialism.” The bases of the party had shown their preference for a democratic way to Socialism that rejected both “the Social Democracy” and the “demagogic and adventurist leftism.” Therefore, their objective was

neither “bourgeois democracy” nor “authoritarian Socialism”; neither “Western democracy” nor “popular democracy”. What the PS proposed was to search for a new way to Socialism that could bring together economic democracy and political democracy, freedom and Socialism. This original way to Socialism had not yet been proved in the Portuguese Revolution, and it was what the PS proposed to do. They thought, however, that the only way to start was with democratic elections, establishing a pluralistic democracy in Portugal.⁵⁰⁴

As we saw in chapter one, the international presence at the Congress of the PS had been an important sign of support, which was noticed by everyone in Portugal. The presence of international representatives of almost all of the Socialist and Social Democrat parties of Western Europe was an important boost for the project of the PS. In January 1975, the Socialists showed its gratitude to the BLP for having been present in the Congress. The National Secretary of the PS, Tito de Morais, sent a letter to the BLP expressing gratitude and the “hope that the existing rapport of friendship and solidarity between our parties will continue to be close”.⁵⁰⁵ This was a formality that was probably sent to all the international parties that assisted at the Congress. However, it was very opportune in view of what happened some days later.

On 9th January, the faction of the PS called MSP, following differences with the Soares’ sector at the Congress, split the party and created the *Frente Socialista Popular* (FSP), with Manuel Serra as its leader. Despite the fact that the British had been witness to the division existing within the PS during the Congress, the rupture of the PS into two created some confusion among the rank and file of the Labour Party. They thought that “the views of most members of the Labour Party are similar to those of the FSP rather than the PS”, which created doubts about to which section they should send their donations, and which section of the Socialist Party should be supported. The international secretary of the BLP, Jenny Little, solved the problem when she informed the party that she had been at the Congress and “the faction that has now formed the FSP was a very small one.” Therefore, the only party that remained to be supported was the PS of Mário Soares. Little also added, “I must also say that I think it is highly dubious that the views of most members of the Labour Party are similar to those of the FSP.”⁵⁰⁶ The words of Little highlight the ideological differences between many

⁵⁰⁴ “O Partido Socialista e a Revolução Portuguesa,” *Portugal Socialista* (27/12/1974): 3.

⁵⁰⁵ Letter from the National Secretary of the PS, Tito de Morais, to the British Labour Party, 06/01/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

⁵⁰⁶ Letter from Jenny Little (International Secretary) to Judith Hart, MP, 20/03/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

of the BLP militants and those of the leadership, especially those in the government, and the fact that the leadership was exclusively focused on supporting Soares's group.

After solving this minor confusion, the most immediate objective of the BLP in Portugal in January 1975 was to help the PS to prepare for the upcoming elections. Thus, the BLP and the whole European Socialist family through the SI mobilised in support of the PS. It was planned that the elections for the Portuguese Constituent Assembly would be held in March, and the priority of the European Socialists was helping the PS in its electoral campaign. For them it was very important that the PS could obtain a good result, because it could restrain the increasing Communist control of the Portuguese situation, and put the country on the path towards a Western kind of democracy. Thus, the SI held a Bureau meeting on 12th January in London, at which it was recommended that the members of the Portugal Committee of the SI give financial aid and logistic assistance to the PS.⁵⁰⁷ Immediately after this meeting, the BLP sent an appeal for donations among all its members and the trade unions to help the PS with the preparation of the elections. According to the British, at that moment the PS "was hampered by a desperate lack of funds. [...] For this reason the Labour Party has endorsed a request for material help, made through the Socialist International."⁵⁰⁸

According to the BLP, this was the list of material needed by the PS during the upcoming elections:

A) Lighting material for T.V.: 5 bulbs 1201 BR Ref: 13029 x/99; 10 bulbs par 56 300 watts/220 volts. B) Audio Material: 1 Amplifier 30 watts; 2 columns 30 watts/8 ohms; 3 microphones AKG 224; 3 table bases; 2 bases with adjustable arm AKG; 1 pair of earphones for Philips tape recorder 448; 30 reels CP 18. C) Video: 1 monitor BAS 52cm; 1 Sony AVC, 20 reels of ½ inch; 5 slide projectors. 200 megaphones; 1 car with sound installation; 1000 pairs walkie-talkies; propaganda material samples; samples of sales material; 10 diesel vans. Paper for posters (packs of 500 sheets); 90 grs. Paper (for top quality posters in the national campaigns size 70x100 or 60x90): 7000 packs of 500 sheets or 220 tons in rolls. 63 grs. Paper (for local campaigns, announcement of public meetings, etc. size 35x50): 7000 packs of 500 sheets 35x70 or 1.750 packs (500 sheets) of 70x100 or 40 tons if in rolls). Self-adhesive: 400 packs (500 sheets per pack) or 2 million sheets total 50x70. Paper for brochures: a couche paper double face with 100 grs size 70x100, 6000 packs (500sheets per pack) or 250 tons in rolls. Writing paper: offset 80 grs paper size 60x90, 2500 packs (500 sheets per pack) or 55 tons in rolls. Newspaper type paper (enough for 8 special editions of *Portugal Socialista*).⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁷ Kyrtsos, "The attitudes and Policies of European Socialists," 190.

⁵⁰⁸ Appeal for donations to help the Portuguese Socialist Party, December 1974, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

⁵⁰⁹ List of material needed during coming elections, BLP Historical Archive, Box 89, Spain and Portugal.

There is no documental evidence to prove that the PS received all of this material, because the historical archives of the party are only partially available. However, the fact that the BLP made an economic appeal and a collection to provide all of this material strongly suggests that their contributions to the PS in the Portuguese electoral campaign were important. If we add the support provided through the SI by the other Socialist parties,⁵¹⁰ we could conclude that the electoral campaign of the PS was to a great extent financed and materially covered by the European Social Democracy. However, the unpredictable events in Portugal strained the political antagonisms one more time before the elections, and finally they had to be postponed to April.

In the first weeks of January, the existing tensions between the Socialists and the Communists intensified. The Communists took to the streets in massive demonstrations as a way of exerting pressure in order to pass a law which aimed to impose a single central union organisation in Portugal controlled by the PCP.⁵¹¹ The MFA leadership, which included the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves, supported the PCP's proposal. However, the Socialists and the Social Democrats of the PPD voted against this law in the cabinet. The PS was in favour of trade union unity, but it was opposed to the setting up of a single central union that would be compulsory for all the workers, because it implied the losing of what little control they had over the working class, and allowing the Communists to perpetuate a leading role as a vanguard of the workers. Notwithstanding this fact, the law was approved on 21st January, and the Ministers of the PS and the PPD threatened to resign. At the last minute, an agreement was reached between Socialists, Communists and MFA. The law passed, but the Socialists could introduce some amendments such as grassroots trade unionism,⁵¹² and the institutionalisation of the acceptance of different tendencies within the union.

The PS also received the PCP and the MFA's compromise for setting 12th April as a date for the elections. The PCP was reluctant, and wanted to postpone the elections, arguing that the Fascist structures were still alive in rural areas, and that this fact would not allow a free electoral campaign. Despite the fact that they reached an agreement, the political confrontation was taken to the streets, as both the PS and the PCP were using mass

⁵¹⁰ At the moment we only have evidence of the support given by the SPD. See: Rôla da Fonseca, "É Preciso Regar os Cravos!".

⁵¹¹ The PCP intended to impose a monolithic structure in the Portuguese union *Intersindical* to which all workers would belong, and since they had already the control of the trade union, this could imply the perpetuation of their control over it.

⁵¹² This was the possibility for all workers to take part in the life of the trade union. All important decisions should be taken in general assembly and not by the trade union executive alone.

mobilisations to support political initiatives. This provoked the escalation of political and social tension.⁵¹³

During that January, when the MSP, the most Leftist section of the PS, abandoned the party, the PCP took advantage of the split and exploited the crisis of the Socialists in the media—which was controlled by people connected to the PCP. In that already strained situation, the Communist manipulation of the mass media outraged the Socialists, who on 16th January contested their rivals, organising a massive demonstration at the Palace of Sports in Lisbon. Thousands of people attended the demonstration, and it eventually became an exhibition of Socialist strength and popular support. At this meeting, the confrontation between Socialists and Communists was consolidated. The Socialist leaders accused the PCP of trying to implant a dictatorship in Portugal. For them, the attempt “to wipe out the PS from the Portuguese political scene [would mean] to liquidate the democratic process and to establish a new dictatorship.” This gave the PS the opportunity to vindicate its role as the true revolutionary party of the Portuguese workers. The action of the PCP gave the PS the chance to redefine the meaning of being revolutionary on their own terms. To be a revolutionary did not mean “to establish a dictatorship against the workers, in the name of them,” as they accused the PCP of trying to do. It meant not being afraid of “freedom” and “democracy.” What really was revolutionary, according to the PS, was the “freedom of the workers.”⁵¹⁴ With this redefinition of the concept, Mário Soares said “we [the PS] are the guarantors of the public freedom in Portugal”, which implied that the PS was the true revolutionary party in Portugal, and that the Revolution had to bring freedom to the Portuguese.⁵¹⁵

This confrontation with the PCP stressed the already existing duality—which does not imply a lack of cohesiveness when it comes to the objectives of the party—in the rhetoric of the PS. On the one hand, the Socialists emphasised freedom and democracy, which was an alternative to the Communists, who according to the PS wanted to establish a dictatorship. On the other hand, they emphasised their anti-Capitalism, because it was a way of appropriating the PCP’s most attractive characteristic for the workers, which was at the core of the discourse of the revolution. Thus, in order to be successful in the competition against the Communists, the PS

⁵¹³ Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 108-110; Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 72; Phil Mailer, *Portugal: The Impossible Revolution?* (London: Solidarity, 1977): 74-77.

⁵¹⁴ “Sem o Partido Socialista não é possível construir a democracia e o socialismo,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975).

⁵¹⁵ “Se o PCP não jogar seriamente o jogo da democracia, será uma tragédia para o povo português,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975).

had to emphasise positive values such as freedom, but at the same time, the Socialists could not lose ground on the Left side. The PCP had increased its criticism of the PS as Social Democratic from its December Congress onwards, when the line of Manuel Serra was defeated. Besides, the frequent contacts Mário Soares had with the main leaders of the European Social Democracy contributed to the Communist criticism. Furthermore, Alvaro Cunhal had criticised the PS for serving as a “base of a new offensive of the reactionary forces that wanted to stifle the revolutionary process and orientate the power towards the right.”⁵¹⁶ All of this criticism made it necessary for the PS to maintain a strong anti-Capitalist rhetoric in order to clarify any doubt about their Social Democratic tendency. The PS responded to the Communist accusations saying, “we are not Social-Democrats [...] the PS will not save Capitalism” we “fight for the destruction of Capitalism in order to establish a classless society.”⁵¹⁷ However, in the short term, they still considered that the best way to keep the struggle against Capitalism was to “firmly respect the programme of the MFA”, which meant to respect the date of the forthcoming democratic elections, which were the main objective of the PS at the moment.

This rally also served as an improvised pre-campaign electoral meeting. Mário Soares took the opportunity of such a big demonstration to talk about the achievements of the PS. He did so with the aim of demonstrating the capacity of their ideas and the attachment to freedom and democracy. He wanted to draw the attention of the audience to the role that the PS had played in the decolonisation of Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. He emphasised “the extraordinary work that has been done—in which the Socialist Party [was] deeply involved—in eight months to decolonise all of the Portuguese African colonies, putting an end to the Colonial Wars.” Furthermore, he said, “we have contributed to radically modifying the whole policy in Southern Africa, making back up and mortally wounding racism and ‘apartheid’.” All of this showed “the capacities of the PS and of the MFA programme”, to which the PS was deeply committed because, as I already pointed out, it envisaged democratic elections.⁵¹⁸

Thus, the month of January saw the polarisation of the Revolution into two antagonistic Communist and Socialist sides that disagreed on how to carry out the process, and on the purpose of the Revolution. This confrontation had been announced since October 1974, but it

⁵¹⁶ Kyrtsos, “The Attitudes and Policies of European Socialists,” 189.

⁵¹⁷ “Sem o Partido Socialista não é possível construir a democracia e o socialismo,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975).

⁵¹⁸ “Sem o Partido Socialista não é possível construir a democracia e o socialismo,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975).

was in January when it became a reality. In the following months, it would worsen until reaching its peak in the summer of 1975. This polarisation created a dialectic between the PS on the one hand, and the PCP and their allies in the MFA on the other hand, which would have a decisive reflection on the behaviour of the PS and its ideological and discursive development. The scholarship on the PS argues that the pressures coming from the Left, exerted by the PCP in its powerful position as a revolutionary vanguard supported by the MFA, obliged the PS to move towards the Right.⁵¹⁹ This is an interpretation accepted in this thesis. However, as will be shown in the next section of this chapter, the PS could have responded differently to these pressures, and it had more possible alternative actions than moving to the Right.

The shift towards the Right first appeared in the behaviour of the PS, and later, more slowly, in its rhetoric and ideological production. At that time, the political behaviour of the PS was highly controlled by its leadership—Mário Soares and his closest collaborators, Tito de Morais, Salgado Zenha, Raul Rego, and Ramos da Costa. As we have seen above, this was a leadership that took a realistic approach to the situation which allowed them to surpass ideological constraints in order to pursue their political objective, which was to establish a parliamentary democracy in Portugal as a frame for implementing Socialist policies. This shift towards the Right began to be noticeable in the rhetoric and the public statements of the leaders of the party in the following months, although the evolution of this change was much subtler, slower, and non-linear in their rhetoric than in their political behaviour.

At the same time that this change was taking place, the Western international actors, especially the European Social Democratic governments and the US, were adopting a more determined stance against a possible Communist seizure in Portugal. From January onwards, their concern about the possibility of a Communist-controlled or even a Leftist neutralist Portugal made them increase their involvement in the Portuguese situation, and implement their strategies through the PS. This was probably a factor that pushed the PS further to the Right, because, since the leaders of the party were convinced that they had all the Western support behind them, losing ground on the Left side was not as worrying as it could have been if they had no support from abroad. In fact, before the elections of April, competition with the PCP in the Left was necessary, but after the positive result of the elections, this would not be as imperative as previously.

⁵¹⁹ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução no poder e na oposição.”

To return to the relations between the Portuguese Socialists and the British, the main concern for the British government and the Labour Party in the first months of 1975 was the maintenance of the electoral appointment in Portugal, which seemed to be threatened by the prior events. As we have seen, at the party level the BLP multiplied its economic and material support of the PS in order to help them to have a successful electoral campaign. At the governmental level, the Labour Cabinet started to adopt a multilateral approach in their relations with the Portuguese from January 1975 onwards. The British started to work closely with the US administration and other Western European countries ruled by Social Democrat parties. This was mainly due to the interlinked and coinciding interests of the Western powers in Portugal, which were to avoid the complete Communist takeover in Portugal, while at the same time avoiding a counter-revolutionary coup, and thereby keep Portugal in the West. But the British were going through an economic crisis and were having increasing problems carrying out an effective foreign policy. In their own words regarding foreign policy in January 1975, there was an “increasing reliance of the United Kingdom on United States’ strength and support in our present economic difficulties.”⁵²⁰

In January, the Americans began an initiative aimed at “making the maximum impact during the period before the Portuguese elections.” In December 1974, the US designed a programme of economic assistance for Portugal which was meant to be “a psychological boost that should help to restore the confidence of the Portuguese and foreign investors in the Portuguese economy.”⁵²¹ At the beginning of 1975, the economic situation in Portugal had deteriorated greatly. The economic crisis initiated in the last years of the dictatorship due to the colonial wars was aggravated because when the PCP started to take the control of the Revolution, the foreign investors abandoned the country. Furthermore, the decolonisation closed the former colonial markets and provoked the return of the soldiers and settlers from the colonies. Together with the closure of many companies due to the lack of credit, this raised the unemployment to very high levels, which made the situation dramatic, especially because Portugal was suffering high inflation due to the repercussions of the international economic crisis.⁵²² This economic and social situation could provide the right scenario for

⁵²⁰ January 1975 visit of the Prime Minister to Washington 29-31 January, UKNA, FCO 9/2291, Relations between Portugal and the United States.

⁵²¹ This measure was part of a wider plan of action of the US aimed to changing the course of the Revolution. Other measures taken were the substitution of the American Ambassador to Portugal and exerting diplomatic pressures over the Portuguese local authorities. See: Moreira de Sá: *Os Americanos na Revolução*, 95-103.

⁵²² Pedro Lains, “A economia portuguesa no Século XX: Crescimento e mudança estrutural” in *Portugal Contemporâneo*, ed. António Costa Pinto (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2004), 117-136.

drifting further to the Left or for a Fascist counter-coup, and the economic assistance was an attempt to prevent either from happening.

The Americans “hope[d] that [...] the United Kingdom could make their contribution to restoring business confidence in Portugal.” This initiative showed a change in the American vision and strategy for Portugal. From the initial pessimism of Kissinger, they had passed on to a more constructive and less alarmist stance. This change of approach towards Portugal had a lot to do with the fact that from December 1974, there was a new US Ambassador in Lisbon—Frank Carlucci⁵²³—who held a perspective on Portugal that was closer to the European Social Democrats than to Kissinger. In general, his approach, was based on the idea that Portugal was not lost to the Communists, and in order to avoid their total takeover, it was necessary to develop a sophisticated strategy of incentives shaped to the democratic evolution of the country, and veiled support for the Portuguese non-Communist forces—especially the PS.⁵²⁴ This approach was to a great extent shared by the British Labour Government. Regarding the new American attitude, the British thought that “it [was] satisfactory that we and the Americans appear now to be viewing prospects for Portugal in a much the same way”, because they thought that previously the Americans have had a “period of over-reaction” that now was “receding.” As I pointed out above, the British thought that by collaborating with the US, “it will be easier to handle the bi-lateral and multi-lateral problems which the Portuguese cause for us and the Americans.”⁵²⁵

At the end of January, the opinion of the South West department of the Foreign Office regarding the Portuguese situation became more pessimistic. The Americans approached the British for a comment on the situation. The British Assistant Under-Secretary for Western Europe, Hugh T. Morgan, said that they were “equally concerned” though they hoped that the situation would not worsen in the short term and the Portuguese could “carry on with the elections.” “The immediate threat of a left-wing coup seemed to have receded slightly”, but the British still thought that “the situation still gave cause for much concern.” Even if the elections were held, they considered that “in the longer term, it was still unfortunately hard to believe that all would end well.” Regarding the economic assistance planned by the

⁵²³ Frank Carlucci was a renowned anti-Communist with the reputation of being a hardliner. He had served in South Africa, Congo, Zanzibar, and Brazil before going to Portugal.

⁵²⁴ Gomes and Moreira de Sá, *Carlucci versus Kissinger*.

⁵²⁵ Letter from the British Embassy in Lisbon to the Foreign Office, “US relations with Portugal”, 20/12/1974, UKNA, FCO 9/2291, Relations between Portugal and the United States. The contents of this document have been partially used before in Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 133.

Americans, the British said “we now [have] fair hopes of being able to offer Portugal at least a token aid programme of our own.” They felt that “even a limited gesture would help; this was what all our visitors from the democratic parties [...] had told us.”⁵²⁶

This pessimistic view of the Portuguese situation gives even more relevance to the Labour support for the PS, because it was not only a short term investment. The construction of a solid Socialist party was a guarantee of the establishment of a democratic regime in the medium and the long term. After the elections, it would be necessary to have a strong party in the moderate left that could ensure the stability, credibility, and continuity of the democratic regime. The establishment of a Western kind of democracy in Portugal could take a long time, but in order for it to be established, the role of the PS would be fundamental.

The next step that the British planned was the visit of James Callaghan to Portugal, “our most important effort to date.” The objectives of this visit would be to discuss the situation in the Iberian country with the provisional government. Callaghan would try to encourage members of the government and the MFA “in pro-Western tendencies and realistic thinking, especially about economic matters.” In this sense, the British considered that it would be a positive move to demonstrate support for the Portuguese efforts “to re-establish a democratic form of regime” and to show “support for his socialist colleague, Dr Soares, in particular.”⁵²⁷

Thus, on 6th February, Soares officially invited Callaghan to visit Portugal. It was his first visit to the country since the outbreak of the Revolution and the meeting took place in a very friendly atmosphere. The British wanted to express a positive attitude towards Portugal, and encourage them to keep to the democratic path started after April 1974. Callaghan was subtle enough not to touch on the issue of the increasing Communist control of the situation, since the meeting with Soares was also in the presence of other ministers, diplomats, and the Portuguese Ambassador in London. However, he brought up the situation of the South of Europe and the problems that the existence of big Communist parties in member-countries of NATO posed for the Atlantic Alliance. Immediately after that, he said he “hoped that Portugal could focus more on NATO” now that it was disengaging from Africa. Regarding the limitations imposed by the US on Portugal, he hoped it would not be an obstacle to keep Portugal close to NATO. Soares answered that they “understood and accepted the limitations

⁵²⁶ Letter from H.T. Morgan to Mr Barret, “Portugal”, 31/01/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2291, Relations between Portugal and the United States.

⁵²⁷ Letter from H.T. Morgan to Mr Barret, “Portugal”, 31/01/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2291, Relations between Portugal and the United States.

imposed” and that “all the political forces in the current Provisional Government are in favour of keeping Portugal in NATO.” After the visit to Portugal, Callaghan was again optimistic; he thought that good sense reigned in Portugal, and that “there would be no Communist takeover.”⁵²⁸

However, three weeks later, the events in Portugal contradicted the assessment of Callaghan. A further drift to the Left took place in Portugal, triggered by a Rightist attempt at a coup d'état on 11th March. Between February and March, the embassies of the Western European countries in Portugal, as well as the American Ambassador Carlucci, were informed about some Right-wing activity on the border between Spain and Portugal, and about the possibility of a reactionary anti-Communist coup in Portugal.⁵²⁹ When such a coup happened, it had unexpected consequences, as we will see shortly.

To summarise, the first months of 1975 were characterised by the intensification of the conflict between Communists and Socialists, who now represented the main force opposed to the Communist seizure of power in Portugal. This situation was a cause for concern in the Labour Government and in the main Western countries, who started to collaborate closely in Portugal with the common objective of preventing the increasing Communist drift of the Revolution. The main objective in the short term for the PS and for British Labour was to maintain the electoral appointment, in which the Socialists hoped for a good result that would grant them the necessary legitimacy to take control of the situation. With the aim of supporting the PS in the elections, the BLP tried to provide the Portuguese Socialists with material and economic support through the SI to help them to organise the electoral campaign. This means the main Western Governments, the SI, and the main European Social Democrat parties were working in the same direction with interconnected interests. For all of them, the PS was at the core of their strategy. At the same time, a new form of leverage appeared, which was used by the Western powers. This was the galloping economic crisis Portugal was going through. This made the country even more susceptible to influences from the Western actors, who as we have seen, were planning to offer economic assistance to Portugal. All of this affected the PS, since it was the party that better represented the Western interests in Portugal, while at the same time being attractive for the Portuguese in a revolutionary situation.

⁵²⁸ Record of the conversation at the Secretary of State's dinner for Dr Kissinger at admiralty house at 8 P.M. on Monday, 17/02/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2291, Relations between Portugal and the United States.

⁵²⁹ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 136.

3.1.2. From the coup attempt to the victory of the PS in the elections to the Constituent Assembly

On 11th March, Spínola and his supporters, with the financial help of the big Portuguese monopolists,⁵³⁰ attempted a reactionary coup d'état. This was the consequence of two situations that the conspiratorial Right believed could benefit them. The first was the impotence of the MFA and the political parties to resolve the Portuguese problems, namely the economic and political crisis. The second was the atmosphere of confrontation between the forces of the Left, which was translated into the military division of the MFA into pro-Socialists, Communists and also extreme Leftists, who began to be alienated by the Communist authoritarian methods.⁵³¹ This led the Portuguese Right to think that they could benefit from this division and re-establish order, and above all, their former privileged position in Portugal. However, Spínola's attempt was a poorly-organised disaster that failed even before arriving in Lisbon. The attempt was broken up by the MFA in collaboration with a Leftist crowd, and Spínola had to escape to Spain.⁵³²

However, the coup attempt had important consequences. It opened a new stage of the Revolution, in which the Communists, in a strained alliance with the extreme Left, were going to advance more decisively towards their idea of revolution, in which they would be the vanguard. The immediate effect of Spínola's failed attempt was that the most radical elements of the MFA removed their more moderate colleagues from their positions. On 12th March, they created the Council of the Revolution, replacing the JSN and the Council of State created after 25th April, which became the supreme authority in the State. Together with the Council of the Revolution, the pro-Communist military created the MFA Assembly, which in the words of Kenneth Maxwell was "a confused amalgam of executive and legislative functions which usurped much of the authority intended for the yet-to-be elected Constituent Assembly."⁵³³ On the same day, the MFA Assembly, in which the followers of the pro-Communist Vasco Gonçalves were now prominent, approved a programme of nationalisation that included the banks, the insurance companies, and agrarian reform. It was also discussed

⁵³⁰ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, 105.

⁵³¹ Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 108.

⁵³² The motivations and the development of the coup attempt of 11th March have been the object of debate in the literature on the Portuguese Revolution. A political account can be found in Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 110; a socio-political account can be found in Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, 105-122.; a politico-military account, and perhaps the most detailed narrative of the events, can be found in Maria Inácia Rezola, *Os Militares na Revolução de Abril. O Conselho da Revolução e a Transição para a Democracia em Portugal (1974-1976)* (Lisboa: Campo da Comunicação, 2006), 127-158.

⁵³³ Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 110.

the appropriateness of holding the elections in these circumstances. The faction of the MFA led by Gonçalves proposed cancelling them, but the remaining part of the moderate faction of the military, with reputed members such as Melo Antunes or Vasco Lourenço who were in favour of a parliamentary democratic way to Socialism, opposed the initiative. Finally, the President Costa Gomes only postponed the elections from 12th April to 25th April, which would give more time to create a new provisional government before the beginning of the electoral campaign.

The French Socialists visited Portugal immediately after the coup, as we will see more in detail in the next section of this chapter, and talked with Soares about the new situation. According to Soares, the situation was very serious. He thought that the Communists had manipulated the intentions of the Right for a putsch, which they had been aware of, and had triggered the coup attempt at the moment that they had judged to be favourable to change the balance of power in the government in their favour. He considered the internal changes in the MFA as “an internal coup” for which Vasco Gonçalves had responsibility, since “the PCP enjoys the full support of Vasco Gonçalves.” The document produced by the French was translated into English and circulated in the SI.⁵³⁴ Moreover, Soares also sent a message to Gerald Ford through Willy Brandt in which he expressed the same concerns.⁵³⁵

The purge within the MFA strengthened the Communist control over the Portuguese State apparatus, which once again created alarm in the Western governments. This situation brought the US, the UK, and the FRG closer together. They tried to co-ordinate their reactions as much as possible in order to influence the situation in Portugal at a moment that they all considered to be critical. They tried to collaborate in order to prevent the establishment of a totalitarian Communist regime in Portugal. At the NATO level, representatives of the UK, US, France, FRG, Italy, and Belgium met on 23rd March, and they decided to adopt an intransigent stance towards the pro-Communist Portuguese authorities and the USSR. However, they also decided that the issue of Portugal should not be openly linked to the process of détente or to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that would be held in August in Helsinki. They were aware of the risk that a strong stance at the NATO level could mean for détente at this crucial moment. Thus they decided not to use the NATO framework. Instead, they planned to approach the Portuguese and the Soviets bilaterally. The

⁵³⁴ Blanca, Antoine, “48 hours with the Portuguese Socialists”, IISH, SI Archives, 780 (Portugal 1975-1976).

⁵³⁵ Castaño, ““A practical test in détente’,” 8.

message that they agreed to emphasise was how important it would be for them if the Portuguese people were able to express themselves through democratic elections.⁵³⁶

Despite this planned initiative, the approach to the Portuguese situation was again different in the US and in Western Europe. Kissinger still viewed the situation quite pessimistically. He did not trust the capacities of the PS and Mário Soares to be the main resource of the West to revert the situation, and therefore he did not consider the forthcoming elections as crucial as the British and the Germans did. He thought now that there were no middle-of-the-road solutions. Kissinger started to consider the possibility of intervention in Portugal, and expulsion from NATO in the case that the Communists attained complete control over the country. According to him, in these circumstances, a Communist Portugal could be the lesser evil. He considered that it could be a vaccine for the rest of the members of NATO, which would bring them closer together. If the Communists took control, the Iberian country would be expelled from the Alliance and would be internationally isolated, serving as an example to other Western countries with strong Communist parties, namely Italy and France, that would show them the consequence of having Communists in the government.⁵³⁷ The Europeans did not share this approach; they were still in favour of a softer line that was based on backing the PS to counterbalance the PCP, combined with diplomatic pressure on the Portuguese government and promising conditional economic aid to Portugal. Notwithstanding the differences between their approaches, the Europeans and the US followed the same line of action in front of the Portuguese authorities and the USSR.

Before the formation of the new provisional Government in Portugal, the British exerted subtle pressures on the Portuguese in order to let them know that they expected that no big changes would be made, and that they wanted to see Mário Soares in the Government. On 21st March, the British Secretary of Employment Michael Foot, and the Ministry of State for Foreign Affairs Hattersley, invited the Portuguese Minister of Employment and pro-Communist member of the MFA Costa Martins, and the Secretary of Emigration Pedro Coelho to London. The invitation was sudden, taking the chance that the Portuguese were visiting Stockholm. This fact disconcerted the Portuguese, who wondered about the abruptness of the British invitation. They supposed that since the British were “a democratic and a Socialist Government” and the events of 11th March moved Portugal away “from their ideological framework”, they probably wanted to “exert over us some kind of doctrinaire

⁵³⁶ Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 225-226.

⁵³⁷ See Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 143; Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos na Revolução Portuguesa*, 105-113.

influence to bring us closer to them.” This supposition was confirmed when they met the British, although Labour were very subtle and did not try to exert any direct pressure.⁵³⁸

The Portuguese had a very short meeting with the Secretary of Employment Michael Foot. He was in general very polite, but he tried to test the intentions of the Portuguese government that would be formed in the next days. Thus, he offered Costa Martins all the experience and help that the British could give the Portuguese, leaving “some silences in the middle of the conversation” that created some tension. He seemed to be trying to provoke some kind of reaction from the Portuguese, but they only thanked him for the offer and made references to the already existing collaboration.

After the meeting with Foot, the Portuguese Ministers, together with their Ambassador in London, visited Hattersley at the Foreign Office. He described the good reception that the Revolution had received from his government at the beginning, but he also said that the latest events had created some concern. Then he emphasised “the great affection and the great consideration that our Secretary of State (Callaghan) has for Dr. Mário Soares.” By mentioning Soares, Hattersley was implying that the British expected to see him in the Government again, preferably in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Portuguese understood this and felt obliged to “clarify that Dr. Soares would abandon the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but he would not abandon the Government. He would occupy the position of Minister without portfolio, which hierarchically was above the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” They argued that this position would give him more responsibility because his competence would not be limited by any specific Ministry, although it could also be interpreted as an attempt to distance Soares from his international contacts. The fact that the British authorities showed great interest in seeing the Portuguese ministry appointments, and that nothing clear emerged from the conversations, made the Portuguese confirm that Labour only wanted to test the intentions of the new government and to show them their “apprehension and disenchantment” with respect to the new situation.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁸ The next four paragraphs are based on: Letter from the Portuguese Embassy in London to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Visita do Ministro do Trabalho e do Secretário Estado Emigração”, 25/03/1975, Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negocios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 43/1975/ Processo 330 GBR. Relações bilaterais com a Grã Bretanha e Irlanda do Norte.

⁵³⁹ Letter from the Portuguese Embassy in London to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Visita do Ministro do Trabalho e do Secretário Estado Emigração”, 25/03/1975, Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negocios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 43/1975/ Processo 330 GBR. Relações bilaterais com a Grã Bretanha e Irlanda do Norte.

This was a subtle form of pressure with which the British let the Portuguese know their interest and concern regarding the situation in Portugal. They offered all of the help that they could provide, while at the same time they expressed their apprehensions about the direction the situation was taking in Portugal, which had a clear implicit message for the Portuguese: we can both profit from our relations and collaboration, but beware the direction you take, because it could harm our relations. Finally, once again, the British worked to favour Mário Soares and the PS. They stated that they would like to see him in the government, implying in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thus they tried to press in favour of the presence of the Socialist leader in the potential new government. In a context in which the most important event ahead were the elections, the presence of the Socialists in the new government could be important to ensure that the electoral process eventually took place. In addition, the presence of Soares within the government was important for the British because he was the perfect interlocutor for them, and he also was a guarantee that some moderate elements would be kept in key positions of power.

The British activities and pressures to ensure the presence of Soares in the Government and the holding of elections were in favour of the PS, because it seemed to be the favourite party to win the forthcoming elections. Some weeks before they were held, on 2nd April, the results of a national survey appeared, according to which the PS was the favourite party of the Portuguese. In the survey, Soares was considered to be one of the best-known politicians in Portugal. He was third in a ranking that included members of the military, just behind the Presidents of the Republic, Spínola and Costa Gomes, but he was the first politician of the list. He was also the number one response to the question of who was the most beloved politician. Regarding the parties, the survey said that the PS was the most popular party in Portugal, and when asked what was the means of communication that influenced the Portuguese the most, they answered the television and chats with their friends.⁵⁴⁰ The visibility of Soares on the television during the first year of the Revolution had been very important, because as he was Foreign Minister, his figure had been very often on TV.⁵⁴¹ In addition, he was positively associated with the process of decolonisation, and the new international respectability of Portugal thanks to his personal contacts with the West, and the positive public statements made by his European Socialist counterparts.

⁵⁴⁰ Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 235-236.

⁵⁴¹ Mário Soares, “Portugal e a transição para a democracia: um testemunho pessoal” in *Portugal e a Transição para a Democracia (1974-1976)*, ed. Fernando Rosas (Lisboa: Edições Colibri, 1998), 328.

For the PS, these results implied that the figure of Mário Soares and his popularity were key to a good electoral result. Therefore, it was very important to keep him in the government where he could get more visibility, to increase his presence on the television as much as possible, and to focus the electoral campaign of the PS on the image of the leader. Thus, the posters used for the electoral campaign, which had been provided by the European partners of the PS, as we have seen above, were printed with the image of Mário Soares. If the leader of the PS already had a very high level of control over the party *de facto*, from now on the cult of personality started to become a characteristic of the PS, as the party became dependent on the image of the Secretary General. I will come back to this characteristic of the PS and its consequences during the electoral campaign later.

The fact is that five days after the meeting between the Portuguese and the British Ministers, on 26th March, the fourth new provisional Government was formed in Portugal. Its composition, although Communist-oriented, was not as radical as the Western powers had feared. The Prime Minister was again Vasco Gonçalves. The Communists or pro-Communists had four ministries, the Socialists kept the Ministry of Justice in the hands of Salgado Zenha, but they lost Foreign Affairs. Mário Soares was replaced by Melo Antunes—who, as we have seen was Socialist-oriented—but he was appointed Minister without portfolio. The majority of the ministries went to MFA members, and the PPD kept two ministries.

The reaction of the PS to the events of March was quite temperate. The main objective of the PS at that time was to ensure that the elections would be held. They knew that a good electoral result would change the dynamic of the Revolution, and contribute to limiting the influence of the radical sectors of the MFA and the PCP.⁵⁴² Thus in the third week of March, they organised a rally in Lisbon and published an analysis of the situation in which they commented on the events of the past weeks with one objective in mind: to argue that the elections should be maintained. On the one hand, the PS welcomed the nationalisations determined by the Council of the Revolution in principle. However, on the other hand, they warned of the dangers of not accompanying nationalisation with political democratisation, for which holding the elections was essential. After the nationalisations, the PS considered that a favourable context to “organise the transition to Socialism” was set. It implied that the moment would be right to start the original Portuguese way to Socialism, “conciliating political democracy with economic democracy.” For the PS, this was the only plausible way

⁵⁴² Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 74.

of advancing towards Socialism in Portugal, otherwise “socialisation would become State control” and Socialism would degenerate into “State Capitalism” as had happened in other Eastern European countries. For this reason, the PS considered that the exercise of fundamental political freedoms expressed in the polls was now essential. This was “truly revolutionary.”⁵⁴³ Although the PS did not mention the PCP at all, it was clear that they were warning of the risks that the Communist avant-garde way of achieving Socialism implied. The PS showed that they were willing to keep moving towards Socialism, but the way of achieving it had to be linked to political democracy. Thus, they posed the focus of the Revolution not on the transformation of economic and social structures, but on the transformation of political relations. The other transformations should be carried out after the will of the Portuguese had been expressed through democratic means. Therefore, they were setting a revolutionary path in which the most urgent task was to hold elections.

This objective, together with the new weakened position of the PS in the state apparatus and in the government, explains the fact that at the beginning of April, the party had to accept a harmful condition imposed by the MFA. It consisted of attributing a future constitutional role during a period of 3 to 5 years to the Council of the Revolution and to the Assembly of the MFA, which would limit the competences and the autonomy of future governments. The MFA, with the support of the PCP, made the signing of a pact in which the parties accepted these limitations a condition for participating in the next elections. This means that the elected Assembly would only have the powers to write a Constitution, and the MFA would keep executive power and the right of veto over the Constitution. However, the moral legitimacy that the electoral results could give to the PS, and the delegitimising effect that a poor result would have for the PCP and their supporters in the MFA, made it essential for the PS to maintain the process in spite of these limitations.⁵⁴⁴

Thus, the elections were held. As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, the electoral campaign of the PS was to a great extent financed and supported by the West European Social Democratic parties in the SI. They provided the PS with material, economic, and moral support. At the same time, European Social Democrat governments, including the UK, the FRG, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Austria, gave political support, visibility and technical assistance to the PS. The Socialists developed a campaign in which the main slogans

⁵⁴³ “Liberdade, Socialismo, Independência Nacional,” *Portugal Socialista* (20/03/1975).

⁵⁴⁴ Mario Soares, *Portugal: Quelle revolution? Entretiens avec D. Pouchin* (Paris: Calman-Levy, 1976), 109-110.

were “Socialism in Liberty” and “Socialism yes, Dictatorship no,” following the main message that they had been spreading during the previous months.

The PS posters were printed with the image of Mário Soares, which was a response to the great popularity of the Secretary General of the party, but also to the suggestions that the German SPD made to the PS. The Germans supported the campaign of the PS, not only materially, but also by giving advice to the Portuguese. The idea of exploiting the positive image of Soares was a German suggestion that, at first found some resistance in the party.⁵⁴⁵ For the PS, it implied an excessive dependence on the leader, but it was accepted because of the positive electoral results that this strategy could provide. This was the first step taken to transform the PS into a catch-all party. If the initial intention of the PS, as had been shown in its first Congress, was to become a mass party, three factors pushed it into a different direction. First, the excessive dependence on the electoral results to try to reverse the Communist control of the revolutionary process; second, the reliance on Soares to get a good result by appealing to all the social sectors in Portugal; and third, the interest of the European Social Democratic parties in helping the PS to achieve a good result. All of this eased the introduction of campaign methods imported from Western Europe, which had been designed by the Social Democrat parties to attract as much votes as possible from as wide a social spectrum as possible. Thus, the adoption of this strategy by the PS shows the beginning of a change towards the kind of party which the PS would become after 1975.

In addition, since the PS was still a young party in the process of construction, their initial ambitions of becoming a mass party were jeopardised by the quick developments of the Revolution. The events in Portugal did not allow the leadership of the PS to focus on the construction of a solid structure. As I pointed out in chapter one, the PS inherited the cadre structure of the ASP when it was created. This structure was useful within a clandestine context, but after the outbreak of the Revolution, it had to be changed. The task was not easy due to the quick progression of events and the limitations imposed on the leaders of the party, who had to get involved in the Government from the very beginning, which did not allow them to dedicate time and effort to building up the party structure. By April 1974, the PS had a strong base of militants who numbered than 40000, but it lacked formed middle cadres that could connect the base to the leadership and the whole party better connected, more coherent,

⁵⁴⁵ Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 235-236.

and structured.⁵⁴⁶ In fact, the lack of cohesion and the gap between the different echelons of the party was so vast that it is possible to say that chaos reigned in the headquarters of the party.⁵⁴⁷ These problems and shortages also contributed to the progressive transformation of the PS into a catch-all party, which was more keen to develop a representative democracy than a combination of representative and grass-roots democracy, as their programme envisaged.

The elections were held on 25th April with universal franchise, and the PS had an impressive result. They had 37.9% of the votes, which gave them 116 seats in the Parliament (out of 250). Surprisingly, the second force was the PPD, who was economically supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation,⁵⁴⁸ with 26.4% of the votes and 81 seats, and the PCP only had 12.5% of the votes. Finally, the only representative of the Right (if we consider the PPD to be a Social Democrat party), the *Centro Democrático Social* (CDS), had 7.6% of the votes. Participation in the elections was extremely high, including approximately 92% of the electorate.

The literature on the Portuguese Revolution has interpreted these results, and specifically the success of the PS, in several ways. According to Martin Kayman, the PS benefited from their lack of ideological definition. Thus, they were assisted by negative or tactical voting. He argues that the PS got the votes of the Leftist people who believed that in the present climate, the success of the PCP would be disastrous, considering the concern manifested by the NATO allies. The PS also got the votes from the Right who believed that they had better chances of victory than the PPD, and who saw in them the best possibility of marginalising the PCP.⁵⁴⁹ Phil Mailer, in turn, argues that the most important factor that explains PS' success was that they offered a non-Stalinist solution to the Portuguese Revolution, contrary to the alternative of the PCP.⁵⁵⁰ Kenneth Maxwell, in line with Kayman, argues that the PS benefited from potential PCP voters in the Left and potential PPD voters in the Centre/Right. But according to him, what was a key factor was the division of the country into a conservative and Catholic North characterised by the small holdings of land, where the tendency was to vote for the

⁵⁴⁶ Maria José Stock, "O PS de 1973 a 1983. Trajetória de uma década", in *O Partido Socialista e a Democracia*, ed. Vitalino Canas (Oeiras: Celta, 2005), 129-168.

⁵⁴⁷ See: Letter from Maria Emília Tito de Moraes to Mário Soares, 27/05/1975. FMS, (1975-1978), "Correspondência (Maria Emília Tito de Moraes, Fernando Loureiro, François Mitterrand, Irène Petry)", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: http://hdl.handle.net/11002/fms_dc_79927 (2016-2-4).

⁵⁴⁸ Rôla da Fonseca, "«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»," 238.

⁵⁴⁹ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-revolution*, 139.

⁵⁵⁰ Mailer, *Portugal: The Impossible Revolution?*, 134.

PPD; and the South, where land property was highly concentrated and the labour force composed of salaried farm workers, where the tendency was to vote for the PCP. In both regions the PS was the second force. Besides, in the relatively modern and populated centre of the country, around Lisbon, and in the other big cities such as Oporto, the PS had the best results.⁵⁵¹

However, together with all these reasons, in a less direct sense it is undeniable that the foreign support of the PS was very important in understanding its victory in the elections. Apart from the material, economic, and technical support provided by the parties gathered in the SI, the European Social Democrat and Socialist leaders had enhanced Soares' public visibility, and they had always shown their support for the PS. Together with the fact that Soares had been Minister of Foreign Affairs, this gave a good deal of visibility and respectability to the Socialist leader. If we add to this that he had a charismatic personality and an impeccable anti-Fascist reputation after the years of the dictatorship,⁵⁵² the result was the wide victory of the PS, which became the primary political party in Portugal.

The PS was consolidated as a national party, with good results throughout the whole country. These results were satisfying for the main West European supporters of the PS, British Labour, and the German Social Democrats. The results confirmed the success of their strategy of supporting the PS to make it into the biggest force in the Left in Portugal, thus minimising the Communist influence and control over the situation. The British Ambassador in London Nigel Trench considered that these results had opened a clear opportunity to reverse the situation. But now, it was even more necessary to “strengthen the Portuguese forces in favour of the representative democracy.”⁵⁵³

However, the Communists and their allies in the MFA still controlled the State apparatus in fact. Some days after the elections, the May Day celebrations in Lisbon anticipated the bitter struggle between Socialists and Communists that would take place in the following months. In the *1º de Maio* meeting organised in Lisbon at the stadium, the Socialists were prevented from ascending to the stand for the authorities, where Alvaro Cunhal, Vasco Gonçalves, Costa Gomes and the leaders of the *Intersindical* were. The Socialists considered this an affront that went against the will of the Portuguese that had been democratically expressed, and on the following day, they organised a demonstration in Lisbon against the establishment

⁵⁵¹ Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 114-115.

⁵⁵² See Avillez, *Soares: ditadura e revolução*.

⁵⁵³ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 144.

of a new dictatorship in Portugal in the name of the Revolution. This opened a conflicted period known as *Verão quente* (the hot summer), when the confrontations between Communists, Socialists and extreme Right and Left, reached levels that led to the idea that the situation in Portugal would degenerate into a civil war.

3.1.3. Electoral legitimacy vs revolutionary legitimacy.

From 1st May until 25th November, the Revolution experienced greater radicalisation and greater political and physical confrontation than before, with the MFA, the PS, and the PCP as the main actors. As we have seen above, the events of May Day inaugurated a period when the PCP and some sectors of the MFA would not recognise the political importance of the elections. On 14th May, the leader of the PCP Alvaro Cunhal had an interview in the Russian newspaper *Pravda*. When he was questioned about the speculation in the Western media on the Portuguese elections, he answered that “[...] they had the wrong opinion that the results of the elections could, by themselves, question the revolutionary process, make the opposition to it, even reverse it. However, it will not happen. The elections represent an integrant part of the revolutionary process, but they are not a determinant factor.”⁵⁵⁴ Only some weeks later, in an interview in the Italian journal *L’Europeo*, Cunhal stated his view of the situation very clearly; for him there was “a revolutionary process ongoing and, in parallel, a bourgeois democratic process” that sometimes “coincided with the objectives of the revolutionary process” and sometimes “contradicted it”. The solution was “in the revolutionary process” and not in the legality that the bourgeois democracy imposed. He stated that the revolution “did not respect the laws, it created new ones.”⁵⁵⁵

These statements caused the PS to fear that the PCP would not give any importance to the electoral results. Moreover, the limitations imposed by the MFA on the competences of the Constituent Assembly, which had been accepted by the PS, provided the Communists and the MFA with a strong argument against the kind of legitimacy that the PS claimed to have. The PS considered that the results of the elections gave them an electoral legitimacy which was superior to the revolutionary legitimacy of the MFA—a legitimacy that the PCP also claimed

⁵⁵⁴ “Tarefas do Portugal democrático,” Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negócios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 3/331/1975. Política interna e externa de Portugal. Actividades dos partidos políticos portugueses.

⁵⁵⁵ “Un Revolucionario,” Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negócios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 3/331/1975. Política interna e externa de Portugal. Actividades dos partidos políticos portugueses. This interview has been already quoted in: Del Pero, “A European solution for a European Crisis,” 30-31.

as vanguard of the Revolution.⁵⁵⁶ This situation, in which there were two legitimacies that were unable to coexist, deepened the already existing confrontation between Socialists and Communists, as well as the internal divisions in the MFA. The so-called extreme-Left parties (the MDP/CDE and smaller groups such as the MES, MRPP, PRP, UDP), which were in favour of grassroots democracy through military and workers' committees, also condemned the authoritarian avant-garde strategy of the Communists, although they allied with them occasionally. At the same time, the more moderate sectors of the MFA, which were favourable towards Socialism within the frame of a parliamentary democracy, were also upset by the Communist behaviour. All of this happened within a context of civil turmoil; at the provincial and local level there were physical confrontations in which the groups involved were not easy to define ideologically. There were confrontations between Communists, extreme-Left wingers, Right-wingers, Socialists, and Catholics in different parts of the country, as well as spontaneous and orchestrated occupations of land, houses and companies.⁵⁵⁷

In this context of political, military and civil confrontation, Soares tried to link the upheaval in Portugal to the international situation, involving the Western Social Democrat partners as much as possible. On 27th May, he made a statement to the international media in Paris, in which he said that if Portugal became some kind of dictatorship, it would be “a problem for détente in Europe, and for all the European Left.” Furthermore, he started to moderate his discourse regarding issues that were sensitive for his Western partners. He was asked about the Atlantic Alliance and his opinion about the American bases in the Azores Islands. His answer in public now showed a much more pro-Western Alliance discourse than in the previous months. He said that the population of Azores “is not opposed to the existence of the base, moreover they are in favour of it because of economic reasons.” Regarding the opinion of the PS on these issues, he said that the party was in principle against the maintenances of the bases, and against the military blocs. Notwithstanding this fact, he also said that “[the PS] would not question the bases in Portugal.” Moreover, he thought that in order “to dismantle the Atlantic Alliance, the Pact of Warsaw should be dismantled”,⁵⁵⁸ which somehow expressed the acceptance that the dismantlement of NATO was not realistic.

⁵⁵⁶ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 75.

⁵⁵⁷ See: Pedro Ramos Pinto, *Lisbon rising. Urban social movements in the Portuguese Revolution, 1974–75* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁵⁵⁸ “Portugal e a Europa,” Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negócios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 3/331/1975. Política interna e externa de Portugal. Actividades dos partidos políticos portugueses.

Soares started to show a subtle change in his statements publicly, involving the PS in this change. He stopped criticising the Atlantic Alliance in public, admitting and accepting its existence in a veiled way. Since he involved the PS in his statements, this meant that, despite the programme of the party, the Socialists would not question the Atlantic Alliance, but accepted it. The public discourse of the leader of the PS was little by little converging with his discourse in private. As we have seen on several occasions above, Soares had confirmed his and his party's commitment to NATO privately. The reason behind Soares' change of discourse in public was that in the Portuguese situation, the PS required as much Western support as possible to make the results of the elections valid, and it would be favourable for the interests of the party not to criticise NATO. Furthermore, he probably feared a Chilean-style counter-coup promoted by the US, since Kissinger had several times shown his anger at the presence of Communists in the Portuguese government.⁵⁵⁹ Thus, by showing that the PS would not question the Portuguese presence in NATO or the American bases in Portuguese soil, Soares demonstrated that the situation in Portugal was different to the one in Chile two years before, where the Left had been united in a popular front. The fact that the PS was now in a confrontation with the PCP, and that it had the support of the Portuguese electorate, made it appear to be the best solution to the Portuguese crisis for the West.

In May, the Communists implemented their revolutionary strategy by taking control of the mass media, which included the complex case of the Socialist newspaper *República*. The PCP had already controlled most of the Portuguese media and newspapers since the moment when the banks were nationalised. The banks owned most of the means of communication in Portugal and after their nationalisation, the Communists put their people in control of newspapers and radio and TV channels. One of the few newspapers that escaped this control was the Socialist owned *República*. However, on 19th May, the workers of the newspaper, who were not members of the PCP, occupied the main office and detained the director Raul Rego, and most of the journalists affiliated with the PS. The workers, who were mostly typographers linked to extreme-Leftist parties, demanded the capacity to decide the editorial contents of the newspaper, which was the responsibility of the editor and the journalists. The PS thought that this occupation was planned by the PCP in order to take control of the newspaper. However, although the Communists denied their participation in the occupation, they supported the claims of the typographers. The Council of the Revolution then mediated,

⁵⁵⁹ This idea is strengthened with primary sources in the next section of this chapter.

and closed the newspaper as a provisional measure until the problem was solved, which left the PS without means of expression apart from their official newspaper *Portugal Socialista*.

For the Socialists, this situation was unacceptable, and Mário Soares let President Costa Gomes know that he would resign from the government if the situation was not reverted. The leader of the PS sent a letter to the President of the Republic in which he said that he “could not be in a government that did not respect neither the popular will nor the most basic freedoms.” The *República* affair also served to aggravate the concern of the European Social Democratic family regarding the situation in Portugal, because it was a direct attack on the PS and to the freedom of press. In a document circulated among all the member parties of the SI, there was a description of the events that led to the closure of the journal, and the conclusion it reached was that there was “enough evidence about the politically motivated battle for *República*—and about those who started it [the Communists].”⁵⁶⁰

The PS tried to press the Council of the Revolution to reverse this situation, and they suspended their attendance of the meetings of the Council of Ministers. However, the fact that the case of *República* was not resolved,⁵⁶¹ together with the fact that the MFA Assembly approved a document called *Documento-Guia Povo-MFA* at the beginning of July, which ratified the status of the military power in coalition with the people over the power of the democratic institutions, caused the resignation of the PS from the government. The document proposed by the MFA radicals was an attempt to give ideological and political legitimacy to the military, thus disregarding the electoral legitimacy of the PS and the PPD. They proposed fomenting the direct participation of the popular masses in the Revolution, the defence of the process from the reactionary forces, and to consolidate the coalition between the people and the MFA as the motor of the Revolution.⁵⁶²

This combination of events caused the resignation of all the PS ministers on 10th July. The Socialists abandoned the government and started a different strategy in order to reverse the loss of political influence. It consisted of combining four different kind of actions. First, they proposed a political alternative for the Revolution in a document called *Vencer a crise. Salvar a Revolução*. Second, they used their capacity for mass mobilisation in order to show their

⁵⁶⁰ “Not just the story of a newspaper,” IISH, SI Archives, 780 (Portugal 1975-1976).

⁵⁶¹ The newspaper was re-opened on 16th June, but the typographs occupied it again with the support of the COPCON, and the Council of the Revolution decided to appoint a Colonel as director of the newspaper.

⁵⁶² *Aliança Povo-MFA*, Centro de Documentação 25 de Abril, Universidade de Coimbra. The document can be consulted in: <http://www1.ci.uc.pt/cd25a/wikka.php?wakka=poderpol17>. Last time consulted, 21/05/2014.

popular support in the streets, and the people's rejection of the PCP and the MFA. Third, they publicly criticised the PCP. Finally, the PS strengthened their cooperation with their European allies. In addition, Mário Soares thought that with the resignation of the Socialist Ministers—the ministers of the PPD had also resigned—the government would be left without political parties (except for the PCP). Thus, the Portuguese government would be exclusively composed of the military and Communists, which would formally make it a military dictatorship.⁵⁶³ This situation would be very uncomfortable for the MFA with regard to the Portuguese. Besides, it had the potential for deepening the political differences among its members, as some of them were clearly anti-Communist.

The political alternative of the PS was made public on 28th July in a document entitled *Vencer a crise. Salvar a Revolução*, in which they presented their plan. The underlying idea behind this document was that the electoral results should be reflected in the composition of the government, and that this government should have enough competencies to rule the country. However, the rhetoric used by the Socialists was quite strong. In the radicalised context in which the political struggle was occurring within the Left (including the military), the PS had to turn back to its origins in order to propose an alternative solution to the crisis that would be revolutionary and democratic at the same time. Thus, the PS referred to their declaration of principles of 1973 in order to argue that they were a truly revolutionary party. Their conception of the revolution, however, differed from that of the PCP and the extreme-Left parties, as the PS thought that the articulation between the social and the political bases of the revolution had to be made via democratic elections. The Socialist solution for saving the Revolution was the creation of a Government of National Salvation, with a composition that “should respect the popular will”, which in practice meant the results of the elections of April. The PS said that it did “not vindicate in any way the power or [specific] ministries”, but added that it “only expected the popular will unmistakably manifested in the elections to be respected.”

The PS respected the pact signed with the MFA before the elections, and said that the party accepted a MFA personality as President of the Fifth Provisional Government, but that person should not be linked to any political party. The MFA should also be apolitical, and their role

⁵⁶³ “Les Socialistes Portugais lancent un ultimatum aux militaires,” Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negócios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 8/331/1975. Política interna e externa de Portugal. Incidentes com meios de comunicação social. Jornal Republica, Radio Renscença. Referencias na imprensa, Posição da opinião publica portuguesa e estrangeira.

in the revolutionary process should be limited to the defence of the Revolution. Once the government was created, its immediate tasks should be to re-establish the order and the faith of the people in the Revolution. In order to achieve this goal, it was necessary to take some political measures, such as to reaffirm the authority of the Constituent Assembly; to ensure the pluralism of the media; and to insert the workers' and neighbours' commissions that were acting autonomously into the State apparatus, thus regulating their functioning.

Moreover, tackling the economic problems of Portugal was also urgent. The PS proposed an economic programme, the *Plano Económico de Reconstrução Nacional*, for solving the economic crisis. This program mixed Socialist rhetoric and objectives with short-term concrete measures. The PS stated that the aim of this project was “the development of the productive forces, in the frame of the progressive substitution of the capitalist relations of production by socialist relations of production.” However, they acknowledged that this was not an easy task. The PS argued that in order to reach this goal, “it would be necessary to insert Portugal in a wide and diverse frame of international co-operation”—which meant consolidating their links with Europe and the Portuguese-speaking countries. The economy of transition to Socialism implied the planning of the economy, fomenting “self-management experiences where possible”, but also “reaffirming a coherent policy of public and private investments, national as well as international.” In order to successfully carry out this policy of investments, it was “indispensable to re-establish a climate of confidence internally and externally.”

These statements imply that the PS thought that in order to solve the immediate economic problems of Portugal, it was necessary to open the economy to national and international private investors. Consequently, in order to attract these investors, it was necessary to re-establish their confidence in Portugal and abroad. In theory, these investments should help to consolidate the nationalisations that had already been achieved and to advance in the direction of a socialised economy; however, it is clear that to create confidence among internal and external investors, the private sector of the economy had to be guaranteed. Therefore, this programme, while focused on how to stop the degradation of the Portuguese economy, was quite ambiguous regarding its commitment to the construction of a Socialist economy.

In this programme, the PS turned to the same kind of vocabulary that they had used before the beginning of the Revolution, because the context justified it. They probably wanted to avoid the criticism for being a reactionary force that came from the Left, and to propose a program

that could be accepted by all the relevant political forces and the MFA. However, one sign that shows that they wanted to avoid the ideological battle that had been going on since 25th April 1974, is that they started to criticise the ideologised and “pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric” prevalent in Portugal. They considered that this ideological battle should be abandoned because “the workers measured the value of the Socialist project, very materially, by the way in which their basic problems are solved.” This shows that at the same time as the PS talked about Socialism, anti-Capitalism, and a classless society in the long term, in the short term they were much more pragmatic, proposing policies that were not necessarily in the direction of Socialism, and advising the de-ideologisation of the popular masses.⁵⁶⁴

The PS combined this concrete proposition for solving the political and economic crisis with pressure in the streets. On 18th and 19th July, the Socialists organised multiple demonstrations in Lisbon, with the main slogan of “*o Povo já não está com o MFA*”,⁵⁶⁵ showing the disenchantment of the demonstrators with the vanguardist strategy of the military and its allies, and their rejection of the *Povo-MFA* alliance. In these demonstrations, Soares publicly asked for the dismissal of the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves, a demand that was supported by the centre and conservative parties, the PPD and the CDS, as well as the Catholic Church, who now saw the PS as the best option for preserving their interests.

The Council of the Revolution did not accept the Socialist propositions, but it was unable to solve the political crisis by itself, since it was quite divided. In an attempt to get out of the political crisis that strengthened the most Leftist revolutionary alternative, on 25th July the Assembly of the MFA created a political-military directorate composed of the President of the Republic, Costa Gomes, the Prime Minister, Vasco Gonçalves and the Major Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho (COPCON). The creation of the so-called triumvirate removed all the power from the Council of the Revolution, which had consequences within the MFA. Now, a movement started around the moderates Melo Antunes and Vasco Lourenço, which culminated in the publication of the *Documento dos nove* on 7th August. This document made the break of the MFA into two factions official, since it denied the vanguardist strategy adopted by the faction led by Vasco Gonçalves and his extreme-Leftist allies, as well as the authority of the *Documento-Guia Povo-MFA*.

⁵⁶⁴ “Vencer a crise. Salvar a Revolução,” Documento do Secretariado Nacional do Partido Socialista, *Portugal Socialista* (30/07/1975): 7-15.

⁵⁶⁵ Reis, “O Partido Socialista na revolução,” 77. The slogan can be translated as “the people are no longer with the MFA”.

The new group, known as the *grupo dos nove*, expressed ideas that were in tune with the PS. They rejected the Socialist model of Eastern Europe, as well as the Social Democratic model of Western Europe, and defended an alternative way to Socialism that should be based on plural democracy, and respect for all basic freedoms and human rights. Their document also diverged from the Socialists, especially regarding the role that the military should play in the revolution, because they kept considering themselves a vanguard,⁵⁶⁶ contrary to what the PS had proposed in their above-mentioned document. However, despite some divergences, their coinciding ideas were strong enough for the PS to support the *grupo dos nove*. As a result, the political confrontation was reflected in the MFA. Although the situation in the military was very complex,⁵⁶⁷ broadly speaking it could be said that it reflected the political division between Socialists on the one hand, and Communists and an autonomous extreme-Left on the other hand.

Once again, the Portuguese situation put the country at the core of international concerns. However, the Western powers had run out of ideas, and could not figure out how else they could influence the events in Portugal. Thus, they decided to keep working in the same direction as previously, hoping that their strategy of supporting the PS would bear fruit, and improving their contacts within the MFA. The fact that there was now disagreement within the MFA was encouraging for the West, but their uncertainties were still vast. The greatest novelty in the summer of 1975 was that the British strategy of supporting the PS was strengthened at the informal level. The party level acquired more importance than ever before from August onwards. The British Labour leaders worked more closely with the main European Social Democrat and Socialist leaders with the aim of promoting the democratisation of Portugal through the support to the PS. This was a joint strategy that involved their parties as a means of carrying out less constrained policies than the ones coming from the Governments or the SI at the informal level. It resulted in a very effective way of pursuing their objectives, since it allowed them to avoid the limits imposed by more official channels, as well as to avoid the criticism that could come from the East. Considering that the Social Democrats were interfering in Portuguese internal affairs, they could be accused of violating the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs approved in the Helsinki Accords in August.

⁵⁶⁶ “O documento dos nove. Em direcção ao socialismo, à democracia e à paz,” *Portugal Socialista*, 56 (13/08/1975).

⁵⁶⁷ See: Rezola, *Os Militares na Revolução de Abril*.

This was an exclusively European, and exclusively Social Democratic, strategy. However, the US was informed of this strategy and accepted it. As we have seen above, the views of the Americans and the Europeans regarding Portugal were quite different, especially considering the kind of action that should be taken in order to sort out the situation. But the dramatic circumstances described above made the Americans reflect on their strategy, giving more autonomy to their European partners for carrying out their own policy for trying to solve the situation in Portugal in Western terms.⁵⁶⁸

On 23rd May, at a meeting of the CENTO Council of Ministers in the UK, the difference between the American and the British approach to Portugal was very clearly exposed. The British reported the words of Kissinger, who had said that “the Americans viewed the events in Portugal more seriously than the Europeans did.” However, the British thought that Kissinger’s views “were not necessarily an incentive to action”, which left some room for the British to attempt an alternative strategy. The US thought that the danger now was not “a Communist takeover”; instead, what they feared was a Leftist, neutralist government in Portugal, “a Yugoslav-type government”, which could remain a member of NATO “in order to ensure its own protection against the United States.” This kind of development was especially worrying for the US because it “would hold dangers for Italy, Greece and Spain.” However, they seemed to be out of ideas, apart from precipitating radical solutions such as promoting the establishment of a Right-wing dictatorship or letting Portugal fall into the hands of the Communists. Therefore, they “would let the British have a run at their policy” because Kissinger “had no concrete alternative policy to offer.”⁵⁶⁹

Despite the change in the Portuguese scene with the Socialists holding electoral legitimacy, but at the same time out of the government, the British did not change their strategy. Actually, they “could think of nothing better to do in practice.” Thus, they would keep aiding their fraternal party, the PS, and its leader, Mário Soares, “hoping to help maintain Portuguese links with the West” until the military leadership “began to come to terms with the facts of life and therefore to be disillusioned with the Communists.” The British were aware of the limits that their strategy could have, but they believed that, eventually, the Communists could not take over Portugal. Thus, their helpful attitude “was quite clearly and explicitly linked to

⁵⁶⁸ Del pero et al., *Democrazie*; Gomes and Moreira de Sá, *Carlucci vs Kissinger*.

⁵⁶⁹ Cento Council of Ministers Meeting, 23/05/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese Territories.

the survival of people like Soares”,⁵⁷⁰ who could eventually redirect Portugal in a Western and democratic direction.

Some weeks later, on 18th July, Callaghan visited Washington accompanied by Roy Hattersley. They were received by the American Secretary of Defence, James R. Schlesinger, Kissinger’s advisor, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, and the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, Arthur Hartman. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the Portuguese situation and possible actions. Hattersley explained the British expectations and strategy in Portugal to the Americans. He said that “although the prospects for a pluralistic democracy seemed to be getting worse, the only sensible policy for the Western countries was [...] to try to exert a helpful influence both through contacts with representatives of the political parties and of the [MFA].” Schlesinger agreed with the British analysis, but Sonnenfeldt and Hartman were sceptical. They thought that “a point of no return at which such a policy could be useful had already been reached.” Although they noted that the US was carrying on with its aid programme for Portugal, they also thought that the situation required NATO to consider the acceptability of Portugal remaining a member.⁵⁷¹

However, the Labour government did not change its views, and started to complement their strategy of supporting the PS with contacts among the moderate members of the MFA who were close to the Socialists. Since the leader of this moderate faction Melo Antunes was now the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, the British took the chance to approach him personally and invited him to London on 27th June.

On that day, Callaghan met with Melo Antunes. According to the British Secretary, “he came across as an earnest, intelligent and forceful person who wished to create in Portugal a democratic socialist society, with an economy in which there will still be a role for private enterprise.” Regarding the situation within the Armed Forces in Portugal, Antunes confessed to the British that “those who favoured totalitarianism were vocal but not the majority within the [MFA].” He did not underestimate the difficulties that the moderates would have to face, but he saw the situation “with great determination and optimism.” Therefore, in order to defeat those who wanted to turn Portugal into a “people’s democracy”, Antunes “emphasised

⁵⁷⁰ Letter from the British Embassy in Washington to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and to the British Embassy in Lisbon, “Portugal”, 30/05/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese Territories.

⁵⁷¹ Telegram for departmental distribution, “Portugal”, 20/06/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese Territories.

the importance of any help which Portugal's friends in the western world could give." The opinion of the new Portuguese Foreign Minister was that although "the situation in Portugal is uncertain and often depressing [...] the battle is not yet lost." According to him, how the West could best help the moderates in Portugal was to support "economically and politically to both the moderates in the political parties and those in the armed forces."⁵⁷² This coincided with the British thought.

For the first time, in this conversation the British brought up an initiative that was being organised at the EEC level. The idea was to offer financial aid—the amount was undecided, but it would be very significant—to Portugal under the condition that the country would evolve towards a Western kind of democracy.⁵⁷³ This was a carrot and stick approach that in the Portuguese dilapidated economic situation could be very persuasive. It was an initiative born in the Council of Ministers of the EEC, where the Social Democrats were the majority, but it still had to be discussed. Since the UK was also going through an important economic and financial crisis, the Europeans had to decide how to manage the loan, but it would probably come from the European Bank of Investments.⁵⁷⁴ However, this possibility did not nullify the bilateral offer of aid. Since the beginning of the year, the British had been planning to offer Portugal a small gesture of economic support, which had not been given yet because of the political development of the country. Although the British did not make this condition explicit to the Portuguese, their intentions were very clear. In the words of Callaghan: "although we have not stipulated that British aid to Portugal is conditional upon political commitments, it is of course intended to help not only the development of Portugal but also the prospects for the development of democracy there."⁵⁷⁵

The meeting with Melo Antunes was very influential in the actualisation of the British strategy from now on, since they realized that the MFA was not as united as it appeared to be. Besides, the new Portuguese Foreign Minister seemed to be as centred and realistic as Mário Soares, and viewed the situation with relative optimism. These two facts led the British to combine their support of the PS with the support for the moderate forces in the MFA, and to

⁵⁷² Secretary of State's meeting with Dr Kissinger, "Line to take", 12/07/1975, Portugal, UKNA, FCO 9/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese Territories.

⁵⁷³ Conversações com o Ministro Britânico dos Negócios Estrangeiros, 27/06/1975, Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negócios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 43/1975/ Processo 330 GBR. Conversa entre o ministro Melo Antunes e o senhor Callaghan.

⁵⁷⁴ See: Geoffrey Pridham and Pippa Pridham, *Transnational Party Cooperation and European Integration*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1981).

⁵⁷⁵ US request for advance notice of statements by HMG on Portugal, 15/07/1975, UKNA, FCO 20/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese territories.

stimulate the relations between both groups, as we will see below. The British now wanted to see “whether the shock of the Socialists’ resignation will help the moderates to reassert themselves inside the [MFA] in the short term or later on.”⁵⁷⁶

3.1.4. The Verão Quente. Social Democratic collaboration, the PS and the problems of Socialism

At the height of the *Verão Quente* in July, in parallel to the governmental activities, the European Social Democratic family took the international initiative regarding the Portuguese revolution. On 22nd July, the Prime Minister of Sweden, the Social Democrat Olof Palme, invited all the leaders of the European Social Democracy—Harold Wilson, Mário Soares, Bruno Kreisky (Austria), Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, François Mitterrand, Joop den Uyl (Netherlands), Trygve Bratteli (Norway), Anker Jørgensen (Denmark), and Kalevi Sorsa (Finland), , to an informal meeting in Stockholm to be held on 2nd August.⁵⁷⁷ The aim of the meeting was “to discuss ways in which democratic processes in Portugal could be supported.”⁵⁷⁸ Also, as British Labour put it, this was “an opportunity for us to give Dr Soares any advice that might help him to play his hand steadily and sensibly over the difficult times ahead of him.”⁵⁷⁹

Palme’s initiative came when the chances for Western kind of democracy in Portugal seemed to be decreasing. The Socialists had resigned from their positions in the government and the Communists were taking over power in a country that was more divided and polarised each day. The Swedish Prime Minister thought that it would be a good idea to have an informal meeting in Stockholm because the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe would be held on 1st August in Helsinki, it . This would give many of the European Social Democrat leaders the opportunity to attend to the meeting in the Swedish capital on the following day. There, they could have an informal meeting where they could discuss the situation in Portugal without the constraints of the official meetings.

⁵⁷⁶ US request for advance notice of statements by HMG on Portugal, 15/07/1975, UKNA, FCO 20/2302, Anglo-American talks on Portugal and Portuguese territories.

⁵⁷⁷ Letter from Ole Jødahl to Harold Wilson, 22/07/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁵⁷⁸ Letter from P.J. Weston to Harold Wilson, “Meeting of Socialist Leaders on Portugal”, 22/07/2013, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁵⁷⁹ Telegram from Callaghan to the No. 10 Downing Street and to the Cabinet Office, 25/07/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

The Stockholm meeting was exclusively aimed at proposing a co-ordinated Socialist action on Portugal. However, the Portuguese situation was representative of a wider problem that all of the European Socialist and Social Democrat parties in the mid-1970s had to face. This was how to deal with the activities of the Communist parties in Europe, especially in Southern Europe. Although the Portuguese situation was the most important and urgent issue for the European Social Democrats in the short term, it was also a case that demonstrated that the competition between Communists and Socialists was an issue that was difficult to solve. A situation similar to the Portuguese one could be extended to Spain and Greece in the near future. It was already present, although in a different form, in Italy and France. This made this issue a major international problem for the European Social Democracy. Thus, British Labour proposed to add this wider topic of discussion to the agenda of the meeting. They wanted to propose to their European partners “the need for some Western coordination in response to communist party activity in Western Europe, and in particular to the strength and influence of the communist parties of Southern Europe.”⁵⁸⁰

Before going to Stockholm, the British Foreign Office produced a document for Callaghan and Wilson that analysed the relations between Socialists and Communists in Europe. The document shows that the British were concerned with the near future of the Iberian Peninsula, not only because of Portugal, but because the Portuguese situation could extend to Spain. It also shows that they considered that the best way to fight against the Communists in Western Europe was through the Socialist parties. Only a strong and moderate Socialist party could compete in the Left with the Communists constraining the latter to accept the democratic rules of the game.

According to this document, Portugal was the most important instance of this whole problem. But it was also considered “a lesson to us [the British] when considering the far greater prize of Spain.” The British considered that in the Portuguese case they had been especially fortunate, because before the Revolution they had already made “links with the Portuguese Socialist Party and close personal contacts with Mário Soares, [...] there is no doubt that without him there would have been no focal point of opposition.” According to the British, the Portuguese case had shown the conspiratorial nature of the Communists, and also that

⁵⁸⁰ All the quotations in the next three pages come from the Paper report from Tom McNally to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, “Communism and West European Social Democracy”, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

“when it comes to the crunch, the Soviet Union is far more decisive and less squeamish in its use of funds.” They considered the Soviet support to the PCP to be very extensive. In comparison with the Soviet Union, they thought that they themselves had “responded slowly and in some cases inadequately to initial Portuguese requests for assistance.” Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the Social Democratic party’s assistance to the PS helped them to win the elections in April. This means that assisting the PS was the right thing, and that “support for the Portuguese Socialists must obviously continue, both at a party level and at a governmental level by making cooperation with Portugal conditional on the establishment of democratic institutions.”

Regarding Spain, the British thought that they could face a similar situation to the Portuguese one, with a well-disciplined Communist party receiving funds from the Soviet Union. Thus, they were aware that they “should not be taken by surprise in Spain.” However, the British lacked a Spanish version of Soares on whom they could focus their support. For them, at that moment there was not “a single undisputed leader of the left [...] of the stature of Soares” in Spain. Therefore, they thought that they “should use the time before us for a little bit of «trial and error experimentation».” The strategy of finding someone on whom they could focus their support should be carried out through “the Party net or [...] the government net, where appropriate.” The British thought that the best strategy to follow now was to “try and get as many of the potential leaders abroad as possible so that we can assess their relative merits. [...] It will in essence be a matter of political judgment and political touch.” They were aware that “some action is already taking place within the Socialist International”, but they considered that “impetus at party leader level would obviously be useful.” Joining them in this strategy of looking for a Socialist candidate in Spain suitable to receive their support, “the parties more likely to be active are ourselves, the SPD, the Dutch Labour Party and the Swedes. The Italian and French parties also have good contacts in Spain.” However, the British already had a clue about who could be the best candidates in Spain, especially thanks to the work and cooperation carried out at a party level through the Spanish Democrats’ Defence Committee, as we saw in chapter two. In fact, the SDDC had invited a delegation from the PSOE to visit Britain in the next autumn, and they thought that “if we are to meet a potential Communist challenge, I believe the PSOE offers the best opportunity for growth into a democratic socialist alternative.”

This document shows very clearly that for Labour, the core of the problem that emerged through the Portuguese Revolution was the threat that the Communists posed to the Socialists/Social Democrats in the West, and to the role that they had played in post-war Europe. It also shows the British concern regarding the extension of the Portuguese situation to Spain, where this issue could potentially have more dramatic consequences. Considering that in the past the struggles among the forces of the Left, as well as between the Left and the Right in Spain, had resulted in the Civil War, they were worried about what could happen after Franco's death. Additionally, the document shows the blurred lines between governmental and party activities planned by the leadership. The Labour leaders used all the means at their disposal to implement a strategy that combined formal and informal levels of politics in order to achieve their objectives.

The overall situation of the Socialist/Communist competition in Europe, especially at its southern flank, led the British to propose a coordinated policy between European Social Democratic parties and governments. This would complement other kinds of policies and actions that could be carried out through more traditional means—for example via NATO and the EEC—in order to respond to the emergence of Communist or Communist-influenced governments in Western Europe. The British recognised that “the views on this issue of some non-Socialist leaders [such as the US President Henry Ford and the French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing]—could not be ignored.” However, “it would appear to me that the social democrats [...] will be in the front line in facing communist advances.”

When considering how this Social Democratic coordination should take place, and where it should be prepared and discussed, the British thought that a combination of formal and informal meetings would be appropriate. This would provide the opportunity to discuss these matters more “freely in an informal context”—such as at the following meeting in Stockholm—in combination with “the more formal (and public)” framework offered by the Party Leaders' Conference of the SI. Thus, in the short term, “the Stockholm meeting [...] would give an early opportunity to air this problem.” Despite the fact that the British Foreign Office thought that this crucial matter of how to deal with the Communists would be better tackled through the political parties, or rather the joint work of Social Democratic parties and governments, all of the decision-making capacity was held by the leaders of the party with governmental responsibilities. This means that the parties would only be partially informed about governmental strategy. They would be used as a complementary tool to implement that

strategy. As the British document put it: “once we had some clear idea of where we wanted to place our effort some coordination between parties would be possible and, without necessarily giving them all the details behind our strategy, I am sure that Party Executive would be willing to go along with individual initiatives.”⁵⁸¹

Beyond the analysis of the British, the relations between the Socialists and Communists was a problem that could potentially threaten the Social Democrat predominance in the Western European Left. As we saw in chapter one, the Communist parties in the South of Europe were going through transformations that made them electorally attractive. These parties, labelled as Eurocommunists (mainly the PCI, the PCE, and the PCF), had accepted a parliamentary way of achieving Socialism that was respectful of the institutions of the bourgeois democracy, which made them a potential electoral threat for the Socialist parties. This was linked to another threat, which was that if these parties reached or participated in the governments of Western Europe, they could put the bases on which the post-war world had been constructed at risk, which would be a menace to the international stability reached during the Cold War and the important role played by Social Democracy. In addition to posing a threat to international equilibrium and the predominance of the Social Democratic Left in Europe, however, the Western Communists were trying to offer a response to a new situation that was problematic for the whole European Left, especially for Social Democracy. This was the new situation provoked by the economic crisis that was unleashed in 1973. It had put an end to the post-war economic boom, which meant a crisis for the Social Democratic model that was based on the redistribution of the surplus of the Capitalist growth. This new situation, in which there was no economic growth to redistribute, unemployment was rising, and inflation affected more or less the whole of Western Europe, made it necessary to reassess the relations between Socialists and Communists.⁵⁸²

Taking into account these problems, the most relevant points of action for the next meetings of Labour were as follows:

⁵⁸¹ Paper report from Tom McNally to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, “Communism and West European Social Democracy”, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁵⁸² For a general view on the challenges of the Left and on the relations between Socialists and Communists in the 1970s, see: Albert S. Lindemann, *A History of European Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy. The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. The Western European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996); Jacques Droz, *Histoire générale du socialisme, Tome IV. De 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1978).

To discuss with Chancellor Schmidt the possibility of coordinating policy among a number of key social democratic leaders in Western Europe; [...] discuss the coordination of policy concerning Portugal and possible concerted action *vis a vis* the Soviet Union and its support for the Portuguese Communist Party; discuss present situation in Spain at Government and Party level to acquaint ourselves with the widest range of elements in the opposition. Consider in particular contacts with and future assistance to the PSOE.⁵⁸³

3.1.5. Social Democracy takes the lead

The British plans took shape during the summer. Between July and September, the British had several chances to implement their strategy. They met with Mário Soares several times, they had the chance to discuss the development of the situation in Portugal with Brezhnev during the CSCE meeting in Helsinki, and they attended the Socialist meeting in Stockholm. There it was decided to keep having these informal meetings, and a second meeting was held in September in London. During these three months, the international activities crucially influenced the evolution of the Portuguese Revolution and the role that the PS would play in it. At the end of September, the PS formed a new government with Western support, the EEC conceded conditional financial aid to Portugal (conditional to the development of a parliamentary democracy), and the Communist threat was temporarily dispelled. This obviously affected the PS and determined its political behaviour, as well as its ideological evolution, since the way to power that was supported by the West implied that the PS had to progressively dismantle the most radical social achievements of the Revolution (however, this is something that I will not examine in this thesis). Before that, the Socialists had to find a way of resisting the Communist offensive and the general turmoil, and they found invaluable support in the strategy of the European Social Democrats.

In mid-July, before the meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Helsinki, and before the Socialist meeting in Stockholm, the British and the American Ambassadors in Lisbon had several meetings with Mário Soares, at which the Socialist leader showed great concern about the situation in Portugal. These meetings took place immediately after the resignation of the Socialist ministers from the Fourth Provisional Government. Now Soares tried to press the British and the other Western partners, arguing that if until that moment the Western support for the PS had been aimed at ensuring democratic elections, now

⁵⁸³ Paper report from Tom McNally to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, "Communism and West European Social Democracy", UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM's visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM's meeting in London Sept. 1975.

that he had “got electoral legitimacy” and it had not been respected, he was willing to “fight against the Communist takeover.” Despite the obvious stress that Soares was working under (he asked for an explicit NATO intervention in Portugal, and asked to be supplied with arms so that the PS would be prepared if a probably confrontation with the Communists and their allies in the MFA took place), Soares outlined a strategy that was quite in tune with the Western thinking. He emphasised the Portuguese need for economic assistance, and he thought that the Europeans should offer a programme of economic aid “conditioned to the development of a democratic regime.” He also asked the British, the Americans, and the Germans to intercede on his behalf against Soviet intervention in Portuguese affairs, and to try “to use [their] influence with Costa Gomes”, the President of the Republic.⁵⁸⁴ Some of Soares’ petitions were considered inappropriate, such as his demands for arms supplies for the PS and NATO actions in Portugal, but the rest of his suggestions were taken into account.

Some authors have argued that Soares’ extremist position regarding a possible armed confrontation with the Communists cost him credibility among his European partners.⁵⁸⁵ Notwithstanding this idea, the documents of the British Foreign Office show that the British government and the Labour Party maintained and even intensified their collaboration with Soares and his party in the following months. Although after his resignation on 10th July, Soares did not have any official position in Portugal, the continuous British support shows that they trusted him, and that the PS was the only credible alternative to Communism in Portugal that they counted on at that time.

At around the same time, on the 12th and 13th July 1975, there was a SI Bureau meeting in Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, where the situation in Portugal was discussed. This discussion included “ways in which the member parties of the International, especially those which are in government, could help to ensure that Portugal remains on the path of democracy.” Although no specific recommendation was made, the meeting was thought useful “to know what suggestions were put forward in the discussion, in particular those put forward by the Portuguese representative.” The representative of the PS at the meeting was Victor Rego, Soares’ Chief of Cabinet, who explained to the Bureau of the SI that there was “a concerted plan by the Communist Party to seize power in Portugal.” At the exchange of views which

⁵⁸⁴ Meeting between Mário Soares and Nigel Trench, 12/07/1975, UKNA, FCO 9/2270, Internal political situation in Portugal, 1975. Document already used in Del Pero et al. *Democrazie*, 149. About Soares’ contacts with the German Social Democrats in the same days see: Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»”, 265.

⁵⁸⁵ See: Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 150. Also: Del Pero, ““Which Chile, Allende?””, 642-643.

followed Rego's presentation, it was suggested that member parties "should urge their governments to make approaches to the Portuguese Prime Minister and President"; they should point out that "if Portugal turned away from democracy this could be harmful to relations between Portugal and Western Europe." Other governments that might influence the Portuguese developments "such as the Soviet government"⁵⁸⁶ should also be approached.

In contrast to the suggestions that an angry Soares made on the same day to the British and American Ambassadors, Victor Rego's recommendation to the member parties of the SI was that "it would be better if any approaches to the Portuguese government were not made in an open or dramatic way." He also thought that "West European governments should [not] adopt too hard an attitude towards Portugal." His ideas coincided with Soares, however, when it came to the usefulness of offering economic aid to Portugal through "West European countries" or "particularly the EEC." He considered that Europe should link that aid to "the problem of democracy in Portugal" and to "the position of the Portuguese Socialist Party."⁵⁸⁷

At these two parallel meetings, the PS showed a clear idea of what they expected from Western support. They wanted to strengthen their internal actions—their resignation from the government—with external pressures and incentives that would be conditional to the establishment of democracy. Mário Soares was more anxious about the situation, and asked the British and the Americans for more forceful measures than Victor Rego did at the SI Bureau meeting. However, what is interesting here is that the PS counted on Western support at almost every level, and that they did not hesitate to ask their Social Democrat partners to exert international pressure on the Portuguese Government. This was very important just after the PS resignation, because international pressure would make the Socialist absence in the Government unsustainable.

The international contacts between Social Democrats that were focused on Portugal went on during the summer, and the British Prime Minister visited German Chancellor Schmidt in the last week of July. At this meeting, the British and the Germans tried to coordinate their policies regarding Portugal, in order to present a single voice in the following international meetings, especially at the CSCE meeting in Helsinki, and agreed to follow the above-mentioned lines stressed by the Portuguese Socialists. As was usual, governmental policies

⁵⁸⁶ Portugal-summary of discussion at Bureau meeting, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, July 12-13, 1975, IISH, SI Archives, 780 (Portugal 1975-1976).

⁵⁸⁷ Portugal-summary of discussion at Bureau meeting, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, July 12-13, 1975, IISH, SI Archives, 780 (Portugal 1975-1976).

and party policies were mixed. They discussed the actions to be taken at the governmental level, namely the prospects of a multilateral approach to EEC help for Portugal, and the need to coordinate their line of action—and that of the French and the American governments—when they would meet with Brezhnev in Helsinki. At the party level, the necessity for increasing “public statements of support [to the PS] and contacts with Portuguese leaders” was emphasised. It was recognised that:

On the party front, Dr. Soares’ party have no doubt moved beyond the point at which they still need advice on organisation, but their need for money is no doubt as great as ever. A related aspect which it will be worth exploring with Dr. Soares is the extent to which he would welcome parallel help direct to the other democratic parties in Portugal, whose existence helps to shield and support his own party.⁵⁸⁸

On 1st August, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe took place in Helsinki. This meeting was a high point in the process of détente in Europe. There the international equilibrium between the Eastern and the Western blocs was sanctioned. The post-war borders were recognised, the inviolability of national frontiers and respect for territorial integrity were accepted, as was the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of third countries. On the other hand, all of the participants accepted respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which according to the literature on the Cold War, opened a dynamic that is crucial for understanding the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁵⁸⁹ This had important consequences in the specific case of Portugal, because the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of third countries imposed limits on the international activities in the Iberian country. The violation of this point by the West would endanger the credibility of the Helsinki accords. Furthermore, it could put the process of détente at risk, and it would give the USSR an excuse to criticise the West and support the PCP in Portugal, and perhaps to justify their involvement in the affairs of other Eastern European countries.

In Helsinki, the European Social Democrat leaders had the opportunity to meet with the Portuguese President Costa Gomes. The British, French, and German leaders had coordinated their main points for discussion with the Portuguese President, and all of them exerted pressure on him, emphasising the necessity for establishing a plural democracy in Portugal with a government that would reflect the electoral results. Furthermore, they pressed him to

⁵⁸⁸ Meeting of Socialist Readers on Portugal, 23/07/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁵⁸⁹ Especially see: Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

make the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves resign, because he was seen as a destabilising element. The European leaders complemented their pressures with a conditional incentive. They showed their willingness to help Portugal economically—bilaterally, but also in the frame of NATO and most importantly the EEC—if democracy was implemented in the country.⁵⁹⁰

The British took the opportunity for talks on Portugal with the Soviet delegation. Harold Wilson met with Brezhnev, and they discussed the evolution of the Portuguese situation. The British Prime Minister made it clear that “many of us on the Western side regard the future attitude of the Soviet government to Portugal as being the first test of the spirit of Helsinki.” Therefore, he asked Brezhnev to use his influence over the Portuguese Communists to resolve the situation in Portugal, respecting the peoples’ will expressed in the last elections in April. Brezhnev said that Portugal was an independent country, and that the USSR was not involved in the situation. However, he understood the British concerns, and said that he would discuss the issue in the Politburo.⁵⁹¹

On the day after the Helsinki conference, the main European Socialist leaders went to Stockholm to discuss how to help the Portuguese Socialists to influence and resolve the political situation in Portugal in the best possible way. All of the Social Democratic leaders attended, including the leader of the PSF François Mitterrand, who changed his view on Portugal in the summer of 1975, progressively converging with the views of the rest of the European Social Democratic parties. However, this does not mean that all of the factions of the PSF shared Mitterrand views and activities regarding Portugal, as we will see in the next section of this chapter. Nevertheless, as I pointed out above, the main reason for the Stockholm meeting was to talk to Mário Soares, and give him advice on how to handle the situation in Portugal in order to ensure a democratic future for his country.

On this specific issue, the British thought that due to the quick development of the circumstances, it was “difficult to lay down any line for advice to Mário Soares.” They supposed that he would be “impatient of advice”—which says a lot about how heavily he relied on the British and Europeans—and that he probably would need “practical help in the form of pressure on the Soviet Union and money.” However, they decided that it would be important to encourage Soares to keep up the good work. Just before the meeting, the British

⁵⁹⁰ Rôla da Fonseca, “É Preciso Regar os Cravos!,” 274-276; Lemus, *Estados Unidos y la Transición Española*, 55-79.

⁵⁹¹ James Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (Glasgow: William Collins & Co, 1987), 362-363.

agreed on the advice that they would offer the Portuguese. He should try to “have closer ties with the PPD and the military”, and also he should “improve the PS machine so that he could delegate more, while having a firmer grip on the party throughout the country”. On this last point, the British emphasised that “lack of organisation is still a marked feature of the PS. [...] The PS will be more powerful if its organisation is improved.” In order to help the organisation of the PS, they decided to offer to “send one or two carefully chosen representatives [of the PS] to the UK, Germany or Scandinavia for a crash course in party organisation [...]”⁵⁹²

Already in Stockholm, the meeting started with Soares’ exposition of the current situation in Portugal.⁵⁹³ His description was very bleak and pessimistic, and according to it, Portugal was close to being completely controlled by the Communists. The Communists controlled the mass media, a section of the MFA—although there were divisions between pro-Communists and pro-Socialists and extreme-Leftists—and through the *Intersindical*, the workers as well. To this situation, it has to be added that the country was going through a very deep economic crisis. In this difficult framework, Soares was willing to engage in clandestine activities. He acknowledged that there was a risk of the PS leaning towards the Right, but he asked for understanding from his colleagues, and also asked them for support in defence of the Portuguese democratisation.

After the discussion that followed Soares’ intervention, Willy Brandt’s initiative to create the *Committee of Friendship and Solidarity for Democracy and Socialism in Portugal* was accepted. The Committee was formed of Willy Brandt, Olof Palme, Bruno Hreisky, James Callaghan, François Mitterrand, and Joop den Uyl; all of them, apart from Mitterrand, were members of parties that had governmental responsibilities in their respective countries. The aim of the new established Committee was along the lines of the propositions made by British Labour, namely to establish a European Socialist coordinated action in order to avoid the Communist takeover of Portugal. The immediate stated objectives of the Committee were supporting the establishment of a democratic regime in Portugal with a government based on

⁵⁹² Letter from Nigel Trench to Sir J. Hunt (Cabinet Office), “Stockholm meeting of Socialist leaders”, 26/07/2013, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁵⁹³ The following paragraphs are based on documents that have recently been published in: Castaño, “A practical test in the détente”, 15-18. This meeting has also been researched by Ana Mónica Rôla da Fonseca, who bases her work on the documents of the Archive of the German Social Democracy, *Archiv der sozial Demokratie*. See: Rôla da Fonseca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»”, 276-278. This meeting has also been researched in terms of American diplomatic historical sources, see: Gomes and Moreira de Sá, *Carlucci vs Kissinger*, 174-176.

the electoral results of April 1975, re-establishing the freedom of press, establishing a free and democratic trade union, and fighting against the Portuguese international isolation.

It was also agreed that the Social Democrats should take care of the European public opinion, and publicly explain their activities as far as they could to create a favourable atmosphere in support of democracy in Portugal. This would make public opinion in Western Europe and Portugal understand the motives of the Social Democrats for supporting the democratic forces in Portugal. At the same time, this constructed reality through the media could prevent accusations of interference in Portuguese internal affairs, which after the CSCE meeting was crucial. In this campaign, it would be very important to assist the PS, not only materially, but also from a political and moral perspective. Mário Soares, in turn, should also change his belligerent attitude, and start to make public statements about his radical opposition to any kind of violent solution for the Portuguese crisis. This would increase his credibility and probably also win him the support of the non-orthodox Communist parties in Europe such as the PCI, the PCE, and perhaps the Communists parties of Romania and Yugoslavia, which could undermine the PCP's credibility.

The financial support for the PS, however, remained crucial. After the meeting, a bank account in the Netherlands was established, through which all of the participants in the meeting and the parties who were members of the SI could make transfers of money to the PS. The account would be in the name of the international secretary of the PdvA Mr Harry van den Bergh, and it was agreed that "this matter of financial aid is treated with the greatest confidentiality and that no publicity whatsoever is given to the fact that [donations are made] to the Portuguese Socialist Party." Again, this precaution was taken to avoid the accusation of interference in Portuguese affairs, but it was also probably a response to the risk that these transfers could be intercepted or blocked. "Above all it is most important to preserve confidentiality as to the means whereby the money is being transferred to the Portuguese Party."⁵⁹⁴

This international Socialist campaign in support of the PS and democracy in Portugal had a very deep impact on the PS, on the Portuguese Revolution, and on the international climate regarding Portugal. If it is taken into account that the six leaders of the major Socialist/Social Democratic parties in Europe were involved, and that five of them were in power in their

⁵⁹⁴ Confidential letter from Rodney Balcom to Mr Ejner Hovgaard-Christiansen, 15/08/1975, IISH, SI Archives, 780 (Portugal 1975-1976).

countries, it demonstrates that the development of the Portuguese Revolution was a matter of primary international concern. This fact influenced all the actors that participated in Portugal, and obviously, since it was the vehicle through which Social Democratic support was channelled, it influenced the PS, on which I will focus now.

After this meeting, the official discourse of the PS again changed in subtle ways, becoming more moderate than before. The party gradually abandoned some concepts and ideas that they had previously defended, and that were now considered insignificant. Despite the non-linear pace of the change in the PS discourse, the meeting with the European Social Democrat partners in Stockholm was a turning point in this transformation. After the Stockholm meeting, on 6th August the official newspaper of the PS *Portugal Socialista* published an analysis of the Portuguese political situation by Salgado Zenha, and an interview with Mário Soares about the Stockholm meeting. Both articles are good examples of this change in discourse.

The analysis signed by the ex-Minister of Justice Salgado Zenha, dealt with the current situation in Portugal. He reflected on the ideology of the PS and its role in the Revolution; he kept defending the Revolution, but without clarifying what this actually meant. He claimed that “for the Revolution to triumph it is necessary the popular support” which “had already been expressed through free elections.” Therefore, he claimed respect for the democratically elected Constituent Assembly, in which the PS would have close to the majority of the seats. Zenha criticised the government, saying that they needed an economic and social programme to implement, rather than the “anarcho-populist [...] extremely contradictory and confusing” measures that they were taking, “which favoured the reactionary forces.” Then he added that “it is not interesting to discuss abstract ideological concepts such as ‘social-democracy,’ ‘true socialism,’ ‘popular socialism,’ etc.”; what now was important was “to propose concrete solutions” for the “concrete problems of the Portuguese.” These problems were massive unemployment, which had increased drastically with the return of the Portuguese soldiers from Angola (which was in the transition period towards independence) and the economic stagnation. Therefore, in response to this situation, Zenha announced that the PS would present a programme of economic and social action. As soon as they did this, the PS would be

willing to co-operate with all of the democratic and progressive forces in all of the activities aimed at “building a socialist democracy in Portugal.”⁵⁹⁵

In his analysis, Zenha constructed a discourse in which the main danger in Portugal were the reactionary forces. This could be doubly useful. On the one hand, it allowed the PS to blame the Communists and the extreme Left elements of the MFA for fostering the reaction with their “anarcho-populist” and “confusing” measures. On the other hand, it put the PS in a situation in which it was the only alternative to Leftist or Rightist authoritarianism. Furthermore, by presenting the PS as the solution, to both the reaction and Communism, he did not leave space for any criticism of the PS for being a reactionary anti-Communist force. The task of avoiding these threats made the “abstract ideological concepts social-democracy, true socialism, popular socialism etc.” lose importance. Now, what was important was to solve concrete problems, which were quite serious. Therefore, the labels that had formerly worried the PS, especially the Social Democrat label, were considered less important and worthless to discussion.

In the same number of *Portugal Socialista*, Mário Soares was interviewed about the summit of European Social Democrat leaders in Stockholm. It is possible to observe in his answers that he started to put into practice the European advice, changing his previous belligerent attitude against the Communists into a calmer rhetoric. He constructed the same kind of discourse as Salgado Zenha, which means that he stopped criticising the PCP directly, instead presenting the reactionary forces as the main threat to the PS and the Revolution. However, the criticism of the PCP was implicit, because according to Soares, the reactionary threat was being stimulated by the policies of the Communists and their allies. For him, Portugal was between two dangers, “the Communist-military dictatorship” and “the reunification of the reactionary forces.” In this situation, “the historic mission of the PS [...] was to ensure in Portugal the construction of a real Socialist democracy strengthening its links with Europe.” In this task, the European partners assured him of “total solidarity.”

Soares was asked about the economic aid that Europe was considering giving to Portugal. He said that it would be “essential”, but he also said something that did not exactly match reality. He said: “the thesis I defended on behalf of the PS [...] was that this aid should be given without any kind of political condition, since Portugal very much valued its national

⁵⁹⁵ Salgado Zenha, “Africanismo: doença infantil do socialismo português,” *Portugal Socialista*, 55 (06/08/1975): 1-3.

independence, of which the PS has always been the interpreter.” As we have seen above, this was not completely true, since Soares and Victor Rego had emphasised to their European Social Democrat partners that the economic aid should be linked to the development of democracy in Portugal.

He also said that the Europeans had misunderstood the Portuguese Revolution due to the radical statements of some politicians and the army. Thus, in Stockholm he had the chance to explain the Revolution within its context, giving the Europeans an interpretation that was less alarming. He considered that he had contributed to “re-establishing their confidence on the ongoing process” because “the Portuguese people had shown their civic and political maturity”; therefore, he had told the Europeans that they should trust “the capacity of the people to choose their own destiny.” These statements show that Soares now wanted to show a less alarmist attitude, because otherwise the already-existing tensions would only have increased. In addition, he praised the political maturity of the Portuguese, which was an indirect attack on the vanguardist strategy of the PCP. At the same time, it legitimated his own party, which had won the elections in April.

Finally, Soares was asked about the prospects for a common way to Socialism in Europe. He answered that his thesis was that every country had its own way to Socialism; he remarked that one of the principles of the PS was “not to accept any foreign interference” in Portuguese affairs. However, “it did not mean that Portugal did not have to take into consideration foreign experiences”, although he did not specify which. What emerged from his answer is that despite “the ideological differences” of the European Socialists and Social Democrats, “there is a common concern about how to make compatible socialism, freedom and political democracy.”⁵⁹⁶

This interview provides a sample that shows how the PS was changing its discourse in the direction advised by the European Social Democrats. Slagado Zenha and Soares now emphasised the role of the PS as guarantor of the Revolution against Leftist or Rightist authoritarianisms, without directly criticising the PCP. They also de-emphasised the importance of ideology, giving priority to the solution of the concrete problems of Portugal over over-arching ideas on the Revolution. To carry out this task, they said that the PS counted on support from Europe—support which did not imply interference in the internal

⁵⁹⁶ The four previous paragraphs are based on: “Confêrencia socialista em Estocolmo,” *Portugal Socialista*, 55 (06/08/1975): 3.

affairs of Portugal. Finally, when Soares was asked about the prospects of a European way to Socialism, he did not make distinctions between Social Democrats and the rest of the Socialists, as he had done earlier. He only said that they all converged in their search of Socialism, freedom, and political democracy. These interviews immediately after the Social Democrat meeting in Stockholm show how the European Social Democrats influenced the discourse, the political path, and the ideas of the PS in the Revolution. However, PS' ideological turn had not yet been completed. In fact, from September onwards, when the political situation had become more favourable to the Socialists, the party would temporarily return to the basic ideas they shared with the French Socialists, in which the collaboration of the Socialists and the Communists in the government was not ruled out. This was due to the new challenge they would have to face, which was how to neutralise and integrate the Communists into the new Portuguese democracy. It also responded to the Socialist attempt to make the PCP accountable for the austerity measures that the future government would have to apply to the damaged Portuguese economy.⁵⁹⁷

Some days after the Socialist meeting in Stockholm, the Danish Prime Minister Anker Jørgensen, visited Portugal, where he met Mário Soares and the President Costa Gomes. The PS publicly exploited this visit, emphasising that Jørgensen had underlined that his visit was not official, but the result of “an invitation of the PS' general secretary, Mário Soares.” The Danish used the meeting to support the PS, praising its “unswerving fight in favour of democracy and freedom.” He also reminded the Portuguese of the support that his government had always given to the movements of liberation in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau, as well as to the Socialists during Salazar's dictatorship.⁵⁹⁸ This was a way of recalling to the Portuguese public opinion the long commitment of the European Social Democracy to democratic values, freedom, and social justice. The combination of these statements with the fact that the PS newspaper *Portugal Socialista* highlighted them suggests that Jørgensen and the PS wanted to emphasise the progressive character of the European Social Democratic family, and the fact that the PS belonged to it.

Beyond what the PS newspaper said about this meeting, the Danish Prime Minister reported his thoughts on the situation in Portugal to British Labour. He said, “the economic crisis of the country made necessary the creation of a stable political leadership within a short time, otherwise the development could go in the direction of chaos.” By this he meant towards

⁵⁹⁷ Del Pero, “Which Chile, Allende?,” 645.

⁵⁹⁸ “Visita do 1º Ministro da Dinamarca,” *Portugal Socialista*, 56 (13/08/1975).

economic disaster, and consequently towards a more resolute Communist takeover or towards a Right-wing coup. “The role of the PS was to stop this polarisation and to secure the creation of a national government of conciliation which could solve the economic problems.”⁵⁹⁹

The Socialist leaders kept in touch during the month of August, and they planned to hold the first meeting of the *Committee of Friendship and Solidarity for Democracy and Socialism* at the beginning of September in London. The aim of this new meeting was to work further in the direction indicated at the meeting in Stockholm. Since the Committee had been established mainly “in support of the *Partido Socialista* (PS) but also in support of the democratic Socialist forces within the Armed Forces Movement (MFA),” the working plan was directed towards strengthening the democratic chances in Portugal through the PS, but also through support for the moderate faction of the MFA. According to this plan, this was a crucial moment for acting because “the great amount of good-will which the rapid decolonisation and the elimination of the fascist regime [had] created” should be used to stop the Communists while there was still time. The guideline established for the Committee was to work for “democracy (democratic rights and freedoms including free general elections); free flow of information and the right to form free trade unions.” In more concrete terms, “the committee should further work actively to prevent an isolation of Portugal from the rest of Europe. [...] The links to Portugal are mainly economic assistance and various contacts with the Portuguese leaders.” The practical activities to be discussed at the meeting in London were to make “visits to Portugal by the committee or representatives of the committee for contacts with the government, the PS, perhaps other politicians and MFA representatives.” This would be complemented with “invitations to MFA representatives and politicians to visit other countries in Western Europe.” Furthermore, it was proposed to “stimulate information campaigns for Portugal and fund raising campaign for the PS in individual countries. [...] these more concrete activities [...] are to be organised by the various national party organizations.” Finally, it was proposed “to act in governments, parliaments and public opinion for technical and economic aid to Portugal in accordance with the aims of the committee”, and very importantly, to “study the non-interference aspect.” The activities of the committee could be object of criticism, especially coming from the East. Thus, in order to

⁵⁹⁹ Report of Anker Jørgensen’s visit to Portugal on 11th and 13th August 1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, the PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

avoid this criticism, they needed “to have a good working relationship with the ruling military apart from the self-evident solidarity and close cooperation with the Socialist Party.”⁶⁰⁰

The meeting took place on 5th September in London, as planned. All of the Socialist leaders attended, apart from Bruno Kreisky. The British side included Wilson, Callaghan, Ken Stowe (the private secretary of the Prime Minister), and Ron Hayward (the General Secretary of the Labour Party), which demonstrates the greater involvement of the party this time. This was also the case with other parties. In fact, the other Socialist leaders—or at least Mitterrand, Brandt, and Palme—went to the meeting without the knowledge of their respective embassies, but with the knowledge of their party’s leaderships.⁶⁰¹ This shows not only the informal character of the meeting, but also the fact that, in this specific context, the Socialists found in the party channel fewer constraints on cooperating and interfering in Portugal via the PS than when using more traditional channels for foreign policy.

The European leaders discussed the situation in Portugal and agreed that after the Stockholm meeting in August, “the focus of the struggle in Portugal has moved, temporarily at least, from the relationship between the political parties on the one hand, and the Armed Forces Movement (AFM) and Government on the other, to the ranks of the AFM itself.” Thus, the “Socialist Party opposition to Gonçalves has been overshadowed by opposition from elsewhere.” Notwithstanding this fact, “the role of the Socialist Party has not changed.” Since the new role of the MFA section led by Antunes offered the best perspectives on the non-Communist parties for defeating the PCP, they thought that “Dr Soares needs to cooperate with the ‘moderates’ and offer them such support as is beneficial to both groups.” The Social Democrat leaders considered the idea that “it may well be best for Soares to leave the running to Antunes and his group at the moment.” However, if the situation led to an armed confrontation between the Antunes group and the Communists and their allies, “Dr Soares must be ready to throw the full weight of his popular support behind the ‘moderates’.” At the same time, the European leaders thought that Soares had to work in two directions at once and “ensure that his relations with the PPD remain on a good footing and that efforts continue at grassroots level to counter Moscow-oriented Communist influence.”

⁶⁰⁰ Working paper concerning the Portugal Committee, 27/08/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

⁶⁰¹ Confidential telegram for the Private Secretary, “Portugal”, 28/08/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

They also considered other kind of risks that the PS was facing because of its position as the bulwark against the Communists:

Although the Socialist Party is a genuinely left-wing party, there is no doubt that recent events in Portugal have led to a number of conservatives supporting it, as the main alternative to the Communists. Dr Soares has to recognise this and the dangers inherent in his attraction for what the Communists call «fascists and reactionaries». There is no evidence that such influences are having a disruptive effect within the Socialist Party but this will need to be watched. Similarly Soares has to avoid identifying himself with the anti-Communist demonstrations in [Portugal], which, while welcome as spontaneous manifestations of anti-Communism, may provide the excuse for a Communist backlash. He has a difficult hand to play.

After the analysis of the situation and the prospects of the PS, the debate moved on to what the Western governments could do in Portugal to help the Socialists and the democratic forces in general. They thought that if the moderates eventually won, they should organise demonstrations of support, and most importantly, make an “EEC demonstration of support,” which implied economic assistance to Portugal. It had recently been reported that Brandt had criticised the EEC for losing time over economic help for Portugal and claiming that there ought to be no further delay. However, the British thought that “Brandt’s remarks were largely tactical” because of domestic political reasons, and “because he is known to be anxious that the West should not be seen to be threatening or bribing the Portuguese.” At that time, it was quite obvious to everyone that the strategy of offering Portugal financial and economic help from the EEC was an incentive that was conditional on the democratisation of the country.

Despite the statement of the European Council on 17th July that the EEC was willing to discuss closer economic and financial cooperation with a pluralistic democratic Portugal, the British proposed that if a “moderate government emerged there it should be enough to start the EEC-Portuguese dialogue.” In the short term, they should encourage the moderates with such aid. At the same time, they considered it necessary to:

Make it abundantly clear to the Portuguese that while we have no wish to interfere in Portugal’s internal affairs this and any additional aid (which will no doubt be required), will need to be acceptable to our electorates. While neither they nor we expect Portugal necessarily to adopt an existing Western European form of democracy, there are certain criteria by which the electorates of Western Europe will judge whether a genuine democracy has been achieved in Portugal.”

This was an excellent way to keep pressing the Portuguese while avoiding the direct responsibility of being interfering in their internal affairs. These criteria consisted of “the

exercise of free and real political choice through properly conducted secret ballots. The political parties must also be seen to have a real role in Government. These are the only circumstances in which aid to Portugal will be acceptable to our electorates.” However, they also recognised that “Western Europe cannot afford to wait for a Parliamentary democracy to emerge in Portugal before we offer help”. And that “the most effective economic help Governments could give to a moderate government would be to help them expand their trade.”

Regarding the Party support for the PS, they thought that the only way of counterbalancing the Soviet and Eastern support of the PCP and the *Intersindical* was “with party and union financial help to the Socialist Party and to the non-Communist unions, although this will need to be done discreetly.” They thought that they could do little more for the PS apart from “encouraging and advising Dr Soares and making public statements of support which will give him and his supporters heart.” A new aspect within the strategy of the European Socialists was the exercising of party support for the moderates in the MFA, who at this moment were more crucial in the political development of Portugal than the Socialists, since the political struggle had moved from the party level to the MFA level. In addition, the military were more malleable. Thus, they considered “whether we can help to guide the thinking of uncommitted members of the AFM [...] by invitations to visit Western European countries designed to show them the benefits of our system.”⁶⁰²

A little while before this meeting, at the end of August, the PS was concretising its proposals for getting out of the political impasse and the economic crisis. They created an economic programme of transition, which was meant to be a programme of transition to Socialism, but in fact was an attempt to solve the concrete economic problems of Portugal. The programme was in tune with the document *Vencer a crise. Salvar a revolução* published some weeks earlier, which I analysed above. For the PS, the causes of the economic crisis were a combination of factors such as the legacy of economic structures from the Salazar regime, the lack of an economic and political project in the Provisional Government, and especially the fact that the Government did not reflect the popular will, which obstructed its capacity for action. Thus, despite the fact that the Capitalist centres of power had been broken, the Government was not able to invigorate the economy during its transition to Socialism. This

⁶⁰² Brief for Prime Minister’s meeting on Portugal, 05/09/1975, UKNA, PREM 16/1053, The PM’s visit to Stockholm for a meeting of Socialist leaders to discuss Portugal Policy. PM’s meeting in London Sept. 1975.

was a crucial issue, and in order to strengthen the economy, it was necessary to define the role and objectives of the public and private sectors. The PS did not want “to obstruct the process of socialisation”; instead it wanted to “orientate it in order to increase its guarantee of success diminishing its political risks and its social costs.” But again, the PS prioritised the clarification of the political situation over the economic crisis. The Socialists stated that “more important than this [economic] proposal is the creation of political conditions that make possible its execution”, and these conditions could only be created through a Government of National Salvation that would stabilise the political power in accordance with the popular will.

In order to face these problems, the PS proposed their economic programme of transition, which consisted of a planned economy that would have six fundamental axes. These were the attainment of permanent full employment; the satisfaction of the basic needs of the people; the international independence of the country; the progressive transformation of the form of production through the enlargement of the socialised productive sectors; the development of ways for the workers to control the production in their working places; and the economic decentralisation fomenting the development of all Portuguese regions in equilibrium.

The economic programme proposed by the PS was, therefore, committed to economic planning and a mixed economy in which the private sector could coexist with a strong nationalised sector. In order to understand this Left-leaning programme, it is necessary to take into account the national political context. The PS had been proposing the creation of a Government of National Salvation since the beginning of August, which as we have seen above, was open to all the political forces but reflecting the results of the April elections. In order to make this proposition acceptable and convincing to every political and military group, especially the Communists, it was necessary to emphasise the commitment of the party to the construction of Socialism.

In the meantime, the moderate group of officers led by Major Melo Antunes, assisted by an outbreak of popular demonstrations against the Communists in the north of the country and by pressure from the Socialist Party, succeeded in removing General Gonçalves from the post of Prime Minister. The publication of the above-mentioned *Documento dos nove* ratified the rupture within the MFA. The document proposed a democratic form of Socialism, in which there would be a separation between the political and the military powers, a model that rejected the Soviet way of Socialism as well as the Social Democratic reformism and

accommodating of capitalism. In a theoretical sense, the group of the nine proposed the same form of Socialism as the PS had been proposing, at least rhetorically, since its foundation in 1973.

With the most Leftist faction of the MFA in disarray, the *grupo dos nove* expelled the members loyal to Vasco Gonçalves from the Council of the Revolution, and eliminated the Assembly of the MFA. Thus, on 19th September 1975, the sixth new Government was formed, in which the Prime Minister was Pinheiro de Azevedo. The new government was formed in correspondence with the electoral results of April. Thus, the PS occupied the majority of the Ministries with five, the PPD had two, and the PCP only one. Non-Communist military officers and technocrats occupied the rest of the ministries, and Melo Antunes was Foreign Minister.

The formation of the sixth provisional government was the beginning of the end of the Revolution. We will see in the next section of this chapter how the PS reacted in this period. However, to finish this section, I will summarise very briefly the main events that followed the creation of the sixth provisional government in which the international actors played a key role.

Shortly after the creation of the new government the Western powers coordinated their responses to the Portuguese events and the US and the EEC⁶⁰³ conceded economic aid to Portugal. They made it very clear that with this gesture they were giving a sign of support to the new government, and that economic aid was conditioned to the development of a Liberal democracy in Portugal. They also supported publically a Portuguese request to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for balance of payments aid.⁶⁰⁴

Portugal was entering thus in a dynamic of international economic dependence that would anchor the country to the West. As the Western support was linked to the promotion of the PS as the main bulwark against Communism, this dynamic ultimately would be a crucial international factor in the process of ideological moderation of the PS in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This tendency towards moderation can already be appreciated in the electoral

⁶⁰³ The European aid was provided by the European Investment Bank, which gave 150 million ecus to Portugal. 1 ecu = 1,20 US dollars.

⁶⁰⁴ To see more in detail these events: Castaño, “‘A practical test in the détente’,” 22-25; Del Pero, “‘Which Chile, Allende?’,” 645-646; Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos*, 135-144.

meeting that the PS organized in Oporto in March 1976, named *Europa Connosco* (Europe [is] with us).⁶⁰⁵

3.2. The PSF and the PS in the Portuguese Revolution

As we have seen above, the struggle between the PS and the PCP in the Revolution reached its peak in the year 1975. In this struggle, the PS enjoyed the support of the European Social Democrats, and made use of it in order to impose its own idea of revolution in Portugal. However, at the rhetorical and discursive level, the PS did not show an ideological stance that particularly coincided with European Social Democracy. During most of 1975, the PS kept using a rhetoric that was along the lines of French Socialism.

This section shows that although the leaderships of the PS and the PSF knew that the PS rejected the union of the Left from March 1975 onwards, in public both parties kept arguing in favour of it. For the PS, the claim of the union of the Left was always understood as a form of competition, but if at the beginning of the Revolution it was advocated as a guarantee against the reactionary forces, later it allowed the Socialists to publicly criticise and invalidate the vanguard strategy of the PCP, arguing that the Communist rejection of the union of the Left in Socialist terms implied their rejection of democracy. Moreover, the PS kept using their relations with the PSF as a way of getting Leftist legitimacy, and as a way of discrediting the PCP. Towards the end of the Revolution, the PS made use of the union of the Left to ensure the inclusion of the PCP in the Sixth Provisional Government, which would entail the Communist acceptance of democracy in Portugal.

For the PSF, in turn, the situation in Portugal posed some crucial questions regarding their own strategy of uniting the Left in France. The behaviour of the PCP, and the support given to this party by the PCF, made the French Socialists doubt the suitability of uniting the Left in Portugal. This fact split the party in two factions: Mitterand's faction, which was doubtful about the union of the Left, and the CERES faction, which was in favour of it.

In Portugal, the year 1975 started with social and political unrest, as we have seen above. Since October 1974, the PCP had been strengthening its position within the state apparatus and the MFA, which was a concern for the PS. Between October and December, both the Communists and the Socialists had held their Congresses, and in the case of the PS, one of the

⁶⁰⁵ Granadino, "De la Europa Social a la CEE."

consequences was the splitting of the more Leftist faction of the party, called the FSP, using the argument that the PS was ambiguous in its revolutionary intentions. The PCP used this fact to criticise the Socialists and question their attachment to Socialism.

Alvaro Cunhal questioned the ideological position of the PS on several occasions between the end of 1974 and the beginning of 1975. He criticised the PS for being too Right-leaning and for being Social Democrat. This criticism was based on the fact that Cunhal had known the Socialist leaders for many years, and he did not trust their sudden rhetorical radicalisation. In his own words, “[in Portugal] there is a curious situation, [...] the fascists called themselves social democrats—that is the case of the PPD—and the social democrats call themselves socialists.”⁶⁰⁶ But the arguments that Cunhal used most often in these months were the split of the Leftist faction of the PS after its December Congress, and the close relations between the PS and the SI. For instance, Cunhal criticised the PS for being a moderate reformist party in an interview on 28th December 1974, and he supported his assertion with the fact that the PS belonged to the SI, where there were parties such as “the British Labour and the German Social Democrats.”⁶⁰⁷ The use of these two parties to criticise the PS gives an idea of the reputation that Social Democracy had among the Portuguese Left, and also how difficult it was for the PS to identify itself with these parties.

Despite these criticisms, the PS tried not to leave much room for criticism from the Left, and approved its own way towards Socialism at its Congress in December. As it was mentioned in chapter one, this way was built as an opposition to both Social Democracy and authoritarian Socialism, and its main characteristic was “the synthesis of economic democracy and political democracy, of freedom and Socialism.” The final aim of the PS was still to build a Socialist classless society. It is also true, as we have seen above, that most immediate aim of the PS at the beginning of 1975 was to ensure the celebration of the elections, and “in the current phase, the instauration of a pluralist democracy.” The achievement of this short-term objective became especially important, as the Socialists had doubts about the attachment to pluralist democracy of the PCP and of the MFA, which were increasingly influenced by the Communists. Moreover, the PS expected a positive electoral result, and this could put the party in a preminent position to lead the revolutionary process.

⁶⁰⁶ Alvaro Cunhal, “Nous ne voulons pas faire payer au peuple le prix d’un accord avec le PS,” *L’unité*, 175 (17 to 23 of October 1975): 16-17.

⁶⁰⁷ Pedro Edmundo, “Alvaro Cunhal e o Socialismo,” *Portugal Socialista*, 22 (9/01/1975): 6.

At the beginning of 1975, the PS was also working on a Socialist economic programme for the Revolution. This programme would be based on the combination of a planned economy, which implied the existence of a strong public sector, with a grassroots democracy exerted in the workplaces. The party neglected their supposed attachment to Social Democracy, arguing that the Social Democratic model existing in the main countries of Western Europe was not applicable to Portugal. The main reason for this was the low degree of development in the country, which in the current international context of crisis would not allow sharing part of the additional value of the companies with the workers. Moreover, the Social Democratic parties in Portugal included the owners of means of production who wanted to save their privileges, and the Portuguese workers, aware of this, were not interested in these parties.

The PS wanted to promote the quick economic development of Portugal, and wanted to do so without any kind of neo capitalist solution, as it would place all of the weight of the necessary reforms on the shoulders of the working class, and it would imply selling the country to big multinational corporations. The solution to the socioeconomic problems of Portugal, according to the PS, lay in the construction of Socialism. The Socialists proposed the establishment of an emergency programme that would combat the crisis without hurting the working class. Austerity measures would be necessary, but they would be balanced by an anti-monopolist strategy. The PS therefore proposed the national planning of the economy, emphasising the productive investments that would benefit society. For this to happen, an agrarian reform, as well as public control of the banking sector and main strategic sectors, were essential. This would not imply the disappearance of the private sector; it would be allowed to exist, although under the new rules of the game.

The Socialists proposed to combine these measures with the construction of grassroots democracy. The workers, organised in independent and representative trade unions structured by branches of economic activity, would lead the construction of this new kind of democracy. The Socialists envisaged that the independence of the trade unions from the political parties would lead freely and naturally towards the union of the working class. This implies that the PS rejected the union of the working class within a trade union that was imposed by law, as the PCP advocated.⁶⁰⁸

The PS thought that the union of all the progressive forces was essential for defending and implementing these ideas in Portugal at the beginning of 1975.. In their public statements, the

⁶⁰⁸ Editorial, "Economia portuguesa. Socialismo e social-democracia," *Portugal Socialista*, 16 (28/11/1974): 3.

PS emphasised their theoretical commitment to the union of the Left, not only until the celebration of the elections, but also beyond. However, as I also stated above, the disagreements about the kind of trade union structure to be established in Portugal that occurred in the first weeks of January 1975 meant the beginning of a clear public confrontation between the PCP and the PS on the meaning of the Revolution and on the way it should follow.

The fact that the PS kept arguing publicly in favour of the union of the Left is not contradictory with the anti-Communist stance of the Socialists described and analysed in the previous section of this chapter. Instead, my argument is that this was a complementary way of fighting for domination of the Revolution and the Portuguese Left. Together with the international, diplomatic manoeuvring that we have seen above, the PS had to fight within Portugal against the Communist predominance, and they had to do so in a subtle way. Thus, the PS kept clamouring for the union with the PCP, but changing the terms on which the union of the Left was desirable, which allowed the PS to criticise and put pressure on the PCP.

For this tactic to be useful, the Socialists had to give a new meaning to the concept of ‘union of the Left’ in Portugal. In 1973, when the PS officially adopted this idea, they wanted a programmatic union with the PCP, considering that this was the best way for the opposition to fight unitedly against the dictatorship. Later, after 25th April 1974, the union of the progressive forces had the purpose of implementing the programme of the MFA, and defending the Revolution and its achievements from the reaction. From the beginning of 1975 until the summer, the union of the Left advocated by the PS would have another purpose or meaning. It was still considered essential for the Revolution to triumph against the reaction, but on condition that the PCP accepted some essential terms, namely respecting democracy, public freedoms, and political pluralism. Therefore, the union of the Left was used by the PS as a way to put pressure on the PCP to accept these conditions, and providing grounds for criticism if the PCP did not accept these terms. Moreover, in 1975, this concept was meant to ensure the elections, as it was a reminder that all of the parties in the provisional government were committed to the basic programme of the MFA.

By tactically using this concept, the PS were responding to the fact that they were losing ground in the government and in the state apparatus in favour of the PCP. In fact, this was not the only way in which the Socialists tried to discredit and eventually dominate the PCP. The

PS leaders used all the means at their disposal to refute the criticism coming from the PCP, and also to attack them in turn. For example, Mário Soares praised the Spanish Communist leader Santiago Carrillo in public, who was at that moment involved in the ideological redefinition of the PCE in a Eurocommunist sense. Soares did the same with the Italian Communist Party; in January he visited Romania and Yugoslavia, which were two Communist countries that followed an independent line from Moscow,⁶⁰⁹ and the PS kept showing its affinity with the PSF, which was a partner of the Communists in France. By showing their close relations with other Communist parties, the Socialists wanted to show that in principle, they were willing to make a pact with the PCP, which put the responsibility for the failure of the union of the Left on the side of the Portuguese Communists for being Stalinist, anti-democratic, totalitarian, and so on. These characteristics that the PS attributed to the PCP allowed the Socialists to equate the Communists with the former dictatorship, the *Estado Novo*.

The PS started to implement this strategy from January until the summer. They considered that in the Portuguese—original—way to Socialism, “it was legitimate, and even precious [...] to count on the capacity and experience of the comrade Cunhal. However, for this to happen, a change of mood is indispensable”, which meant not only better relations and the end of criticism, but also that Cunhal should reject Eastern-style Socialism for Portugal, and accept pluralism, democracy, and freedom.

Shortly afterwards on January 16th, at the demonstration against the imposition of the above-mentioned *unicidade sindical* by the Communists, the leaders of the PS, in practice António Lopes Cardoso, transformed the meaning of the union of the Left, a claim that had been present in the public discourse of the Socialists even before the beginning of the Revolution. This allowed the PS to appear consistent, while at the same time attacking the PCP. Lopes Cardoso stated that “Coherent with itself [...] the Socialist Party defends today the union of the working class as it defended it yesterday and it will keep defending [...]. For this reason, we say to the progressive forces of our country: the union of the Left is indispensable for consolidating democracy and for moving towards Socialism, but that union will be in freedom or will not be.”

The flexibility of this concept for the Socialists is evident as they redefined what the union of the Left meant depending on the context. Now that the constitution of a trade union model

⁶⁰⁹ For Soares’ trips to Romania and Yugoslavia, see: *Portugal Socialista*, 22 (9/01/1975).

was at stake, the Socialists thought that the union of the Left had to be built up from the base, from the ground up, and not top-down by the leaders of the parties. Previously, as we have seen, all Socialist attempts and claims to achieve the union of the Left in Portugal had been initiatives by the leaders of the party. However, in this new context, the Socialists considered that the “the union of the working class only will be that weapon [against Capitalism and for the construction of Socialism] [...] when constituted from the base to the top.” Against this reinterpretation of the union of the Left, the PCP’s attempts to control the *Intersindical* were “to confuse the union of the working class by framing it in a unique trade union imposed by the State.” This, according to Lopes Cardoso, would constitute the base “to build a State capitalism in which the workers are reduced to mere pieces of a machine.”⁶¹⁰

Mário Soares and Salgado Zenha also spoke at this meeting. Zenha was very critical of the PCP. In his speech, he complained about the inconsiderate treatment that the Communists were giving him in the government, and he accused the Communists of being anti-Socialists. However, the main point of Zenha’s criticism was to accuse the PCP of being anti-democratic.⁶¹¹ The intervention by Soares followed the same argument. The leader of the PS considered that this was a crucial moment, not only for the PS, but also for Portugal. The future of the Revolution and democracy was at risk, and the PCP was responsible for this. The sentence most repeated by all the speakers at the rally, and also by Soares, was that “if the PCP does not play the game of democracy seriously it will be a tragedy for Portugal.” At the end of his speech, however, he praised the union of all the democratic forces because the conflict between the PS and the PCP could be the perfect excuse for the reactionary forces to act. He added, “it is for that union, in equal terms, with mutual respect, in diversity, without hegemonies, it is for that union that we fight today.”⁶¹²

As we can see, in this case the union of the Left was used by the Socialists in order to try to impose their own view and interests upon the building of a national trade union, or rather in order to avoid the imposition of the Communist model, that as I explained above would mean the strengthening of the Communist control of the working class. It was also used to criticise the PCP, because its behaviour was considered to be against the Socialist interpretation of the

⁶¹⁰ António Lopes Cardoso, “A unidade da esquerda é indispensável, mas essa unidade ou se fará na liberdade ou não se fará,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975): 3-5.

⁶¹¹ Salgado Zenha, António, “Reclamamos que a Junta de Salvação Nacional, a mais alta autoridade do MFA, abra um inquérito ao plebiscito da unicidade,” *Portugal Socialista*, especial number (17/01/1975): 6.7.

⁶¹² Mário Soares, “Se o PCP não jogar seriamente o jogo da democracia, será uma tragédia para o povo português,” *Portugal Socialista*, special number (17/01/1975): 11-12.

union of the Left, and therefore against democracy and against the Revolution. The underlying idea behind the proposals of union made by the PS to the PCP was that although the Socialist wanted the union of all the democratic forces, the behaviour of the PCP made this collaboration impossible. As we will see later, this use of the concept union of the Left would be repeated in the public statements of the PS until to the summer of 1975.

As for the French Socialists, they had been promoting the collaboration between Socialists and Communists in Portugal from the very beginning of the Revolution. In the first months of 1975, the commitment of the PSF to the PS and this idea increased. Between the end of January and the beginning of February 1975, the PSF had its own Congress in Pau. This Congress became a milestone in the international project of the French Socialists in terms of spreading the influence of the PSF over the Socialist parties of the Mediterranean, and more concretely in Southern Europe.

The Congress of Pau is well known for being the moment when CERES, the faction of the PSF most committed to the union of the Left and to the rupture with Capitalism, lost influence within the party. The party secretariat was reshuffled and new members, less committed to the idea of the union of the Left than CERES, occupied key positions. This has been considered Mitterrand's move to "personalise" his power over the party,⁶¹³ as he was able to reduce the influence of the Left-leaning CERES, the only faction with enough strength to negotiate with him about the party line. The internal shift in balance within the PSF did not have immediate repercussions for the strategy of the PSF and its relations with the PS. But later this year, during the *verão quente*, it would be very important to understand the internal confrontation within the PSF regarding Portugal, as CERES, no longer being in the executive, was more free to criticise the leadership of the party, and at the same time, less capable of influencing its policies.

Notwithstanding all of this, all of PSF factions at the Congress of Pau used radical rhetoric that camouflaged the loss of influence of the party's Left. The relevance of the Portuguese and the Spanish Socialists to the French in their project of internationalising their struggle⁶¹⁴ was confirmed. As the final aim of the PSF project was breaking with Capitalism in France and starting to build a new Europe based on Socialist principles, the French considered that they needed to spread their ideas, and the best place to start was the Mediterranean. This was

⁶¹³ See Bell and Criddle, *The French Socialist Party*, 89.

⁶¹⁴ "Pour une analyse du capitalisme d'aujourd'hui," *Le poing et la rose*, 34 (December 1974): 4-5.

because of the current political transformations going on in the region, the area's geo-political relevance, the cultural, socio-economic and geographical proximity to France, and also because of the ascendancy that the PSF had over the Socialists there. As the party stated: "a solidarity particularly spirited inspire our relations with the Spanish and Portuguese Socialists."⁶¹⁵

According to these ideas, the PSF stated with regards to the situation in Portugal:

In southern Europe [...] for the Portuguese people [the success of the Revolution is a matter] of protecting themselves against the aggressions of American imperialism.

This is the opportunity for the PS[F] to express [without hesitation] to the socialist and progressive parties of these countries political, moral and material support.

The definition of an attitude common to the socialist parties, and to the ensemble of the democratic parties of the Mediterranean basin, is of a particular importance. A true consultation should be established among them. Campaigns for action decided in common will materialise this will of working together.⁶¹⁶

As these statements show, the PSF reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the PS in their struggle for Socialism in Portugal at the beginning of 1975. Furthermore, the French considered the Portuguese case very important to their own attempt to spread their ideological influence over the Socialists of the Mediterranean. If this strategy succeeded, the PSF would legitimate and validate its strategy of union of the Left nationally and internationally, which could have important implications in France, and potentially also in the SI, the CEE, and even in the relations between the East and West.

Therefore, the first serious confrontation between the Portuguese Communists and Socialists in January 1975 did not imply any substantial change in how the French Socialists viewed the situation in the Iberian country. In fact, its significance was minimised. The PSF reacted to the confrontation about the trade union model in Portugal by celebrating that after all the tension the PS decided at the end of January not to abandon the provisional government. They also highlighted that despite the hostility of Soares to the trade union project of the PCP, he was aware of the importance of keeping the union with the Communists, and he was already working with the Communists and the MAF to build a "real programme of progress."⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁵ "L'action internationale du Parti socialiste," *Le poing et la rose*, 36 (January 1975): 5.

⁶¹⁶ "Pour assumer la dimension internationale de la lutte des classes," *Le poing et la rose*, 34 (December 1974): 7.

⁶¹⁷ "Portugal: Pour un programme comun," *L'unité*, 143 (31/01/1975):18.

In the same vein, Marcello Curto, a member of the PS national secretariat, clarified the polemic between Socialists and Communists on the model of trade union to be established in Portugal in the French newspaper *L'unité*. He stated that the PS had opposed the PCP's attempt to establish a trade union model controlled by the Communist party and imposed on all the workers by law. Although the Socialists had done this, they still "proclaimed the necessity of a Leftist alliance with the PCP on clearly defined bases."⁶¹⁸ On several occasions during February, the PS tried to calm the political confrontation, and kept developing the argument that the union of all the progressive forces, especially the PS and the PCP, was still desirable for the Socialists, although under the essential condition of respecting freedom and pluralism.⁶¹⁹

After this first serious confrontation between the PCP and the PS, both the Portuguese and the French Socialists kept arguing in favour of the union of the Left in Portugal. The French still believed that this would be the best way to make the Revolution advance towards Socialism in freedom. Moreover, they promoted it because the PSF had linked itself to the idea of the union of the Left in Portugal to such a great extent that its failure could have domestic implications. The PSF was very committed to this idea in France, as was confirmed at their Congress in Pau, because it seemed to be having very positive results. The possible failure of this strategy in Portugal could be an argument used by the enemies of the union of the Left in France for criticising its validity. Moreover, it could strain the relations between the PS and the PCF, which could also lead to the undesirable end of this alliance in France. Domestic as much as international factors therefore explain the French stance on Portugal and the near-silence⁶²⁰ about the confrontations in the Portuguese Left in the French Socialist media.

3.2.1. After the coup attempt of March 11th

The next step in the escalation of the conflict between the PS and the PCP began with Spínola's failed attempt at a coup d'état on 11th March, because of the immediate repercussions that it triggered. As we saw in the previous section of this chapter, after the

⁶¹⁸ "Marcello Curto (PS portugais) «notre force parmi les travailleurs»,» *L'unité*, 144 (7/02/1975): 12-13.

⁶¹⁹ This argument can be perceived in almost every public statement of the PS' leaders in February 1975. See for example, Francisco Salgado Zenha, "Que espécie de socialismo?," *Portugal Socialista*, 28 (20/02/1975): 2. Also, "Estamos dispostos a esquecer calúnias para que a unidade seja reforçada," *Portugal Socialista*, 26 (06/02/1975): 6-7.

⁶²⁰ Only one brief descriptive article placed in the last pages of the newspaper covered the confrontation between the PCP and the PS over the trade union model to be implemented in Portugal. "Le PS reagit," *L'unité*, 141 (17/01/1975): 18.

failed attempt, the Portuguese Communists strengthened their position within the State apparatus. At the same time, the Socialists started to worry as the implementation first revolutionary policies were implemented—the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies, the expropriations of lands, the creation of the Council of the Revolution, the signing of the pact between the MFA and the political parties, and the Communist control of the national trade union *Intersindical*.⁶²¹

However, the public reaction of the PS to these events was relatively tempered. Initially, the Socialists reacted positively to the nationalisations, at least in public, and supported them by arguing that “this measure was a constant in our programme since the times of when we were a clandestine party.”⁶²² However, a close analysis of the public statements of the PS reveals that the defence of these measures was to a certain extent tactical. Without attempting to downplay the Socialist convictions of the members of the PS, it is interesting to note that at the beginning of February, Soares was not completely convinced of the suitability of the nationalisation of the Banking sector in Portugal. He thought that it could contribute towards aggravating the economic crisis, as the important remittances of the exiled Portuguese would be halted. However, in March, when the nationalisations were a reality, the PS supported them.

I would argue that the Socialist support of the nationalisation of the banks was tactical in three ways. First, supporting the nationalisations once they had been achieved was a way to remain cohesive with the programme of the party, and also to respond, as well as appropriate, the will of the workers who took the initiative of seizing companies by themselves. Second, the PS tried not to alienate the MFA while the key positions were occupied by military members who were ideologically close to the PCP. Finally, supporting the nationalisations was a way of attempting to challenge the Communist control of the workers in the *Intersindical*, and therefore the control of the nationalised sectors, without exposing the party to criticism from the Left flank. In this sense, the Socialist use of the concept *autogestão* was instrumental.

In the first number of the newspaper *Portugal Socialista* published after the nationalisation of the banks, several articles appeared that stressed the following idea: the PS supported the nationalisations, but proposed that the nationalised banks should be controlled by workers

⁶²¹ See: Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 108-113.

⁶²² Secretariado Nacional, “O poder democrático dos trabalhadores,” *Portugal Socialista*, 32 (20/03/1975): 4.

freely and democratically elected by all the workers. This implied that the *Intersindical* should not intervene in the management of the banks, and would lose significant control over the working class and the nationalised banks and companies.

[...] [T]he management and control of the banks by the workers that [we] support entirely, [as it is] entrusted [to them] in the programme of our Party, will only be effective if [it] is realised directly and democratically by the workers themselves.

In these conditions we state that:

1. The Trade Unions [...] should not intervene or participate, [not] even indirectly, in any action in the management of the companies.
2. Thus, it is only acceptable that the [members] of the temporary management commissions that will be designated by the Trade Unions will only be so precariously, [and they] should be substituted within a week by [members] elected by all the workers [...].⁶²³

In the same vein, the National Secretariat of the PS published the following text the day after the nationalisation of the banks:

The Socialist Party congratulates itself for the decision of nationalising the Banks [...]. It is necessary to choose clearly now if we pretend to advance towards a socialism based on the democratic power of the workers, on the construction of a pluralist society, with discipline and freedom, or [based on] the adoption of an anarcho-populist strategy that only [could lead] to State capitalism or, more probably, the return of the reactionary forces.⁶²⁴

Some weeks later, as the nationalisations were a fact, the PS campaigned in favour of an organisation of economic life that would combine workers' self-management and national planning, as envisaged in the programme of the party. For them, this was a requisite for making efficient and rational use of the banks and the credits that had been nationalised, which was essential for the economic future of the country. Thus, the PS called for the Portuguese workers to get involved in the management of their companies. However, this claim was also a direct attack on the role of the *Intersindical* in the control of the workers.

⁶²³ Comissão Coordenadora dos Bancários Socialistas, "A gestão da Banca," *Portugal Socialista*, 32 (20/03/1975): 4 As I have doubts about the quality of my translation of this text I reproduce the original text in Portuguese: "[...] [C]ontrolado, no sentido do controlo de gestão dos Bancos pelos trabalhadores que inteiramente apoiamos e que é consignada no programa do nosso Partido só será efectiva se realizada directa e democraticamente por eles próprios. Nestas condições afirmamos que: 1. Os sindicatos [...] não devem intervir nem participar, ainda que indirectamente, em qualquer acção de gestão das empresas. 2. Assim, só é aceitável que os elementos das eventuais comissões de gestão a serem designadas pelos Sindicatos o sejam a título precário, devendo ser substituídos no prazo máximo de uma semana por elementos eleitos por todos os trabalhadores [...]."

⁶²⁴ Secretariado Nacional, "O poder democrático dos trabalhadores," *Portugal Socialista*, 32 (20/03/1975): 4.

Among other things, the original text produced by the Socialists said:

The socialisation and the democratisation of the economic life implies that the workers [should] get the knowledge of the companies in which they are integrated and [the knowledge] of their future development. Without that knowledge the workers will not be able to control the development of the ongoing process [...] the control and the management of the companies [...] cannot be led by decisions taken in a cabinet on behalf of the workers and without their intervention.⁶²⁵

My interpretation of the support that the PS gave to the nationalisation of the banks once it had been achieved is that despite the fact that Mario Soares might have been against it, the PS did not have any other alternative than to support it as a *fait accompli*, especially because it was in their programme, and because many members of the party were favourable to it. However, they used the nationalisations for arguing in favour of their idea of self-managed Socialism, which was a way of attacking the role of the *Intersindical* and the strategy of the PCP, just when the trade union system was being created.

The PSF reacted to the failed counter-revolutionary coup by initially celebrating the new defeat of the Right. They believed that behind the failed coup attempt lay Spínola and the US secret services, and that the final result was a “great victory” for the MFA, and for the “Socialist Party and the Communist Party, the authentic representatives of the people’s aspirations.” The initial analysis made by the French was optimistic to the point of stating that “in the [...] history of the new Portugal, the date Tuesday 11th March 1975, will be without doubt as important as 25th April [...] and 28th September [...]” The new failure of the Right had shown “to what extent the union of the popular forces is determining the current process” and also that “the union between socialists and communists is [now] more necessary than ever.”⁶²⁶

The executive committee of the party also celebrated the defeat of the Right, and made a public official statement in which they argued for “the mobilisation of the whole worker’s movement and the democratic opinion in Europe [as] it is of the higher importance to ensure a favourable atmosphere to the development of the process initiated on 25th April 1974. The Socialist Party would do everything [within its possibilities] to contribute [to it].”⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ “O controlo pelos trabalhadores à economia,” *Portugal Socialista*, 37 (23/04/1975): 6.

⁶²⁶ Claude Estier, “Portugal: solidaires plus que jamais,” *L’unité*, 149 (14/03/1975): 1-2.

⁶²⁷ 450RI1, Communiqué du Bureau Exécutif du 12 Mars 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

These enthusiastic reactions had a very different tone to another article published on Portugal some days later in another journal associated with the PSF, *Le poing et la rose*. The author of this new text, Antoine Blanca, criticised the negligence of the Portuguese government regarding the economic problems of the country. He considered that it was time to decisively tackle the economic crisis of the country “as it has been insistently claiming since the last two months the Portuguese socialist Party, which adopted in its congress of December 74 an emergency plan particularly offensive.” Moreover, the Blanca argued that although all the forces of the Left would be reinforced in the elections after the failed coup of 11th March, the PS was the party that enjoyed the best prospects; Blanca highlighted the attractiveness of the Socialist slogan: “Socialism and freedom.”⁶²⁸

This is a subtle but important change in the tone used by the French Socialists to talk about the Portuguese Revolution. For the first time, the provisional government, which was now dominated by the forces of the Left, was criticised. Although in a veiled way, Blanca reprimanded the Portuguese government for having forgotten about the economic situation of the country, and he excluded the Socialists from this fault. Moreover, this article on Portugal is one of the few written by the French, if not the only one so far, that did not mention the union of the Left. In fact, Blanca exclusively praised the PS and its leader. For example, he made a concession to the government, recognising both the difficult situation and the merit of having achieved such rapid decolonisation, but he emphasised that this achievement was “essentially” due to the “determination and ability of Mario Soares.”⁶²⁹

What happened in between these two articles, so different in tone, was the visit of Antoine Blanca to Portugal. He visited Lisbon in March for two days, more or less a month before the first democratic elections, and only ten days after Spínola’s attempted coup d’état. His visit coincided with the Socialist rally organised in Lisbon on 21st March mentioned in the previous section of this chapter. This coincidence gave Blanca the opportunity to see the Portuguese Socialists in action, evaluate their popular support, and talk with their leader Mário Soares.

According to Blanca, Portugal had changed considerably since the last time he had been there in December for the Congress of the PS. He was “aware of the change as soon as [he]

⁶²⁸ Blanca, Antoine, “Portugal: Mobiliser l’opinion démocratique – Socialisme et liberté,” *Le poing et la rose*, 39, (March 1975): 11.

⁶²⁹ Blanca, Antoine, “Portugal: Mobiliser l’opinion démocratique – Socialisme et liberté,” *Le poing et la rose*, 39 (March 1975): 11.

landed.” Lisbon was “quiet, the faces were serious, [...] newspapers of the Left-wing parties were on sale everywhere, the bookshops were full of Marxist and Leninist literature: posters of Cunhal, Soares and Vasco Gonçalves were also on sale, [...] façades were covered with painted inscriptions and posters.”⁶³⁰ This description gives an idea of the revolutionary atmosphere in Lisbon, and about the sudden politicisation, specifically Leftist, of the daily life of the Portuguese.

Blanca attended to the Socialist demonstration organised on 21st March and he was impressed by the number of people present, suggesting that there were 30 000 to 40 000, and by their enthusiasm. They were shouting the slogans “*socialismo sim, ditadura não*”, “PS, Marxist party” and “down with reaction.” This is very significant, because it shows the image of the PS at that moment in Portugal was that of a Marxist party fighting for Socialism, as well as the kind of political line that seduced the Portuguese who attended that meeting.

Immediately after the rally, Blanca and Soares met privately. The Portuguese had met the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves earlier that day, and his impression of the meeting had been very negative. Blanca could observe that Soares “seemed very nervous, which is unusual for him.” He said to Blanca: “I am going to explain to you the situation and right after that you will go back to talk to your First Secretary. The situation is very serious; we are moving towards a popular democracy.” These words made the French feel “extremely anxious.” Soares said that the Portuguese Prime Minister completely supported the PCP. The Socialists were “convinced that the affair of 11th March was wholly staged. [...] It was infiltrated and triggered at a moment judged favourable to forcing a change in the government with the key posts going to the supporters of a power with a strong Communist tendency.”

Soares’ interpretation of the failed coup of 11th March is a revelation that adds new information on the existing historiographical knowledge on the Carnation Revolution. The forces and motivations behind Spínola’s last counter-revolutionary attempt are still debatable. The most prominent works on the Carnation Revolution provide different interpretations. Martin Kayman suggests that “the ‘11th of March’ was the consequence of the spiral of Spínola’s attempts to control the revolution”,⁶³¹ which places all the responsibility for the *putsch* on the Portuguese reactionary Right and on the conservative sector of the army that was aligned with Spínola. A similar interpretation is offered by Raquel Varela. Although she

⁶³⁰ 450RI1, Carnet de rute: 48 heures avec les socialistes portugais, mars 1975, Antoine Blanca, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶³¹ Kayman, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, 125.

shows that, according to the PCP, Spínola's attempt was orchestrated with the support of the US and the German Social Democratic party, her argument is that the attempted coup was "prepared, run and executed nationally", placing the responsibility on the Portuguese reactionary Right.⁶³² Kenneth Maxwell provides a different interpretation. He argues that the coup attempt "was the result of months of complex subterranean manoeuvring by both sides"; therefore he passes the responsibility onto the complex intrigues of the Left and the Right, which led Spínola to fear a Communist takeover and believe that his *putsch* could succeed.⁶³³ Overall, this interpretation is shared by Maria Inácia Rezola, who has studied the events that occurred on 11th March in more detail.⁶³⁴ Finally, according to António Reis, immediately after the coup attempt, even the PS was accused of being behind it. This accusation came from the sector of the MFA led by the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves.⁶³⁵

It is not my intention to argue against all these interpretations that the PCP was behind the affair of 11th March. However, it is very important to highlight that this was what the Portuguese Socialists thought at that time—or at least it is what Soares told the French Socialists. This is important because it helps with understanding the anti-Communist behaviour of the PS from this moment onwards. Furthermore, this interpretation of the failed coup attempt caused great concern among the French Socialists, which is also fundamental to understanding the change of strategy—or the lack of a clear one—in the PSF regarding Portugal. From that moment onwards, the PSF began to have doubts about how best to support the PS, and about the suitability of the union of the Left in Portugal. This uncertainty entailed many problems for the French Socialists, such as the rupture of the consensus within the PSF on the strategy to adopt in Portugal, and the deterioration of the relations between Socialists and Communists in France, as we will see in the following pages.

To return to how the Portuguese Socialists interpreted these events, Soares complained to Blanca about the fact that the "press, radio and television [were] in the hands of the Communists", which had become a big problem for the PS, since he was "practically banned." Furthermore, the PS feared that the Communists could bring about a split within the PS "by assuring anyone agreeing to play this game all the support of the mass media." The leader of the PS considered this a very serious situation. The consequences of the Communist

⁶³² Raquel Varela, *A História do PCP na Revolução dos Cravos* (Lisboa: Bertrand, 2011), 192-197.

⁶³³ Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy*, 110.

⁶³⁴ Rezola, *Os Militares na Revolução de Abril*, 127-158.

⁶³⁵ Reis, "O Partido Socialista na revolução," 73.

drift in Portugal could have important domestic as well as international consequences that threatened the establishment of democracy and freedom in Portugal. Soares saw the situation as moving towards a dead end in which the only prospect was the establishment of an authoritarian regime, whether Rightist or Leftist. According to his interpretation of the events, “all the experiments of the Left [would] be in jeopardy.”

As far as we know, the strategy of the PCP at that moment was not to establish a popular democracy in Portugal, as Soares believed. According to the recent work of Raquel Varela, the Communists wanted to occupy the State apparatus in order to control and influence the revolutionary activities of the workers, without questioning the class nature of the State at that stage of the revolution.⁶³⁶ However, in retrospect, Soares’ interpretation at that moment cannot be called an exaggeration. Only two days earlier, on 19th March, the Council of Revolution banned three political parties (the Maoists AOC and MRPP and the Christian Democrat PDC) with the public support of the PCP.⁶³⁷ This was an alarming decision that seriously questioned the state of freedom in Portugal, which made the PS suspicious of the real intentions of the PCP. Even the Communist parties of Italy,⁶³⁸ Spain, Yugoslavia, and Romania disapproved the attitude of the PCP. The PCF, however, kept publicly supporting the Portuguese Communists after this episode. In this uncertain situation, Soares’ pessimistic exposition of the events to Antoine Blanca implied that a union of the Left in Portugal was out of the question. This in turn meant that the French Socialists would have to reorient their strategy of support for the PS.

Furthermore, the events that occurred after 11th March could potentially have more extensive international consequences. Soares wondered if “might it not happen tomorrow that US intervention in Portugal is traded for Soviet intervention in other countries?” The fact that Soares perceived this possibility, which could imply the return to a Right-wing authoritarian

⁶³⁶ Varela, *A História do PCP*. There are different interpretations on the will of the PCP to seize power in Portugal. There are authors who considered that the PCP had indeed tried to seize power. See, for instance: Carlos Gaspar, “O Partido Comunista e a revolução portuguesa” in *O longo curso. Estudos em homenagem a José Medeiros Ferreira*, ed. Pedro Aires Oliveira and Maria Inácia Rezola (Lisboa: Tinta de China, 2010), 539-574; Carlos A. Cunha, *The Portuguese Communist Party’s Strategy for power 1921-1986* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1992).

⁶³⁷ Aliança Operário-Camponesa (AOC); Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado (MRPP); Partido da Democracia Cristã (PDC).

⁶³⁸ In fact, this decision damaged the relations between the PCI, which had offered the *compromesso storico* to the Italian Christian Democrats, and the PCP. The main reason for the clash between the Communists was that the PCI considered that the behaviour of the PCP was damaging the attempts of the Eurocommunist parties to appear as reliable partners within the framework of a liberal democracy. See: Alex Macleod, *La révolution inopportune. Les parties communistes français et italien face à la Révolution portugaise (1973-1975)* (Québec: Nouvelle Optique, 1984).

regime with American support, as had happened in Chile less than two years before, shows two things. The first is his uncertainty about the American intentions. Despite his good personal relations with the Social Democrat leaders who were in government in many European countries, Soares still could not feel completely certain about how the West would react to the events in Portugal. He thought that “after their failures in the Far East and Middle East, the Americans are going to be very nervous where Portugal is concerned. The senate is already becoming agitated. It is very serious.” The second is that taking into account this wider picture, the union between Socialists and Communists that the PSF were promoting was not possible in Portugal. Thus, Soares told Blanca that “the solidarity of the French Socialist Party is indispensable to us. We need the European Left, but especially you.”⁶³⁹

I would argue that the fact that Soares emphasised that the PS especially needed the solidarity of the French Socialists was a double message to the PSF. On the one hand, he wanted the French to understand that for the PS, the union of the Left was now discarded. On the other hand, it meant that, in this situation, the support of the PSF could be especially useful for the PS in delegitimising the PCP. Since the PSF supported the union of the Left in France, their public support for the Portuguese Socialists, now that they were confronted with the PCP, could legitimise the position of the PS in Portugal, and at the same time invalidate the project of the PCP as being anti-democratic and against freedom.

Notwithstanding all of this, in public the PS kept arguing in favour of the union of the Left, a concept that, more and more, became a weapon for criticising the PCP by putting the Socialist Party in a position of moral superiority. After the coup attempt, the Communists asked for a meeting with the Socialists to discuss the problems that the Revolution was facing. The Socialists publicly accepted this petition, releasing the following statement:

[...] As usual, the PS accepts the dialogue with the PCP, [it] considers that an accord between both parties with the aim to implant a pluralist democracy and the construction of socialism in freedom represents, if it materialises, an important event.

The PS always fought for cooperating with the PCP, and respecting the fundamental rules of the political democracy and the diversity of ideological positions [of both parties]. In the last months the anti-democratic stances adopted by the PCP made the understanding between both parties difficult. It is important to underline that it was not the PS who interrupted the dialogue and cooperation with the PCP; it was the PCP who fomented an anti-PS campaign.

⁶³⁹ 450RI1, Carnet de rute: 48 heures avec les socialistes portugais, mars 1975, Antoine Blanca, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

The Socialists have always affirmed their willingness to talk and [to be] interested in reaching a platform for common action. For that to happen, it is indispensable that the PCP compromise itself to respect, today and in the future, the fundamental freedoms, to accept democratically the result of the elections, renouncing to hegemonic pretensions [...].⁶⁴⁰

On 22nd May, a delegation of the PCP led by Alvaro Cunhal visited the headquarters of the PS, and they explained their intentions to the Socialists (Soares could not be present) with the aim of clarifying the situation. The Communists said that they wanted to remove all of the power from the banks and the monopolies, but not to put political pluralism or the upcoming elections into question.⁶⁴¹ Some days after this meeting, a new government in Portugal was created. This was the Fourth Provisional Government, with a Socialist presence (Mário Soares was appointed Minister without portfolio as we saw in the previous section of this chapter), and also included members of the PPD. In the short term, events did not degenerate as the PS had thought. However, the document quoted above caused a big impact in the PSF, and probably also among the members of the SI, where an English translation was circulated.

At the end of March 1975, the PSF made the concerns of Mário Soares public in France. He was interviewed by the special envoy of *L'unité* in Portugal Maurice Fabien, and although he did not express his worries as clearly as when he spoke with Antoine Blanca, his statements were along the same lines as in the above-quoted document. Regarding the coup attempt of 11th March, he did not mention his suspicions about the Communist involvement, but he did say that the whole episode was not completely clear. He also nuanced his fears of a MFA influenced by the PCP, and he expressed the “total loyalty” of the PS to the MFA, because the Socialists believed “that the MFA will realise its programme, which means to institutionalise a political, but also economic and social, democracy.” Regarding the relations with the PCP, Soares criticised the Communist influence in the media, and said that although the PS and the PCP still agreed on several points in the Revolution, they disagreed on the model of a trade union to implant in Portugal, the conception of the public freedoms, the composition of the new government, and the political model that should be proposed to the country. These substantial differences seemed to publicly liquidate the idea of the union of the Left.

As the distancing between the PS and the PCP could entail criticism of the Socialists for being moderate Social Democrats, Soares wanted to clarify the position of the PS. “I would

⁶⁴⁰ Secretariado Nacional do Partido Socialista, “O PS aceita o diálogo com o PCP,” *Portugal Socialista*, 31 (13/03/1975): 3.

⁶⁴¹ 450RI1, Carnet de rute: 48 heures avec les socialistes portugais, mars 1975, Antoine Blanca, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

like to add, for the European Left, that the Portuguese [S]ocialist [P]arty is not, [...] a social-democratic party, or a party that defends the bourgeoisie and that tries to obstruct the revolutionary process. We want to [...] create a socialist society in Portugal. But we want to achieve socialism in Portugal without renouncing a value that, for us, is fundamental: freedom.” Moreover, although none of the questions of the interview seemed to justify this answer, Soares also said:

I would like to add that the situation in Portugal is very different from the situation in France. The Portuguese [S]ocialist [P]arty has been misunderstood in France. Especially by some parts of the French Left that think that [the PS] is embedded in social-democratic ideals [...]. The Portuguese [S]ocialist [P]arty is a working class party, is a radicalised party, is a party that within the revolutionary process indeed desires socialism [...]. The PS wants to contribute to the construction of a socialist society [...] but [the PS] does not want that this society will be transformed in State capitalism with a socialist façade [...]. That is why the PS stresses with so much insistence the [importance] of the political freedoms in Portugal. I am convinced that if the French socialists were in our place [...] they would fight with the same energy as we do in favour of the public freedoms.”⁶⁴²

With this last comment, Mário Soares seemed to be trying to justify the *de facto* temporary abandonment of the idea of the union of the Left in front of the French. Moreover, he wanted to emphasise the Leftist character of the PS in a context in which they were receiving criticism for their moderation precisely when the Revolution was radicalising. In fact, the Portuguese Socialists had recently been subject to criticism from the Communists in France. The PCF was trying to strengthen its weakened party identity after the alliance with the PSF, and considered that the criticisms of the leaders of the PS against the Communists during the last weeks were “unbearable.” Moreover, they accused the Portuguese Socialists of sabotaging the democratic experience in Portugal by accusing the PCP of having the ambition of domination.⁶⁴³ These attacks explain the defensive stance taken by Soares, who did not hesitate to mention the PSF while putting the emphasis on the issue of public freedoms that was not only a matter of contention in Portugal, but also between the French Socialists and Communists.⁶⁴⁴

On 22nd March, Mitterrand intervened in this emerging intertwined conflict between Socialists and Communists of France and Portugal. He showed a change of attitude regarding

⁶⁴² Fabien, Maurice, “entretiens avec Mario Soares,” *L’unité*, 151 (28/03/1975): 12-14.

⁶⁴³ “Le parti communiste français dénonce les tentatives de «sabotage» de l’expérience démocratique,” *Le Monde*, 7/03/1975.

⁶⁴⁴ See: Valentine Lomellini, *Les relations dangereuses. French Socialists, Communists and the Human Rights Issue in the Soviet Bloc* (Brussels: PIE Peter Lang, 2012).

the PCP and the union of the Left in Portugal for the first time. He stated in the newspaper *Le Monde* that the PS was “the guarantor of democracy in Portugal” as well as “the party of the revolution”. He showed his support for the leaders of the PS because they wanted the revolution to be “democratic, to go towards democracy and a revolution for democracy”. He also indirectly criticised the policy of the PCP, which seems to be a concession to Soares’ demand to Blanca. Coming from such a prestigious person as Mitterrand, who was the visible head of the union of the Left in France, his criticism were important for delegitimising the actions of the Portuguese Communists and reinforcing the image of the PS as a Leftist as well as democratic party. The position of Mitterrand was important because his criticism could not easily be dismissed under the argument of being anti-Communist. Thus, the leader of the PSF, without mentioning the Communists explicitly, said that the banning of some political parties, which was an initiative supported by the PCP, put democracy “in danger”.⁶⁴⁵

In this strained climate, the PS started the electoral campaign with two main slogans: *Socialismo sim, ditadura não* (Socialism yes, dictatorship no) and *Partido Socialista, Partido da Liberdade* (Socialist Party, the Party of Freedom), emphasising freedom more than Socialism during the whole campaign. The main quarrel between the Socialists and the Communists was about the trade union model, the PCP’s control and manipulation of the media, and consequently on the respect for freedom and democracy.

As we have already seen, the West European Socialist parties backed the PS in the campaign. The French provided the PS with moral and political rather than economic support—at least there are no documents in the archive of the PSF suggesting that the French Socialists supported the PS financially during the electoral campaign. This implies that an important part of the PSF support for the PS was made publicly through media exposure.

Two weeks before the elections, the PS echoed the statements of François Mitterrand in France and used them in their electoral campaign. Commenting on a statement by Alvaro Cunhal rejecting the establishment of a bourgeois democracy in Portugal, Mitterrand said that “bourgeois or proletarian democracy has [its] laws, [...] those laws are called freedom of expression, pluralism of [political] parties and universal suffrage. Is this not enough? I admit

⁶⁴⁵ “Le parti socialiste portugais est le garant de la démocratie déclare M. François Mitterrand,” *Le Monde*, 22/03/1975.

it. But it is certainly necessary. But to the inventiveness of Cunhal I prefer that of the socialists «*socialismo, sim ditadura, não*».⁶⁴⁶

Immediately before the elections in April, the PSF dedicated part of the journal *L'unité* to Portugal. The French desired the victory of Mário Soares and the PS. They summarised the whole year of Revolution and considered that, so far, the alliance of the forces of the Left in the government, and between the political parties and the MFA, had been crucial to the continuation of the process. Regarding the role of the PS, the French thought that “in keeping this fundamental alliance, [...] our Portuguese Socialist comrades have played a key role.” The PS had kept “vis-à-vis the Communist party, which has often attacked [the Socialists] unjustifiably, and with the MFA [...] a key idea that is also our idea, namely that it is not possible to dissociate the struggle for socialism from the struggle for freedom.”⁶⁴⁷

The electoral campaign in Portugal coincided with the greatest efforts of the French Socialists to validate their strategy internationally. In April 1975, Mitterrand led a delegation of the PSF to the USSR, a visit that had great importance for the French. The PSF wanted to test what the reaction of Moscow would be to a victory of the united Left in France, which in principle could be considered a threat to the ideological hegemony of the CPSU among European Communism, and a risk to détente. However, other issues of international relevance, which included the Portuguese Revolution, were touched upon during the meeting.

Regarding this issue, Soviet delegate Mikhail Souslov asked Mitterrand about the relations between Socialists and Communists in Portugal, and about the public statements of several European Social Democratic parties that were very critical of the PCP. Mitterrand said:

In Portugal, socialists and communists have become competitors [not enemies] in an unpleasant way. [...] The [F]rench [S]ocialist Party have always recommended that the Portuguese Socialists remain allied to the communists. [...] It is necessary to find a point of agreement [between the PS and the PCP]. Some party in the [S]ocialist International has asked us to intervene [in Portugal] in an anti-communist sense. [...] If a social democratic party has intervened in an anti-communist sense, it has been wrong.

Suslov then intervened to say that the CPSU had good relations with Alvaro Cunhal and the PCP, but their attitude was “of non-interference in the Portuguese internal affairs.” Mitterrand

⁶⁴⁶ “A opinião de Mitterrand,” *Portugal Socialista*, 35 (09/04/1975): 2. I have reproduced and translated the text as it appears in *Portugal Socialista*. The order of the commas in the quotation «*socialismo, sim ditadura, não*» was a mistake of the editors that changed radically its meaning – the English translation would be “socialism, without dictatorship, no”. What Mitterrand supported was the socialist slogan, “*socialismo sim, ditadura não*”, which means “socialism yes, dictatorship no.”

⁶⁴⁷ Claude Estier, “Portugal: socialismo sim!,” *L'unité*, 155 (25/04/1975): 1-2.

agreed with this point and added: “we will not be associated to any statement against the Portuguese PC,” a statement that pleased the Soviet delegation very much.

On 25th April, elections were held in Portugal, and as we have already seen, the PS proved that it was the party with the greatest electoral appeal. The results were welcomed by the PSF. In the analysis carried out by the French party, it can be appreciated that in the light of the electoral results, the PSF regained its hope for the establishment of democratic Socialism in Portugal. Furthermore, taking into account the new balance of forces that was favourable to the Socialists, they considered that now, more than ever, the union of the Left was necessary in Portugal. As can be seen in the document produced by the French, the Socialist victory opened a new possibility for the PS to establish a Socialist society that would not resemble “social democracy, nor a popular democracy”. The PS had to respect the pact signed with the MFA regarding the validity of the elections, but “it is evident that [the PS] will try to exploit as much as possible its [electoral] success.” In order to do so, the French thought that PS’ efforts should focus on four points: first “the government”, although there would be no major changes, the PS could now exert “moral pressure” to get “enough representation” in it. Second, “the trade unions”: it should “organise all its bases in the enterprises in order to take control of the various trade unions [that form] the unique central union that is taking shape”. Third, “the mass media”: the PS should “not tolerate the strict control of the information by the PCP.” Finally, “the local power”: the PS was strong enough “to demand the urgent organisation of municipal elections”. This was an important point, because the PS was very strong at the local level practically throughout the whole country, but now this power was being exercised by the extreme Left, which had very poor results in the elections. According to the PSF, the Portuguese “Socialists are going to fight ardently on this point.”

However, all of these plans depended on the acceptance of the electoral results by the MFA and the attitudes of the PS and the PCP. According to the analysis of the PSF, the PS “had to convince the MFA that they were determined to keep a political line that would lead to the instauration of a new society”. On the other hand, “the Communists, especially its leader Alvaro Cunhal, would have to understand that there were more ways and models of Socialism than the one they had known in their exile in Eastern Europe.”

The analyst of the Portuguese situation Antoine Blanca thought that the solution to all of these political issues depended on a bigger problem to which little attention had been paid so far, namely the socio-economic situation. “The economic and social situation is such that [they]

are going towards catastrophe if no one decides to give priority to the construction of a new Portugal”. In theory, these electoral results had to change the balance of power between the Socialists and the Communists; therefore, the PSF again considered the agreement between all the political parties to be necessary in order to overcome the difficult social, political and economic situation, and also to remove the excessive power of the military forces. “[...] It will only be possible on the base of a project elaborated on the aegis of the MFA, but with the agreement of all the [political] parties, and taking into account the new relation of forces emanated from the elections.”⁶⁴⁸

However, the optimism of the French Socialists was short-lived. A week after the elections, on May Day, there was a new confrontation between Socialists and Communists, as was described in the previous section of this chapter. Two days after that, the French Socialists held their National Convention, and they discussed the complex situation in Portugal with an eye to its possible implications for France. The Portuguese Revolution had become a very rich laboratory where the French were learning, and the current situation provided them with “some indications, some teachings useful for reflection.” At the Convention of the PSF, it was made evident that the Portuguese Revolution was creating doubts within the party about the relations between Socialists and Communists when the crucial moment for the construction of Socialism would arrive. This, of course, had important implications for the relations between the PSF and the PCF in France.

Again, it was Antoine Blanca who analysed the Portuguese situation. He focused on the behaviour of the PCP in the Revolution, which he summarised as “a strategy to seize power.” He mentioned the project of *unicidade sindical*, the Communist support of and influence on the MFA, the use of the MDP by the PCP as a parallel party, the control and manipulation of the media, and the general hegemonic behaviour and statements of the Communist leaders. In these circumstances, Blanca considered that “to accuse the [PS] of lacking enthusiasm for the union [of the Left] is in fact to accuse them of refusing to bend systematically to these faits accomplis.” Then he added that it was simple to be united with the Communists in the opposition, but “it is difficult to accept to be a simple cumbersome witness in the phase of construction of socialism. [...] The big question posed by the actions of the PCP [...] is: are the Communists ready to consider the socialists as equal partners [...] in the combat for

⁶⁴⁸ The three previous paragraphs are based on: 450RI1, Analyse du resultat des élections portugaises (25 avril 1975), Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

building a socialist democracy? Are they ready to renounce the dogma that makes them confer upon themselves the leading role as the party of the working class?”

Although he stated that he did not want to reach conclusions that would be valid for France, he tried to put forward some more questions regarding the relations between Socialists and Communists in a hypothetical future transition to Socialism in France.

Blanca concluded his analysis by saying: “the construction of the socialist society in France, like in Portugal, needs the presence of the communists. Who can imagine building it without them. However, it is necessary, at least in Portugal, that they make their choices. That is to participate with the socialists in the political direction of the *front de classe* [...] that will lead us to victory.”⁶⁴⁹

These reflections show that for the French Socialists, the Portuguese Revolution and their relations with the PS were much more than simple relations between fraternal parties that shared the same ideology. What was happening in Portugal was a test field for them. Little by little, the experiment was becoming a cause of increasing concern for the PSF who worried about the behaviour of the Communists. This was not the only source of concern for the French Socialists; the public support that the PCF provided the PCP was also worrying.

3.2.2. *The República affair*

Three weeks after the elections, the *República* affair triggered the bitter confrontation between Socialists, Communists, and the MFA that put Portugal on the edge of a civil war in the summer of 1975. The seizure of this newspaper was not the main reason behind the confrontation of these groups, but it channelled and exacerbated all of the accumulated tensions, which magnifies its symbolic importance. The affair *República* also was the trigger for a new confrontation between the members of the union of the Left in France (Socialists and Radicals on one side and Communists on the other side). Furthermore, it caused internal divisions within the PSF, especially between the leadership of the party and the more leftist group CERES. The importance of this episode lies in the fact that it was interpreted and exploited by the non-Communist Left, who considered the seizure of *República* as a clear attempt against the freedom of expression and as proof of the totalitarian and anti-democratic

⁶⁴⁹ 450RI1, (Intervention d’Antoine Blanca à la Convention Nationale des 3 et 4 Mai 1975). A propos de l’action du PC Portugais : du 25 Avril 1974 au 1^{er} Mai 1975. Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

intentions of the PCP. Following the tensions created by the Communist control of the trade union movement in January, their increasing control of the media, and their apparent lack of respect for the elections, the seizure of the *República* was last straw.

In May, some days before the occupation of *República*, representatives of the PSF visited Portugal and met with several members of the PS and the MFA: Mário Soares and Jorge Campinos from the PS, and Rosa Continho (a member of the Council of the Revolution), Vasco Lourenço (spokesman for the MFA and member of the Council of the Revolution), and Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves. After their conversation with the MFA members, the French were struck by how far from “reality were those who maintain the government of the country”. According to them, the “political philosophy of the revolution was expressed in a very elementary way, and at the level of the general principles it was quite confusing”. They were equally struck by the military’s lack of knowledge and interest regarding the economy. It was as if they “did not realise that the country is running towards bankruptcy.” Therefore, the French wondered, “where is the State [in Portugal]? Who rules here?” The conclusion they came to was that the MFA seemed to be very divided and there was a lack of a concrete political project, which was directing the country towards “political and economic anarchy”.

In terms of the relation between the military and the political parties, the MFA members explained that there was a pact with the parties in order to write the Portuguese constitution. “It has never been expected that the provisional government should reflect the composition of the constituent assembly”. However, there is one sentence that expresses very clearly what the leaders of the MFA thought about the electoral legitimacy—a thought that was in line with the PCP’s ideas. According to the military, “in a revolutionary process, the vote is not the only means of expression for the population”.

After this meeting, the French also met with the Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves. They received a similar impression. “At the level of the big political [questions], the project [of Gonçalves] is as imprecise as the one expressed by Continho and the other officials of the MFA.” Regarding the economic problems of the country, “his answers to this problems [...] were also very vague, which is extremely disturbing at this level of responsibility. [...] It is patently obvious that if the Prime Minister is not Communist, all his action is inspired by the PCP.”

Finally, the French met with Soares. The first thing they talked about was the relation between the PS and the PCP. Soares gave them a slightly modified version of the anti-Communist discourse that he used with the European Social Democrats. This was a response to the fact that Soares wanted to ensure the support of the PSF, which was something that could not be taken for granted now that the PS had abandoned the idea of a union of the Left. He said that contrary to how it might seem, “the [PS] is not anti-Communist. It would want to have a policy of alliance with the PCP.” However, “it is not possible because the [PCP] is not a democratic party. It wants to take over the power in order to impose a dictatorship.” Taking this into account, Soares thought that there were only two options for the PS; to “obey [the PCP] and transform [the Portuguese PS] into the PS of Hungary, or combat against the PCP”. In this dilemma “the PS chose the second solution”.

Soares went on attacking the Communists and said that “the PCP does not want the common programme because it does not want political democracy in Portugal. It controls the means of information, the trade unions, and it has infiltrated the apparatus of the State. [...] The PCP does not take power immediately because they are not sure about the army and because they are afraid of international reactions. Besides, it knows that the immense majority of the population is against it.”

The second issue raised at the meeting was the relations between the PS and the MFA. According to Soares, “the army [was] in decomposition [...] the power is in the streets”, and there was a big part of the army “that [was] anticommunist, but they do not dare to speak.” By presenting the army as a disintegrating institution, something that was indeed partly true, he seemed to justify the minimal importance that he assigned to the pact between the MFA and the political parties. Moreover, he accused the MFA of “not respecting the engagement”, as they had not respected “pluralism of parties and freedoms”. This somehow delegitimised the pact, opening a possible way for the PS to avoid the pact, and for claiming that the government should reflect the electoral results.

The leader of the PS described the socio-economic situation in Portugal in terms of an economic paralysis. There was a shortage of investments, whether public, private or foreign, and the gold reserves on which Portugal was surviving were close to being exhausted. Against this backdrop, there was a wave of “unrealistic” social demands that could not be satisfied, which could make the situation explosive. Thus, Soares stated: “Portugal needs foreign aid,

particularly from the EEC. It is necessary to foresee an urgent aid plan, but it is necessary to demand political guarantees.”

This urgency implied that this was the moment to make important decisions quickly and without hesitating, and in order to do so, the pact between the MFA and the parties had to be evaded. Soares suggested that in these conditions, the Socialists wondered whether it was worth it to stay in the government, especially because the decisions were made by the Council of the Revolution. His own answer was that the PS probably “should remain for denouncing and fighting because [we] had the popular support and therefore [we] could win.”⁶⁵⁰ The French thought that Soares was probably presenting quite a pessimistic analysis. However, they also considered that “he is right in essence about these problems, and he is only advancing the situation of Portugal by a few months if things [do not change].”⁶⁵¹

To this disappointing experience for the PSF with some of the leaders of the Revolution in Portugal was added the shock of the occupation of the newspaper *República* on 19th May. As we saw briefly in the previous section of this chapter, a little less than a month after the elections, a leftist workers’ committee occupied the Socialist-owned newspaper. The workers claimed a greater involvement in the editorial line of the newspaper, arguing that they had no voice in it and that it was the mouthpiece of the PS. The PCP wanted to capitalise on the situation and to change the editorship of the newspaper, and the PS reacted by blaming the Communists for being behind the occupation of *República*. According to Soares, only the PCP had the means to accomplish such a takeover.⁶⁵² Eventually, all of the parties involved had to abandon the newspaper and leave the solution to the problem in the hands of the Council of the Revolution, which let the newspaper reappear under military management.

Mario Soares took this opportunity of attacking the PCP publicly, and criticised the illegal Communist takeover of the journal. He condemned what he described as “a threat of Left-wing totalitarianism” and “a violation of the democratic legality.”⁶⁵³ However, his denouncement that the journal had been taken over by PCP agents was not completely true. In fact, it was the workers’ committee that occupied the offices of the journal, and only after that

⁶⁵⁰ 450RI1, Rencontres avec: L’amiral Rosa Continho, le Capitaine Lorenço, Mário Soares, Jorge Campinos, Vasco Gonçalves. Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁵¹ 450RI1, Rencontres avec: L’amiral Rosa Continho, le Capitaine Lorenço, Mário Soares, Jorge Campinos, Vasco Gonçalves. Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁵² Chilcote, *The Portuguese Revolution*, 134.

⁶⁵³ 450RI1, Bureau executive du 28 mai 1975. Communiqué. Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

did the PCP try to capitalise on this movement by controlling the committee. The case of *República* was used and exploited by the leader of the PS to denounce the Communist control over the means of information. In this denunciation, Soares counted on the full support of the PSF, which considered the reaction of the PS “exemplary”, and expressed their “complete solidarity” to their Portuguese counterparts.⁶⁵⁴

This event was a turning point in the evolution of the Carnation Revolution, and it was also important in the evolution of the ideological discourse of the PS.⁶⁵⁵ Moreover, the *República* affair had important consequences beyond Portugal. It provoked immediate international reactions because the issue was understood as a Communist threat against the freedom of expression and democracy in Portugal (partly due to the Socialist accusations against the PCP), which would supposedly lead the country towards an East European kind of regime. The behaviour of the PCP was criticised by all of the conservative forces and the West European Social Democrat parties, and also by the Eurocommunist parties of the PCI and the PCE, but not by the PCF. In the Italian case, the PCI made a joint statement with the PSI in which they showed their concern about the situation in Portugal. They asked for an agreement between the PS, the PCP, and the MFA in order to overcome the crisis. This should be based on the recognition of the popular representation of the parties achieved in the elections to the constituent assembly.⁶⁵⁶ For the Italian Communists, the behaviour of the PCP since the beginning of 1975 had been embarrassing because it provided grounds for the Italian Christian Democracy to criticise the totalitarian nature of Communism, just when the PCI had proposed the *compromesso storico* to the Christian Democrats.⁶⁵⁷ Similarly, the Spanish Communists criticised the PCP because the *Republica* affair happened at a moment when they were wooing the Spanish opposition to Franco with the aim of unifying it. However, the PCF supported the PCP in this affair. According to the French Communists, the PCP was not behind the occupation of *República*, which was actually true, and this event could not be considered to be an attempt against the freedom of the press.

⁶⁵⁴ 450RI1, Bureau executive du 28 mai 1975. Communiqué. Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁵⁵ The *Republica* affair is also considered the case that attracted the most international interest in the Carnation Revolution, projecting an image of the PS as the bulwark against Communism in Portugal. See: Moreira de Sá, *Os Americanos*, 132-133.

⁶⁵⁶ 450RI1, Déclaration commune du camarade De Martino et du secrétaire du Parti Communiste Berlinguer, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁵⁷ Del Pero, “Which Chile, Allende?,” 12; Michael Scott Christofferson, *French Intellectuals Against the Left. The Antitotalitarian Moment of the 1970s* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), 129-132. Also: Macleod, *La révolution inopportune*.

The *República* affair caused the PSF's faith in the Revolution and in the possibilities of collaboration between the PS and the PCP to waver, but they kept arguing in favour of cooperation between these two parties as it was the only possible solution they could envisage. Despite the fact that Soares told the French directly that the union of the Left was not possible in Portugal, the leadership of the PSF kept supporting it. Now, this alliance would have different characteristics to the union of the Left existing in France and promoted by the PSF in Portugal until April 1975, in the sense that they now proposed a PS-guided broad coalition to save the Revolution, which counted on the moral support granted by the electoral results. The Portuguese Socialists would take up this idea at the end of the Revolution, as we will see later.

However, the French Socialists did not think about the Portuguese situation in a homogeneous way. CERES, one of the biggest factions within the PSF, and also the most Leftist one, disagreed with the unconditional support that the leadership of the PSF gave to Soares and his party. As we will see in the final part of this chapter, the *República* affair and the subsequent confrontation between Socialists and Communists in Portugal created internal divisions and an apparent lack of definition in the PSF. This fact would have consequences for the PS, French Socialism, the union of the Left in France, and for the relations between the European Socialist parties that were members of the SI.

3.2.3 The conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties

In the same week, François Mitterrand took the opportunity created by the conflicted Portuguese situation to set in motion the project of a conference of Southern European Socialist Parties. To start preparing the conference, he invited the leaders of the Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Greek and Belgian Socialist parties to spend a weekend of work at his home in Latche in the south of France. All of the leaders, who included Mario Soares (PS), Felipe González (PSOE), Francesco de Martino (PSI), André Cools (PSB), Andreas Papandreu (PASOK), and Protopapas (USD), warmly accepted the invitation.

The meetings took place on 23rd and 24th May, and in addition to the party leaders. other members of the respective executive committees were also present. From the PSOE, as well as the First Secretary Felipe González, the International Secretary Pablo Castellano attended; from the PS, there were Mario Soares and MP Medeiros Ferreira; and from the PSF, Mitterrand, Antoine Blanca, Robert Pontillon, Lionel Jospin, Didier Motchane, Gaston

Defferre and Pierre Guidoni were present. During the weekend, discussion topics included the internal situations of all their countries, their relations with the European Community, their relations with the United States, how to strengthen the cooperation among the member parties of the SI, and solidarity and assistance to Portugal, Greece and Spain.

On the first day of the meeting, the Portuguese situation was discussed in depth. Ferreira presented the most recent events, and emphasised that “to the PS, it is clear that the PCP does not want to play the rules of democracy. It wants to seize power.” The Communists were using the MFA to reach their goals, but the armed movement was also divided. There was a well-organised Communist section within the MFA that was trying to break the PS. However, there were other two factions within the armed forces: the extreme Left-wing that was against the PS, but also against the PCP, and the democrats, who were a mixture of Republicans and Socialists, and were numerous and in principle pro-PS. In summary, neither the PCP nor the PS could impose their will without the military. “The MFA keeps the key to the situation,” he said.

After hearing Ferreira, Mitterrand expressed his opinion. According to him, the MFA could not dispute the power of the PS, because “the universal suffrage had given the power to the PS”, but it was expected that the military now considered the PS their main rival. This made him pessimistic. Mitterrand did not believe the PCP to be an obstacle, because the election had reduced its power and legitimacy. However, Mitterrand thought that there were two possible scenarios that could take place with the Communists. The first one would be that the MFA could “eat the PCP”. The second one would be a solution “à la cubaine”, that is a similar situation to what had happened in Cuba. This meant that the non-Communists members of the MFA would get the power and “would absorb the Communists [initiating] an original experience.” Mitterrand thought that the Communists had lost their opportunity, and they had no power by themselves. Besides, he considered that the USSR did not want to take risks in Portugal, as he was told during his visit to Moscow mentioned above.

Ferreira replied, saying that despite Mitterrand’s argument, “the MFA had the arms” and that “they had never shown a sign of support towards the PS.” No one knew how the army could react. The members of the PS were worried and seemed to think that the political confrontation could turn violent, as Ferreira showed the willingness of the party to mobilise their militants and the masses that supported them. If the MFA would not respect the legitimacy of PS for playing a leading role in Portugal, Ferreira’s main concern was that “we

do not have arms with us.” The Portuguese now considered that international pressure could only be fruitful in the medium term. Regarding the PCP, Ferreira said that the Communists were aware of these dangers, and they did not know what to do, whether to take the risk and “ally with the MFA in order to completely infiltrate it in the medium term” or whether “making a contract with the PS” would be a better option. According to Ferreira, the USSR was advising Cunhal to take the first option.

Bettino Craxi then intervened in the discussion and said that he did not believe that the military would be able to attempt to control the situation in a “*castriste way*”. What could give them real strength would be “the convergence between Cunhal and Costa Gomes.” However, the Communists had to know that following a strategy of direct confrontation with the PS was “too dangerous” because, if they kept going that way, there would be international reactions, and “the consequences could be terrible for Portugal, and also for Spain, Italy and France.” On the other hand, there was the possibility of arriving at a compromise between the PS and the PCP, at least regarding the municipal elections, the trade union law, and the meeting for writing a Constitution. The PCP could accept that because although it would reduce its weight, it could lead to successful Socialist achievements.

On the following day, which was 24th May, Mario Soares arrived. His intervention was slightly more optimistic. He talked about the concrete policies that the PS wanted to implement in order to tackle the political and economic crisis in Portugal. He had recently met with the Council of the Revolution and with the Portuguese President to express concern of the PS regarding the behaviour of the Communists and the MFA towards the Socialists. Soares made the PCP responsible for “having refused to discuss a common programme proposed by the [PS].” An agreement of this kind, in any case, would be impossible because as he said, “the PCP wanted to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.” In this situation, the PS proposed an alternative for reversing the situation that would be presented in the Constituent Assembly. This would consist of the encouragement and protection of the private sector, the return of the technicians to the government, and a request for European aid.⁶⁵⁸ This proposal was in line with Soares’ private discussions with the European Social Democrats, as we saw above, but it was in contradiction to the public documents produced by the party on around the same dates, such as *Vencer a crise. Salvar a Revolução* (June 1975), quoted in the previous section of this chapter.

⁶⁵⁸ 41RI1, “Latche (Landes) 23/24.5.75”, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

According to Soares, Portugal could not support the economic situation for long, and there were reserves of gold for one more year only. Therefore, he thought that in order to boost the economy, the Socialists “would not pursue the agrarian reform”; what they would do would be to “encourage the private initiative, to facilitate the investments and to get credits from Western Europe.”⁶⁵⁹ He thought that European support was very important at the political and economic levels. Politically, he said that “the military was sensible to the pressures coming from Europe”, and a way of pressuring the PCP could be through leaning on the Communist parties of the European countries—the PCI and the PCF—to refuse support to the PCP. He considered that “the PCF is going to be bothered, [but they] cannot defend freedom here [in France] and Cunhal in Lisbon.”⁶⁶⁰

The economic plan presented by Soares was an important change from what his party had defended until then. The PS had publicly mentioned the need for establishing closer relations between Portugal and the EC several times, but this new package of economic measures contradicted the economic plans publicly defended by the party. To what extent Soares’ change of plans had an impact on Mitterrand and the leaders of the PSF is difficult to determine. What Soares aimed to do could make it difficult for the French Socialists to keep defending him publicly. However, they kept doing so. The change of strategy planned by Soares probably had an important influence on the change of stance that the leadership of the PSF took towards the Revolution in the following months. Soares and Mitterrand had time to discuss the situation more privately in the car that brought Soares from the airport on 24th May, and on the following day after they returned to Paris together.⁶⁶¹ Although I could not find the records of these conversations, all of these meetings were probably an important factor in changing the attitude of the leadership of the PSF to the Carnation Revolution, although not the only factor as we will see later.

This first meeting of the Socialists of Southern Europe provoked immediate international reactions. The SI saw the reunion as an attempt to start a new internationalist line that threatened the ideological and organic unity of the SI. Although this issue will be dealt with more extensively in the next chapter, it is worth giving an example here of the concerns related to this possibility among the European Social Democrat parties. Immediately after the

⁶⁵⁹ 450R11, Blanca, Antoine, Etat de situation au 10 Juin 1975. Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶⁰ 41R11, “Latche (Landes) 23/24.5.75”, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶¹ J. Van Den Esch, “Soares chez Mitterrand,” *Aurore*, 26/05/1975.

meeting in Latche, the *Partito Social Democrazia Italiano* (PSDI) wrote a telegram to the SI, in which they warned about the possibility of a schism within the SI by the parties that participated in it. “[T]his event could prove to be the beginning of a new internationalist line. It appears that the establishment of a Socialist international grouping of Latin countries in opposition to those of the centre and the north of Europe is to be taken for granted. [...] [This proved] the openly secessionist behaviour of the French Socialist Party.”⁶⁶²

This accusation was denied by the PSF, who argued that the statutes of the SI allowed regional consultations between parties, and the meeting at Latche had to be understood in that context.⁶⁶³ The PSF felt it necessary to send a letter to the member parties of the SI to explain why had they organised this meeting. The PSF argued that the situation in the Latin countries was similar; in all of them, the working class was divided between Communists and Socialists. This fact justified the meeting because its aim was to exchange ideas about the strategy of each Socialist party in order to reach power. Besides, since Socialist parties of three countries were candidates to join the EC, and had economies that were concurrent and relatively similar to the French and the Italian ones, a confrontation of the perspectives of these parties regarding the EEC was necessary.⁶⁶⁴

Moreover, the leaders of the Social Democratic parties of Germany, Sweden, and Austria (Brandt, Palme and Kreisky, respectively) had held a meeting in Vienna at the same time as the Southern European Socialists that could also be considered within the frame of the SI regional consultation. This strengthened the PSF’s argument that they were not secessionist, but it also exemplifies the rift that was growing within the SI. At this meeting, the Germanic parties reached a common stance that was opposed to the Latin Socialist parties. They stated that they would be “against any kind of collaboration between social democrats and communists.”⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶² 41R11, “Complaint by the Democratic Socialist Party of Italy”, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶³ 41R11, “Letter from Robert Portillon to Antonio Cariglia”, 29/05/1975, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶⁴ 41R11, “Letter from Robert Portillon to Antonio Cariglia”, 29/05/1975, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶⁵ “Socialistas del Sur,” *Cambio* 16, 183 (9/6/1975): 63.

3.2.4. *The French Socialists and the verão quente*

As we have already seen, in June 1975 the Portuguese Revolution entered a very turbulent phase commonly known as the *verão quente*. To briefly recapitulate the situation, after the elections of April, the Socialists and the Communists had physical confrontations on 1st May. The leaders of the PCP and the Council of the Revolution made public statements that downplayed the importance of the electoral results for the basis of the pact signed between the parties and the MFA on 11th April. This led the PS, who considered that the electoral result granted them the legitimacy to take a leading role in the government and in the Revolutionary process, to organise massive demonstrations in Lisbon and Oporto. Later, the occupation of the Socialist newspaper *República*, and the lack of satisfactory solutions given to this problem by the CR, led the Socialists to suspend their attendance at the Council of Ministers. When the newspaper appeared again on 10th July with an editorial line close to the extreme Left, the Socialist ministers resigned from government. The ministers of the PPD followed them four days later.

Moreover, the contradictions within the MFA were clearly shown between June and July. Within two weeks, the Assembly of the MFA received and approved several documents that envisaged different, even antagonistic, ways of implementing Socialism in Portugal. The first document was the Programme of Political Action,⁶⁶⁶ advocated by Melo Antunes and by Vaco Lourenço. It intended the creation of a pluralist Socialist society in Portugal with the participation of the political parties and the grassroots organisations. The Assembly also approved a document supported by Vasco Gonçalves that envisaged the construction of Socialism under the leadership of an avant-garde party. Finally, on 8th July, the *Documento-Guia Povo-MFA* was approved, which implied the instauration of people's power at the grassroots level in alliance with the military. It has to be added that political and social reactionary forces strained the situation further by attacking and burning the offices of the PCP in Rio Maior on 13th July.

In this critical context, after the PS abandonment of the Fourth Provisional Government, the SI held a meeting on Portugal on 12th and 13th July. The organisation sent a unanimously approved public statement, in which it showed its concern about the political evolution in Portugal. It reasserted its support to the PS and to the democratic Revolution in Portugal. It also made an appeal to all its member parties—especially to those in government—to support

⁶⁶⁶ In Portuguese: *Programa de Acção Política*.

the Socialists in Portugal and offer financial aid to the Portuguese government to help with solving the serious economic crisis of the country. The SI thought that the assistance of the Socialist governments in Europe was absolutely essential to help Portugal to keep to the path of democracy.⁶⁶⁷

In a similar vein, Mitterrand sent a letter to Soares four days later on behalf of the PSF in which he expressed the solidarity of the whole PSF with the decision taken by the PS. Mitterrand corroborated the PSF's support for the PS in their pursuit of a Socialist society that would respect the popular will expressed through elections. He also said that the presence of members of the PS in the Portuguese government was the guarantee that there would be a real democratic evolution in Portugal towards a pluralist Socialist society. This implied that now that the PS was not in the government, it was not possible to consider the Portuguese process as democratic.⁶⁶⁸

Moreover, also in July, after the PS resigned from government, the Bureau Executive of the PSF issued another statement of support for the PS. In it, the French reaffirmed "their total solidarity with the combat of the [PS] and with the Secretary General Mário Soares, whose political and economic choices, clearly expressed in multiple occasions, are those of democratic Socialism and *autogestion*." The leadership of the PSF went further than this, and stated their "concern for the recent decisions that make a faction of the MFA the only real power in Portugal ignoring the will expressed by the Portuguese people in the elections to the Constituent Assembly." Furthermore, they were "astonished by not finding the Portuguese Communist Party on the side of the respect of the universal suffrage." Finally, the Executive of the PSF expressed their hope that "Portugal [...] will find in the following weeks [...] a plan to resolve the serious economic problems and to constitute a government that effectively responds to the popular will."⁶⁶⁹

Between the months of July and September, during the *verão quente*, it is possible to perceive a crucial change of priorities and a noticeable change of discourse within the PSF regarding Portugal. If previously the French had been promoting the union of the Left with the final aim of ensuring that the Socialist revolution would follow a democratic way, now the priority of

⁶⁶⁷ 450R11, Communiqué de l'Internationale Socialiste sur le Portugal, Dublin, 12/07/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶⁸ 450R11, Message de François Mitterrand, Premier Secrétaire du Parti Socialiste Français à Mario Soares, 17/07/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁶⁹ 450R11, Le Bureau Exécutif du Parti Socialiste, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

the PSF seemed to coincide more with the objective of the European Social Democracy, namely to establish a representative democratic system in Portugal on the basis of the electoral results of April. The difference is subtle but important. So far, the PSF had been promoting the union of the Left in Portugal because they believed that only the union between Socialists, Communists and the MFA would ensure the success of the Revolution. But that union did not imply the preponderance of any of its members. Therefore, according to this tactic, the way to Socialism in Portugal would emerge from the negotiation and the dialectical relations between the members of this union. However, in the summer of 1975, in the light of the positive electoral results for the PS and the behaviour of the PCP, the PSF would only argue in favour of the union of the progressive forces if it was conceived within the framework of a representative democracy. Taking into account the electoral results, this implies that in the union of the Left, the PS would have a predominant position. It was from this basis that the French now supported a theoretical way to Socialism that necessarily had to pass through democracy.

This subtle change made the French strategy less opposed to the strategy followed by the European Social Democracy in Portugal. The methods followed by both European trends were still different, but their final aims were practically the same—the was the establishment of a pluralist, democratic system in Portugal, a frame within which the Portuguese would have to decide their future. Moreover, the new stance of the PSF had further implications. Firstly, it meant that the leadership of the party was in favour of evading the pact signed between the PS and the MFA. Secondly, if things went as the PSF wanted, the composition of the government would mean the end of the Revolution. The PPD had received the second-highest number of votes in the elections; the PS and the PPD combined had approximately 64% of the votes, and a government that represented these results would put an end to the revolution. These implications were understood by the CERES and by the PCF, who attacked the leadership of the PSF and accused them of being reactionary, as we will see later.

In the summer of 1975, the PSF started to consider the PCP as the main rival of the PS and not a potential ally. As the French put it in an internal analysis of the Portuguese situation: “If it is necessary not to mix up who is the enemy, it is [also] necessary to be careful not to confuse the [partner] party.” For the leadership of the PSF, the PCP had been responsible for breaking with the idea of the union by attempting to monopolise the revolution. In these circumstances, “who can reproach to the [PS] its refusal to negotiate in such a weak position?

Had the [PS] an other alternative than calling the masses, as apparently the scrutiny of 25th April was considered invalid?”⁶⁷⁰

As we will see in the following pages, this change of strategy, or rather the unconditional support that the leaders of the PSF offered the PS, even when the Portuguese Socialists broke the governmental alliance and openly rejected the union of the Left, caused problems between the French Socialists and Communists, as well as within the PSF. Within the party, the main confrontation occurred between the leadership and the CERES, as we will see later. However, the grassroots militants of the party also seemed to be confused about what was happening in Portugal, but especially about the nature of the PSF support for the PS. Many Socialist militants were travelling to Portugal out of curiosity, with the aim of learning and participating in a Revolution in the summer of 1975.⁶⁷¹ Therefore, there was at least basic knowledge of what was happening in the Iberian country among the rank and file of the PSF. However, many PSF members did not understand the increasing public support of the leaders of the party for the PS at a moment when the Portuguese Socialists seemed to practically abandon the basic ideas that linked them to the French Socialists.

At the end of July, the PSF militant Alain Badufle wrote a letter to Lionel Jospin, then International Secretary for the Third World, in which he admitted that he did not understand the behaviour of the PS. He had doubts about “the real will of the Portuguese PS to construct socialism in Portugal.” The fact that he did not understand the motivations behind the behaviour of the PS in a complex context such as the Portuguese one is to some extent normal, especially when taking into account that he was following these events from France. But he also expressed that “it is difficult to understand the position of our party in the support without reservation that it gives to Mario Soares. We would like to understand. [...] What happens in Portugal is so serious for the European and Southern Socialist movement, that our party should give clear explanations of the nature of the process [in which we are] involved. [...] Thus finally we will know the deep reasons of the total support of our party to M. Soares.”⁶⁷²

⁶⁷⁰ 450RI1, Blanca, Antoine, “Les socialistes portugais et la crise de la révolution”, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁷¹ Victor Pereira, “«Será que verei Lisboa?» Peregrinações de franceses no Processo Revolucionário em Curso,” *Relações Internacionais*, 25 (March 2010): 91-105.

⁶⁷² 450RI1, Letter from Alain Badufle to Lionel Jospin, 25/07/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

This French Socialist militant had a legitimate question, as Mário Soares, and the PS in general, radicalised their anti-Communist discourse after May 1975. The República affair, as we have already seen, was used by the Portuguese Socialists to redouble their verbal attacks on the Communists, and to break the governmental coalition.

However, together with the criticism from the PS to the PCP, and despite the confrontations that were going on between both parties in the government in the media and the streets, Soares and his party still admitted in public that the solution for saving the Revolution from any kind of authoritarianism, Rightist or Leftist, was to reach a basic agreement with the Communists. As the previous section of this chapter reveals, Soares was committed to his Social Democrat partners for defeating the PCP and establishing a democratic regime in Portugal. However, as I have been arguing here, the PS had a complementary tactic in Portugal that consisted, even during the hot summer, of keeping alive the idea of reaching an agreement with the PCP. This behaviour, not always understood by the PS Social Democrat partners, had several motives. Firstly, as I said above, it aimed at discrediting the PCP, because its rejection of the Socialist proposition helped the PS to denounce the authoritarian and anti-democratic nature of the Communists. Secondly, it was probably a way of eroding the cohesion of the PCP by seducing and strengthening the position of the minority euro-Communist tendency that existed in the PCP.⁶⁷³ Finally, it also had the purpose of keeping the possibility of a future agreement with the PCP open, if the revolution eventually were to suffer an extreme Leftist drift or end in a Rightist counter-revolutionary coup.

These arguments can be sustained by analysing the public discourse of the PS during the hot summer. At the beginning of July, Soares had a meeting that lasted for two hours with the journalists of Oporto, as he considered that the newspapers in Lisbon were not reliable, being under the control of the PCP. At this talk, Soares said of the PCP that “for Alvaro Cunhal, the future of Portugal is either a new Fascist dictatorship or a Communist dictatorship.” After criticising the recent anti-democratic and authoritarian behaviour of the PCP, Soares finished his talk by saying: “I begin to think that [we need] an urgent plan to save the revolution. We are always willing to converse with the PC[P]. The one who does not want [to negotiate] are the leaders of the Communist Party. We will meet with the PC soon to study a common project.”

⁶⁷³ This idea appears in a document of a conversation between Mario Soares and Willy Brandt quoted by Ana Monica Rôla da Fonseca in her doctoral thesis. See Rôla da Fosenca, “«É Preciso Regar os Cravos!»,” 292.

To complement this, as was noted in the previous section of this chapter, Soares started to soften his public statements when he mentioned the forces of the West and the European Social Democracy. While he kept emphasising that “the PS is a Leftist party that defends an original Leftist line,” he also said when he was asked about Chile: “Carlos Altamirano [the general secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party] was in Portugal and clearly told me that one of the mistakes made in Chile was not to accept the loans of the European Social Democracy. I see now the Portuguese situation advancing in leaps and bounds towards bankruptcy. There are not internal or external investments.”⁶⁷⁴

Furthermore, on 9th July, on the day before the PS abandoned the Fourth Provisional Government, the Socialists published an open letter addressed to the PCP. The PS proposed, “despite our divergences” to reach “a platform of agreement, or a common programme such as the one established by the French Left, or another formula [...]” However, after this proposition, the letter criticised the PCP for being an obstacle to the union of the Left. The reasons were that it had a “closed, anti-democratic, monolithic, rigid and rigorously hierarchical leadership, presided by a Stalinist pharaoh [who is] cold, tough, ruthless [...]” The Socialists also mentioned that the West European Communist parties did not accept the PCP because of the Stalinist line it followed that was jeopardising the policies that these parties wanted to implement in their countries.

After this criticism, the PS asked: “Communist comrades, are we going to let Cunhal, the last Abencerrage⁶⁷⁵ of Stalinism, whose ideas are out of date, to frustrate the Portuguese socialist revolution?” And the text finished with a condition *sine qua non* for reaching the union of the Left: “While the leadership of the PCP keeps this spirit of assault to power with the excuse of the revolutionary legality, while its general secretary considers the elections and democracy incompatible with a revolutionary process, [...] it cannot be any kind of platform of agreement.”⁶⁷⁶

As can be appreciated in these public texts, the Socialists were using their supposed willingness to reach a common agreement with the PCP to denounce their anti-democratic

⁶⁷⁴ “Democracia popular comprometeria a Revolução,” *Portugal Socialista*, 48 (02/07/1975): 7.

⁶⁷⁵ Abencerrage is a family name that belonged to a lineage that had a prominent position in the Kingdom of Granada in the 15th Century. They participated in several revolts contributing to unleash the civil war that helped to put an end to the Emirate of Granada. The use of this name for Cunhal is full of meaning. The PS is presenting the leader of the PCP as the obstacle for the renovation of the Communist family.

⁶⁷⁶ A Comissão Política da Secção de Limoeiro, “Carta aberta aos camaradas comunistas,” *Portugal Socialista*, 49 (09/07/1975): 6.

attitude. Moreover, by making conditions for reaching any future agreement, the PS was trying to adopt a morally higher position than the PCP, while appearing to be the champion of the union of the Left. In addition, the PS was cornering the Communists because presumably they would not accept a pact with the PS in a subaltern position. Finally, in these texts it is also noticeable, although this is just a hypothesis, that the PS was attempting to cause unrest within the rank and file of the PCP. By blaming Cunhal and the “hierarchical” leadership of the party almost exclusively, and calling the rest of the members of the PCP “comrades,” it seems that the PS was attempting to promote alternative positions within the PCP, along the lines of the PCE and the PCI.

To return to the contacts between the French and Portuguese Socialists, some days after the PS resigned from the government, André Boulluche visited Lisbon as a representative of the PSF at a colloquium organised by the PS on the construction of Socialism. In the report that Boulluche made for the PSF, it can be inferred that the rank and file of the Portuguese party was several steps behind the manoeuvring of the leadership, and also that the growing social heterogeneity within the PS (many centred and anti-Communist people, alien to Socialism, started to see the PS as the best bulwark against the PCP and joined the party) had not as yet influenced the ideological line of the party.

Boulluche said that the discussions at the colloquium were doctrinal and abstract, without any connection to current events. According to him, the Portuguese Socialists were “faithful to pluralism and freedom, but not at all attracted by the German Social Democracy.”⁶⁷⁷ He thought that the PCP was trying to push the PS to the right and that it was probable that the centrist electorate would now choose the PS as a defence against the establishment of a people’s democracy. Notwithstanding this fact, “the political line of the PS did not seem to be affected,” the Socialists were still in favour of a Revolution that would be respectful of democracy, Socialism, pluralism and decentralisation. According to Boulluche, a forgotten problem in Portugal that had started to become very serious was the abandonment of the economy, a topic that had not been addressed at the colloquium. Overall, he was pessimistic about the future of the country if the economic situation was not addressed, because together with the strained political situation, it could –provoke a “brutal drift to the right.”⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁷ 450RI1, Témoignage d’André Boulluche sur son déplacement à Lisbonne du 17 au 21 Julliet, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁷⁸ 450RI1, Témoignage d’André Boulluche sur son déplacement à Lisbonne du 17 au 21 Julliet, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

At the beginning of August, as we have seen in the previous section of this chapter, there was a meeting between the Socialist and Social Democrat European leaders in Stockholm where Mitterrand and Soares, among others, were present. After the meeting, the Committee of Friendship and Solidarity with Democracy in Portugal was created, with Mitterrand as one its members. As we saw, the Committee wanted to establish a coordinated action among the European Socialist and Social Democrat parties with the final aim of avoiding a Communist takeover in Portugal. The most immediate objectives of the Committee were to help to establish a democratic regime in Portugal that would have a government that would reflect the electoral results of the April elections, the restoration of basic freedoms (especially press and trade unionism), and fight against Portuguese international isolation.

This meeting at the highest level was poorly communicated to the rank and file of the parties involved. In the case of the PSF, I have not been able to find any document regarding this meeting in the historical archive of the party. There is only a brief report of the second meeting of this Committee that took place in London in September that makes a reference to the meeting in Stockholm. Thus, without the knowledge of Mitterrand's position in the discussions in Stockholm, which would have enriched our perception of the ideological battle going on within the SI—in which the development of the political situation of the Iberian peninsula was crucial—we can only state that there was an agreement between all of the European leaders that definitely changed the strategy of the PSF. Without any doubt, the PSF was the party that , most changed its stance towards Portugal after the meeting in Stockholm. It is true that this change within the PSF had gradually been taking place since March 1975, when Antoine Blanca and Mario Soares met to talk about the situation after Spínola's failed coup attempt. However, the Socialist meeting in Stockholm was the consolidation of that change, as we will see below.

Before that, it is necessary to pay attention to the problems that the Portuguese Revolution was causing for the relationship of the Communists and Socialists in France. It is important to devote the following paragraphs to this issue because it is a prism through which we can see the connected problems that the French and Portuguese Socialists and Communists encountered in conciliating their views when the construction of Socialism was at stake. Moreover, it also helps to explain the change of strategy of the PSF regarding Portugal that I just mentioned. The response of the French Socialists to the Portuguese crisis, combined with how they managed their conflict with the PCF, seems to confirm the traditional interpretation

of the literature that indicates that for the leaders of the PSF, the union of the Left was conceived tactically with the non-exclusive intention of profiting from the Communists. On the Communist side, the conflict on Portugal shows that the union of the Left was also conceived tactically by the PCF. For the Communist leaders, the union of the Left was a way of gaining credibility within the frame of representative democracy, and it was accepted while supposing the subaltern position of the Socialists.

It was especially after the *República* affair, and its implications for the freedom of expression, that the partners of the union of the Left were deeply affected by the Portuguese events. As we have already seen, since the autumn of 1974, and especially after the presidential elections in France, the relations between the French Socialists and Communists had been deteriorating.⁶⁷⁹ However, in the central months of 1975, their previous confrontations seemed to be easing. In this situation, the radicalisation of the Portuguese revolution and especially the *República* affair that confronted the PS and the PCP in Portugal, caused the relations between the PSF and the PCF to become embittered.

On 19th June 1975, there was a meeting of the leaders of the union of the Left at the headquarters of the Radical Party in Paris. The meeting had the purposes of clarifying the increasing confrontation between the partners of the union of the Left, and strengthening the union after the exchange of accusations and criticism in the previous months.⁶⁸⁰ The PCF had so far supported all of the actions of the PCP, and unlike the Spanish and Italian Communists, kept doing so during the hot summer of 1975. This fact was used by the PSF to criticise their counterparts in the union of the Left, and causing doubt about their attachment to democracy. George Marchais complained about the critics that the Socialist made to the PCF because of the Communist support of the PCP in the affair *República*. For the leader of the PCF, it was only a labour conflict in Portugal, but the PSF had turned it into “a war machine against the French Communist Party”. According to Marchais, a Communist typographer working at the *República* had told him that the French and Portuguese Socialists were working together “to destroy the union of the Left” or “to get profit for the Socialists from the Communists.”

⁶⁷⁹ For the relations between French Socialists and Communists in the years of the Union of the Left see: D. S. Bell and Byron Criddle, *The French Communist Party in the Fifth Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 166-186; John Gaffney, *The French Left and the Fifth Republic. The Discourses of Communism and Socialism in Contemporary France* (London: Macmillan, 1989); R. W. Johnson, *The Long March of the French Left* (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1981); Bernard E. Brown (ed.), *Eurocommunism & Eurosocialism. The Left Confronts Modernity* (London and New York: Cyrco Press, 1979), 14-103.

⁶⁸⁰ Pierre Beregovoy, “Consolider et élargir l’Union,” *Le poing et la rose*, 42 (June 1975): 6.

Mitterrand answered that the issue of the newspaper *República* “represented the problem of freedom of expression in Portugal.” He also said that, as the PCF could not bear anyone to question their respect for the public freedoms, the PSF “does not bear that anyone question its [fidelity] to the union of the Left. However, there always exists the right to criticise.” He added: “my solidarity with Mário Soares is like the solidarity of Marchais with Brezhnev. It should not alienate our independence.” However, Mitterrand went on to attack Marchais. He said that despite the statements of the PCF in favour of the public freedoms, “we don’t have any example, in a Communist country, in which the classical public law has been applied with regards to freedom.” Marchais defended his party, arguing that the French Socialists “were not innovating, and were taking up again against the PCF the old argument of what happens in the Communist countries. [We] do not accuse the Socialist Party about what happens in the Federal Republic of Germany”. Regarding the *República* affair, Marchais said that the PCF did not want to betray a fraternal country that had spent fifty years under fascism. “We will do everything to help the Portuguese Communist Party. [...] [But] we cannot be responsible for what happens in other countries.”⁶⁸¹

This meeting shows the original awareness of the Communists about the real intentions of the PSF regarding the union of the Left. Since 1972, when Mitterrand stated at the Vienna Congress of the SI that the PSF aimed to use the union of the Left to conquer three million voters out of the five million that voted for the PCP,⁶⁸² the PCF had been suspicious about the Socialist intentions. Although the PCF never stopped thinking that in essence the PSF was a reformist Social Democratic party, now Communist concern was increased by the behaviour of the PSF towards the PS in Portugal and towards the PCF in France.

For Mitterrand, the Portuguese events raised questions about the democratic credibility of the PCF and its attachment to democratic freedoms. The Socialists, who were very interested in keeping alive the union of the Left because it was essential for defeating the Right in France, were concerned about the PCF’s support of the PCP, and used it to attack them without reaching a point of rupture. The Socialists were also suspicious of the PCF’s intentions, as in 1975 a secret document dated in 1972 was published,⁶⁸³ in which Marchais stated that the

⁶⁸¹ Reunião cimeira da União das Esquerdas, efectuada em Paris em 19 de Junho de 1975. Passos relativos a Portugal. Ambassade de Portugal, Paris. 26/06/1975, Arquivo Histórico Diplomático de Negocios Estrangeiros, Fundo PEA 8/Processo 331/1975.

⁶⁸² André Donneur, *L’alliance fragile. Socialistes et communistes français (1922-1983)* (Montreal: Editions Nouvelle Optique, 1983), 258.

⁶⁸³ The document appeared in Etienne Fajon, *L’union est un combat* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1975).

PCF's programme was superior to the common programme of the Left, and that the party would work to make its own programme prevail. However, the PSF also thought that the Communists probably wanted to have "two irons in the fire"⁶⁸⁴ and that the union of the Left could still work. This meeting had the purpose of confirming the commitment of both parties to the union.

However, during the last days of July, the tension between the PSF and the PCF increased. The French newspaper *Le quotidien de Paris* published articles by the Portuguese Socialist editors of the *República*, in which they complained about the lack of freedom of expression in Portugal. The PCF took the side of the PCP and stated publicly that these accusations about the Communists were favouring the Right, because the false accusation of lack of freedom put the Revolution at risk, and nationally and internationally delegitimised it.

Thus, on 13th August, the members of the union of the Left met again to discuss the latest developments in Portugal. In the first days of August, the political conflict in Portugal had developed further, and it affected directly the MFA. After the creation of the Triumvirate within the Council of the Revolution on 30th July, the moderate faction of the MFA led by Melo Antunes, which was ideologically close to the PS, published on the 7th August the so called *Documento dos nove*. This document, as we saw above, claimed a pluralist way to Socialism. However, on the following day, the Fifth Provisional Government was created without the PS and the PPD, and two days later Melo Antunes and his supporters were expelled from the Council of the Revolution.

In this context, the members of the French union of the Left had their meeting on Portugal with the double objectives of analysing the Portuguese events and trying to reach a common stance that would put an end to their own conflict. Mitterrand was not present, and after the meeting, he decided to publish an open letter to the PCF. He expressed his willingness to collaborate in any kind of initiative, without interfering in Portuguese internal affairs, in order to ease the situation and favour Socialism in Portugal. He also considered that "contrary to the analysis of your political Bureau [he referred to the PCF], [I] consider that the errors of judgment of the leadership of the [P]ortuguese Communist Party have greatly contributed to [...] the events that we deplore." He considered that the PCP had refused the union of the Left proposed by the Socialists, and that its strategy of seizing power was the main cause of the deterioration of the situation and the crisis of the Revolution. The only solution envisaged by

⁶⁸⁴ Brown, "The Common Program in France," 46.

Mitterrand was that all of the parties and movements engaged in the Revolution should be included in a government of unity. “All of this is possible. All of this is urgent.” But the PCP refused to accept the offers for unity made by the PS, and preferred to look for alliances with the extreme-Left. “That is why we state again our willingness to take part in a campaign capable of mobilising our public opinion with the aim of supporting the [P]ortuguese people in their struggle against all kinds of exploitation [...]”⁶⁸⁵

Only six days later, Georges Marchais responded to Mitterrand with another open letter. The Communist leader considered that the risk of a reactionary coup in Portugal was high. Therefore, he also thought that a common action of solidarity with the young Portuguese regime was necessary; this was something that had not been achieved so far due to the differing analysis of the situation made by the PSF. The PCF thought that the analysis of the French Socialists regarding Portugal was wrong. They had considered the PCP to be responsible for the current violent situation, while in turn the PCP was the victim. Moreover, the PCF disagreed with the PSF about their interpretation of the failure of the union of the Left in Portugal. If the PSF blamed the Portuguese Communists for having rejected the offers of the PS, the PCF blamed the Socialists for not having accepted a collaboration with the PCP under the threat of the risk of eviction of the Socialists. Furthermore, taking into consideration the original nature of the Portuguese process, in which the military had Revolutionary legitimacy, the PCF considered that the criticisms from the French Socialists to the PCP for not having respected the universal suffrage were “to distort the reality completely.” The political parties had signed a contract with the MFA before the elections, and the only party that did not want to respect it was the PS. Finally, the PCF rejected the Portuguese Revolution as a model for France, and blamed the PSF for having extrapolated the Portuguese experience, causing them to question the attachment of the PCF to pluralist democracy. And yet, in order to save the Portuguese Revolution, Marchais considered that “it is of a vital importance the union [of the progressive forces].” Therefore, the PCF proposed to the PSF “to engage in a common campaign of solidarity [...] with the Portuguese democrats [...] victim today of a dangerous aggression by the Portuguese and international reaction.”⁶⁸⁶

The result of the meetings on Portugal held by the members of the French union of the Left was the publication of a common statement. The Communists, Socialists and Left Radicals expressed that “without wanting to interfere in the internal affairs of Portugal, we consider

⁶⁸⁵ “La lettre de François Mitterrand,” *L'unité*, 169 (05/09/1975): 12-13.

⁶⁸⁶ “La reponse de Geroges Marchais,” *L'unité*, 169 (05/09/1975): 12-13.

that it corresponds to the parties and movements initially associated with the leading of the revolution [...] to stop any kind of return to fascism and to ensure that the government [...] [relies] on the popular will democratically expressed.”⁶⁸⁷

This was a Socialist attempt at smoothing things over with their partners in the union of the Left, but what they actually did was to follow the line designed by the European Social Democracy at the informal meeting of Stockholm. In fact, the day after the meeting between the partners of the union of the Left, the National Secretariat of the PSF sent a circular to all the party members, informing them about the common stance reached between Socialists, Communists and Left Radicals in France, but the following paragraph was added:

We want to call your attention to the fact that we have agreed to keep the contact [with Communists and Left Radicals] at a national level to follow the [Portuguese] events, but we have not judged useful or efficient to engage in any common action, whatever it is.⁶⁸⁸

As a response to questions from several federations of the party that did not understand this apparently contradictory message, this notification was further explained five days later in another circular.

We have asked the federations, and therefore also the sections, not to get involved in any common action with other formations of the Left over the Portuguese affair, because the common action does not have sense if it is not developed on a clear basis.

Equally, we ask you not to sign common texts [and] not to have any public common meetings, or whatever it could be, with the other formations that are signatories to the common programme. In fact, we make an important distinction in the analysis of the situation with the Communist party.

[...] We would like that the socialist federations [that] manifest on the Portuguese situation [...] [would] insist on the following terms:

The reference to universal suffrage should not be excluded, even in a revolutionary process, such as the one going on in Portugal.

The revolution should be put at the service of the democratic principles: political pluralism, freedom of expression, freedom of reunion etc...

We socialists think that the respect for these values, even during the development of the revolutionary phase, is indispensable.

⁶⁸⁷ “Le communiqué commun,” *L'unité*, 169 (05/09/1975): 13.

⁶⁸⁸ 450RI1, Secrétariat Nationale. Circulaire 440, 14/08/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès. The underlined appears in the original text.

Also, the recognition of the irreversible fact created by the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly [...].⁶⁸⁹

The agitation within the French party because of the Portuguese events was bigger than ever during the month of August, and the PSF decided to stop supporting the union of the Left in Portugal if it was not achieved in Socialist terms.

The PSF kept informing the federations and the secretary of propaganda about the strategy to follow. A new circular was sent with more refined instructions at the end of August. The leadership of the PSF built a basic argument that should be followed and adopted by the whole party. Following along the lines of what we have already seen, it consisted of stressing the anti-union of the Left behaviour of the PCP and its sectarianism. This not only made the union between the PS and the PCP more difficult, but also opened the door to the reaction. Therefore, whenever the PSF would come to claim the union of the Left, this would be done bearing in mind that “it can only be achieved on the base of the democratic principles and on the respect of the universal suffrage,” which meant that the union should be led by the PS. “The content of the union of the Left in Portugal has to be democracy.” Finally, “the socialists will not give up their solidarity against the reactionary forces, for this reason they will not give up in the defence for democracy.”⁶⁹⁰

In the second half of August, the PS exploited the schism in the MFA as much as they could. They supported the ‘Group of the Nine’, and through statements in the media and massive demonstrations, they asked for the removal of Prime Minister Vasco Gonçalves. Although the social and economic situation was far from being on track, with the local power in the peripheries of the country in the hands of the extreme Left and the extreme Right, and with the country moving towards bankruptcy, the Portuguese situation seemed to enter a new political phase when on 30th August Gonçalves, resigned and was replaced by the moderate Pinheiro de Azevedo. The President, Costa Gomes, stated his intention of creating a new provisional government that would reflect the electoral results.

At the same time, Soares proposed an international conference between the Socialist and Communist parties of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France with the aim of discussing the problems of the transition to Socialism, and to settle on a common project for moving towards

⁶⁸⁹ 450RI1, Secrétariat Nationale. Circulaire 441, 19/08/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁶⁹⁰ 450RI1, Secrétariat Nationale. Circulaire 442, 26/08/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Socialism in the four countries. The main question to be answered at this conference would be whether “the transition to socialism has to be made respecting political democracy and public freedoms or if [it is necessary] to give up this kind of democracy that the Communists consider a bourgeois luxury.”⁶⁹¹ In addition to this aim, Soares also wanted to delegitimise the stance of the PCP internationally. Taking into account that the Socialist parties of the four countries were in favour of a democratic way to Socialism, and that the Communist parties of Spain, Italy, and France based their new identity on respect for pluralist democracy, the aim of Soares in organising this conference was to put pressure on the PCP, and demonstrate publicly and internationally that the way to Socialism that they advocated was unfeasible and out of date.⁶⁹² Furthermore, it allowed Soares to skip a proposal that Cunhal made to the Socialists at that critical moment, consisting of a rapprochement of the stances of the PS and the PCP into a governmental coalition that would also include the MFA.⁶⁹³ Although the conference would eventually not be organised (Cunhal and Marchais declined to participate), the PSF picked up the baton and interviewed all of the leaders of the eight parties organising an international debate in their newspaper *L’unité*, as we will see below.

On 19th September, the Sixth Provisional Government was formed in accordance with the electoral results of April. This means that there was a majority of Socialist ministers. The PS had five ministers, the PPD two and the PCP one (the ministry given to the Communists was Public Works). Moreover, there were independent ministers that were close to the PS, such as Melo Antunes, who was confirmed as Foreign Affairs Minister.

Alvaro Cunhal was aware of the disadvantaged position of his party after Vasco Gonçalves resigned and the MFA Assembly changed its composition in favour of the moderates. He therefore tried to bring together the most revolutionary factions of the MFA (pro-Communist and extreme-Left), with the aim of minimising the Communist loss of influence in the Revolution. He complemented this strategy by accepting being part of the Sixth Provisional

⁶⁹¹ “Mário Soares a France Press: «Transição para o socialismo deve respeitar a democracia»,” *Portugal Socialista*, 58 (27/08/1975): 10.

⁶⁹² George Kyrtos has a different, although complementary, interpretation of Soares’ proposal. According to him, Soares probably wanted to mitigate some critical voices coming from the Portuguese and the international Socialist movement about the rightist drift of the PS by organising this conference and presenting himself as an advocate of the union of the Left. See: Kyrtos, “The Attitudes and Policies,” 270.

⁶⁹³ Raquel Varela, “O PCP quis «tomar o poder?»”, in *Revolução ou Transição? História e Memória da Revolução dos Cravos*, ed. Raquel Varela (Lisboa: Bertrand Editora, 2012), 153.

Government, arguing that the PCP would participate in the government in order to avoid the total drift to the Right that their absence would have entailed.⁶⁹⁴

The political, social and military divisions in Portugal were still deep, and the new government would have to face many challenges between September and November. In these last months of the Revolution, the PS had to reinforce democratic authority, urgently tackle the imbalances of the Portuguese economy, restore discipline in the armed forces, and contain the pressures coming from both the Right and the Left. In order to succeed in these tasks, it was crucial to have economic assistance from outside, but also to integrate the PCP into the nascent Portuguese democracy.

With the new balance of forces in the government, the PS again resurrected the idea of the union of the Left. The Socialists now wanted to ensure that the Communists, in alliance with the extreme Left, would not jeopardise the new government. In order to save the model of democracy proposed by the PS, it was crucial that the PCP accept the rules of the game and be included in the system. This was important for the PS to make the Communists co-responsible of the economic adjustments that the government would have to undertake. This was also important for the Socialist leader, to avoid the possibility of a Right-wing counter-revolutionary coup opened up by the division of the forces of the Left.⁶⁹⁵ However, although the Socialists tried to persuade the Communists to collaborate, in this last period of the Revolution the behaviour and rhetoric of both the PS and the PCP was erratic, to say the least.

In October 1975, Soares still wrote a column in which he accused the PCP and the extreme-Left of having an “aversion to democracy” and for wanting to overthrow the government. This was what set apart the PS and the PCP. However, he also wrote:

we have said it tens of times, if the PCP would accept the theses of the Italian or Spanish PCs [...] there would not be any difficulty in [establishing] fruitful and long-lasting collaboration between the PS and the PCP [...]. For this reason, the union between the PS and the PCP seems to be unviable, **as the PS will never renounce political democracy as the original way of building a pluralist Socialism in Portugal.**

However, it is true that without an agreement between the PS and the PCP there is no possible way to Socialism [...].

⁶⁹⁴ Raquel Varela, “O Partido Comunista Português e a Esquerda Militar. Contributo para o estudo da crise político-militar na Revolução dos Cravos,” *Ler história*, 63 (2012): 65.

⁶⁹⁵ According to Bernardino Gomes and Tiago Moreira de Sá, the Western powers let Soares know that he would not be supported if a right wing coup happened in Portugal. See: Gomes and Moreira de Sá, *Carlucci vs Kissinger*.

Hence, the deep contradiction in which the current policy of the PCP finds itself. This contradiction is noticeable for the [...] militants of the PCP, split as they are between supporting a government in which the PCP participates – to which they know that there is no alternative in the Left – and contesting that very government [...].

The [sixth] government is trying to get the house in order [...]. It faces a chaotic economic situation, social agitation [...], violent political attacks [...]. The economy is near to collapse. The future of the next generations is truly at stake.

In this situation it is a patriotic duty to support the [sixth] government, as it is not possible to offer the country any other alternative. There is no moment for adventures.⁶⁹⁶

In the same month, the PSF's newspaper *L'unité* brought together the opinions of the eight Communist and Socialist leaders of the Southern European parties: Felipe González (PSOE), Mario Soares (PS), François Mitterrand (PSF), Francesco de Martino (PSI), Santiago Carrillo (PCE), Enrico Berlinguer (PCI), Alvaro Cunhal (PCP) and Georges Marchais (PCF). The leaders of the Left in Southern Europe had to answer the same questions: "Where are the forces of the Left in Spain, Italy, Portugal and France today? What are the relations between Socialist and Communist parties in these four countries? [...] What are the perspectives for Socialism in these four countries of Southern Europe?"⁶⁹⁷

The interviews with Soares and Cunhal appeared on 17th October. The leader of the PS made a negative analysis of the Revolution. According to him, the continuous degradation of economic conditions in Portugal was weakening the popular support for the Revolution. The responsibility for this degradation was the bad management of the nationalised companies and the poorly-planned agrarian reform. Fixing this situation would be the task of the Sixth Provisional Government. This was an ambiguous answer as he did not explain in which sense this would be fixed, whether by improving the economic planning and management or by reversing the process of nationalisations.

Soares had constantly made ambiguous and changing statements during the Revolution, as we have seen. This was noted by the interviewer Francis Pisani. He asked about the unclear strategy of alliances of the PS, which seemed to have shifted from advocating the union of the Left to advocating an alliance with the PPD in the government. Soares answered that in the PS strategy "there is no ambiguity"; he considered that in order to gain social support for the Revolution, it was necessary to count on the PPD, which represented the middle classes and

⁶⁹⁶ Mario Soares, "Salvar a Revolução," *Portugal Socialista*, 68 (29/10/1975).

⁶⁹⁷ "Les huit Readers socialistes et communistes de l'Europe du Sud parlent pour la première fois des chemins de l'unité," *L'unité*, 174 (10 to 16 of October 1975): 2.

the petit bourgeoisie. This did not exclude the fact that the PS also considered an alliance with the PCP to be necessary. The problem regarding the Communists was that “we have never obtained [their] commitment to freedoms.” Insisting on this argument, he accused the PCP for “having a plan to seize power in a way comparable to what happened in the East of Europe after the war.”

Thus, Soares considered the centrist PPD as a suitable ally for strengthening the Revolution, indirectly rejecting the Communists as partners. It seems difficult to imagine how he wanted to carry out the Revolution with the support of the middle classes, and without the support of part of the working class. However, when Soares was asked about how he reconciled his close contacts with European Social Democracy and his statements against the suitability of this model for Portugal, he answered that “although we belong to the same spiritual family of democratic socialism [...] [the difference between Social Democracy and democratic socialism were that] we have a strategy of rupture with capitalism. We want a society truly Socialist, a classless society [...].”

Finally, Soares was asked about the future relations between the PS and the PCP. He was open to collaborate with the Communists in the future, but under the conditions that they “revise all their strategy and respect the rules of democracy.” From that moment onwards, the PS would be willing to establish a common project with the PCP to advance the Revolution.⁶⁹⁸

In this interview, the tactical use of the union of the Left made by the PS since the beginning of 1975 again appears quite clearly. In the new context in which the Socialists were gaining control over the government, with the Communists still influential in the Portuguese State apparatus and in the Army, Soares kept arguing that if the Communists fulfilled some conditions imposed by the Socialists—specifically the respect for the democratic freedoms—he would be willing to collaborate with them. At this moment, this tactic probably was less relevant than it had been, since the key to the Revolution was the Armed Forces, as we already saw. However, it allowed the Socialists to mitigate the criticisms for trying to halt the Revolution that came from the Left. Furthermore, it left the door open for the eventual inclusion of the PCP within Portuguese democracy.

⁶⁹⁸ “Mario Soares: Je ne vois pas d’issue à notre révolution hors de la collaboration entre PC et PS,” *L’unité*, 175 (17 to 23 of October 1975): 17-18.

As well as the interview with Soares, *L'unité* published the interview with Cunhal. He explained the PCP's interpretation of the Revolution, and he considered the accusations made by the PS about the Communist lack of attachment to freedom to be false. He understood freedom differently to Soares, however. Cunhal argued that in order to keep and enlarge freedom in Portugal, it was necessary to liquidate the power of the monopolies, which were the ones that put freedom in Portugal at risk. This led him to reject a Western kind of democracy in Portugal, as it would allow the monopolies to survive.

Cunhal thought that the mistake the PS made in the Revolution was to oppose the democratic legitimacy that they had in the elections with the revolutionary legitimacy of the popular forces and the military. This had shown the difference between projects of the PS and the PCP—the former wanted build a Western kind of democracy in Portugal, and the latter to advance towards Socialism. Thus, the PCP, which in theory was also open to collaborating with the PS, would not do so because he considered that the Socialists did not want to advance towards Socialism.⁶⁹⁹

The PSF considered that the new situation in the Portuguese Sixth Provisional Government put an end to the way the Revolution had followed so far. The leadership of the French party now saw the situation in terms of avoiding a Right-wing coup in Portugal, and not in terms of moving towards Socialism. Thus, they considered the new situation as the best possible solution for avoiding a reactionary coup in Portugal. The coalition between the PS, PPD, and PCP, in a government that reflected the electoral results of April, was seen as the best way to avoid a tragic end.

On 4th and 5th October, the PSF held a debate on Portugal. The directive committee of the party unanimously adopted a resolution. The French wished that Portugal could keep the *acquis* of the Revolution, and “wished that the PS would contribute to sanitising the relations between the parties of the Left, to create the conditions of development of the union of the popular forces and to ensure the efficacy of the governmental coalition.”⁷⁰⁰

At this stage, the PSF were very much aware that “what it is at stake in Portugal is the meaning of Socialism. It is to know what kind of socialism will prevail eventually.” The leadership of the PSF acknowledged the ambiguity of the behaviour of the PS in the

⁶⁹⁹ “Alvaro Cunhal: Nous ne voulons pas faire payer au peuple le Prix d'un accord avec le PS,” *L'unité*, 175 (17 to 23 of October 1975): 17-19.

⁷⁰⁰ 450RI1, Resolution votée à l'unanimité par le comité directeur des 4 et 5 octobre 1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Revolution. In one of the many analyses of the Portuguese Revolution carried out by the PSF, the leadership of the party wondered: “do we have the right to [put into question] the authenticity of the PS?” The answer that they gave to this question was negative. The PS was the only Socialist party that, like the PSF, “refuses the label social democrat [...] and advocates *autogestion* in its program” Then the French wondered again, “judging globally from the behaviour of the [PS] what can we confirm?” They thought that the PS represented “the first manifestation in which a PS has reaffirmed its autonomy in a revolutionary situation that has not succumbed to the Social-Democrat temptation, or to crypto-Communist deviation.” Moreover, they considered that “by itself”, the PS “had made the PCP back down without favouring the counter-revolution.”

The PSF also considered that to contest the actions of the PS vis-à-vis the PCP, to blame it for being against the union of the Left, was “in some way, to put into question our own unitarian situation.” Therefore, they considered the role played by the PS in Portugal positively. Far from considering the behaviour of the PS to be harmful for the union of the Left and Socialism in Western Europe, the PSF thought: “we can say that [the PS] has done a great service to the European Socialism”. Accordingly, the PSF’s unconditional support to the PS “was largely justified.”⁷⁰¹

3.2.5. Confrontations within the PSF caused by Portugal

However, this interpretation of the Portuguese events was not unanimous within the French Party. The unconditional support given by the PSF to the PS created internal disagreement between the leadership of the French party and the CERES.

On 4th of June, the Executive Committee of the PSF held a meeting to discuss the situation in Portugal. This meeting saw the first confrontation between the leader of the CERES Jean-Pierre Chevenement and Mitterrand. The cause of the confrontation was an interview with Mário Soares published in the Journal *l’Aurore* in which he openly criticised the PCP. Chevenement disapproved of these critics because they damaged any possibility of collaboration between the Socialists and the Communists, and he also criticised the tone used

⁷⁰¹ 450RI1, Quelle type de revolution pur le Portugal?, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

in the interview. Mitterrand defended Soares, saying that “if we cannot criticise the Communists without being anti-Communist...”⁷⁰²

However, it was the Socialist abandonment of the Fourth Provisional Government on 10th June that created the biggest divergent interpretations within the PS. In August, the leader of the CERES Chèvenement was interviewed on Radio-France, and he showed more clearly the different opinions that existed in the PSF regarding Portugal. According to Chèvenement, the most important issue in the Revolution was “that the Portuguese Socialists and Communists come together.” He argued that “there is no solution outside of the union, this is true in Portugal as well as in France.” The interviewer argued that this worked in theory, but in practice an agreement between the PS and the PCP seemed impossible to achieve. Chèvenement replied that there was still hope, and that the French Socialists and Communists should play a role in promoting this agreement, because “there was no other solution” than the entente between PS and PCP, especially considering that he feared an imminent “coup from the Right.”

Contrary to the statements made by the leadership of the PSF during the previous months, Chèvenement believed that if the Portuguese Revolution was in crisis, this was not only due to Communist behaviour. He thought that this was also the responsibility of the PS. According to him, the Portuguese Socialists had not established links with the Communists and the MFA at the beginning of the Revolution, and now they did not have the right to claim a leading role in the Revolution because of the electoral results. “It [was] not the elections” that overthrew the dictatorship, “it was a coup d'état that brought down the dictatorship.” Therefore, the situation was too complex for the argument that the Socialists should have a leading position in the government, because the military, and the PCP linked to the MFA, could also legitimately exert power. In conclusion, the leader of the CERES thought that French Socialists should try to facilitate the creation of a common political platform for Socialists and Communists in Portugal. Both parties should then pursue “the transformation of the Portuguese society in a socialist sense”; an “economic model that allows them to get

⁷⁰² 450RI1, Extrait du proces verbal de la reunion du Bureau Executif du 4 Juin 1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

out of the current situation”; and in the political level they should create a frame that “respects pluralism”⁷⁰³.

The stance defended by the CERES was consistent with their understanding of the union of the Left. What was happening in Portugal was the reflection of a problem between the Socialists and Communists that happened everywhere, which the CERES called a “vicious circle.” The more the Socialists moved towards Social Democracy, the more the Communists became radicalised, and vice versa. Therefore, they kept arguing that the union of the Left in Portugal was the only way to save the Revolution. It was their opinion that this union should bring about changes in the PS, but what was more important, it should also provoke changes in the PCP.

A more detailed analysis of the Revolution by CERES appeared in the journal of the faction, *REPERES les cahiers du CERES*, in September. They analysed what they considered to be the main failures of the PS in the Revolution, just when the process seemed to be reversing. These failures were abandoning the provisional government, translating the political struggle to the streets, and misunderstanding the importance of the MFA as a guarantor of the Revolution. Interestingly, however, they placed part of the responsibility for the PS’s failures on the international solidarity received from the European Social Democracy, which had become “a double-edged sword.” According to the CERES, “the patronage [exerted by H. Schmidt and H. Wilson] made the Portuguese PS appear as the vector of a ‘social democratic’ project, which in the current conditions of Portugal means the restoration of Capitalism.” This rendered the alliance between the PS, the extreme Leftist military, and the PCP more difficult.

In this regard, the CERES considered the participation of the PSF in the Committee of Friendship and Solidarity for Democracy and Socialism in Portugal created in August under the leadership of the SAP, the SPD, and the BLP “more than surprising”. This struck the French because this Committee was “manifestly linked [...] to the interests and intentions of the West European capitalism and of the American diplomacy.” Moreover, the arguments that this collaboration with Social Democracy were based on, namely preventing the imposition of a popular democracy in Portugal and respecting universal suffrage, were false.

⁷⁰³ 450R11, Radio-France. France-Inter Journal 13/14. Service des Relations avec la presse pour la Direction de l’Information. Le Socialisme, la gauche française et le Portugal. Interview de Jean-Pierre Chèvènement par J.P. Elkabbach. 13/08/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

According to the CERES, regardless of the intentions of the PCP, the Communists were never in a condition to take power in Portugal, as they were very weak in the rural areas, especially in the north. Thus, the Social Democratic pressures to save Portugal from a Communist dictatorship were a manipulation of reality. Regarding the respect for the universal suffrage, “the argument more used” by the Social Democrats, the CERES considered that the idea held by the PS and the European Social Democracy on this issue “is not our [idea].” The pact signed between the parties and the MFA in March made the concrete objectives of the elections clear, and the reaction of the PS and the European Social Democracy to the electoral results was to question the signed accord. Moreover, CERES considered that the accord was questioned based on a very weak argument, that of the electoral victory of the PS. For the CERES, the victory of the PS without the majority of the votes did not grant them the legitimacy that they claimed. Instead, the electoral results showed that the government should be based on a coalition.

These considerations made the CERES very critical of the strategy of the PS, which consisted of the implementation of a bourgeois Western kind of democracy. “It goes without saying that we make reference here to [PS’] acts and not to what it says: a party is what it does and not what it says.” They also showed disenchantment with their own party, considering that the whole revolution and the behaviour of the PS had shown the limits “of the autonomy strategy of the ‘socialist parties of Southern Europe’.”

Finally, the French still considered that “we must support the revolutionary process and at the same time try to make sure that the Portuguese Socialist Party fully participates in it. But the fact that the governments led by Social Democrats and certain social democratic parties of Western Europe support the Portuguese Socialist Party while attacking the [...] revolution entails a grave ambiguity to which it is annoying to be linked. On the contrary, the socialist parties of Southern Europe have the responsibility to show [...] that their project has nothing in common with the Labour formulas of ‘loyal management of Capitalism’.” Moreover, the CERES also considered that “the union of the Left in France will be put into question, directly or indirectly, [in the light of] the Portuguese events, which is showing [...] that the union of the progressive forces, at the national as well as at the international level, are indispensable for the success of the transition to socialism.”⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰⁴ “Le point de vue du CERES,” *REPERES. Les cahiers du CERES*, 25 (September 1975): 6-9.

The CERES interpretation of the Revolution was on the same lines as the initial interpretation by the leadership of the PSF. However, at this stage it was very different to the analysis of the group led by Mitterrand. The basic disagreements were not only about the desirability or not of the union of the Left in Portugal, but also about its meaning and who was responsible for its failure. For the executive of the PSF, who had been in direct contact with the leaders of the PS, the party responsible was the PCP and its totalitarian behaviour. For the CERES, in turn, it was the PS and its attempt to reverse the revolution by implanting a bourgeois democracy in Portugal that would limit the strength of the revolutionary forces. These different interpretations led to different proposed solutions. Since May 1975, Mitterrand's faction had argued in favour of the union of all the progressive forces in a government that would reflect the results of the elections, which implied a majority of PS and PPD members. For the CERES, the union of the Left was still crucial and it should be an alliance on equal terms between Socialists and Communists that would be useful for consolidating the revolution and preventing the return of the counter-revolutionary forces to Portugal.

4. The BLP and the PSOE in the Spanish transition (1975-1977)

4.1. The BLP and the PSOE in the transition

This chapter begins with an update of the international context in 1975, because within a very short time, there were substantial changes in the Mediterranean that affected how the main Western powers looked at Spain—especially in Southern Europe with the beginning of the Carnation Revolution and the falling of the Regime of the Colonels in Greece.⁷⁰⁵ What is considered to be the end of the Revolutionary process in Portugal coincided with the death of Franco in Spain. The Portuguese experience influenced how the Western powers approached the Spanish change of regime to a great extent. The radicalisation of Portuguese politics caused the main international actors in the West—the US, the UK, the FRG, and France—to consider the possibility that the experience of Portugal could be repeated in Spain. This possibility could potentially have a greater destabilising effect on the international status quo than the events that occurred in Portugal; therefore, these powers tried to promote a peaceful change of regime in Spain that would lead the country to a kind of democracy that would be comparable to those existing in Western Europe. However, since the situation in Spain did not escape the control of the government, and the transition to democracy was relatively peaceful,⁷⁰⁶ it is accurate to say that the international powers, although at different degrees of intensity, in general exerted supervision more than intervention over the Spanish process of transition.⁷⁰⁷

The Western actors had different interests and concerns that converged in Spain. For the US, Spain was a faithful ally and very important from a geo-strategic perspective. In this sense,

⁷⁰⁵ For a panoramic view of the transformations of the Mediterranean region and its relevance from a Cold War perspective see: Ennio Di Nolfo, “The transformation of the Mediterranean, 1960-1975” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Crises and Détente, Vol. II*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 238-257.

⁷⁰⁶ The transition in Spain has been always considered a peaceful process because it has been compared, consciously or unconsciously, with the bloody past of the country, specifically with the Civil War. Notwithstanding this fact, the process of change of regime in Spain had more deaths due to political violence and terrorism than the Portuguese and Greece transitions. On the myth of the peaceful Spanish transition see: Sophie Baby, *Le Mythe de la Transition Pacifique. Violence et Politique en Espagne (1975-1982)* (Casa de Velázquez: Madrid, 2013); Mariano Sánchez Soler, *La Transición sangrienta. Una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España (1975-1983)* (Península: Barcelona, 2010).

⁷⁰⁷ The most prominent works on the international factors in the Spanish transition have proved this statement. See for example: Lemus, *Estados Unidos y la Transición española*; Viñas, *En las garras del Águila*; Rosa Pardo, “EEUU y el tardofranquismo: las relaciones bilaterales durante la presidencia Nixon, 1969-1974,” *Historia del Presente*, 6 (2005): 11-42; Rizas, *The Rise of the Left*.

Spain became even more important during the period of greater radicalisation in Portugal (from March to November 1975), when the uncertain outcome of the Carnation Revolution could have brought about the loss of American bases on Portuguese soil. Therefore, it was essential for the Americans to guarantee the political stability of Spain, which in turn was essential for keeping their military bases on Spanish territory. Although the US were in favour of the democratisation of Spain, they thought that if there were going to be disturbances, the priority should be to keep the public order instead of undertaking big reforms.⁷⁰⁸

In the case of the FRG, the threat that a disordered change of regime in Spain could mean for the European status quo, – underpinned by the policy of détente promoted by the Government of the SPD, made the Germans work to avoid a repeat of the Portuguese situation in Spain. Moreover, the Social Democrat Government in Germany was worried about the fact that the instability in Portugal, and also in the whole Mediterranean area, had encouraged the critics of American military guardianship over Western Europe. This was a cause for concern, because according to the Germans, stability in Europe depended on the military presence of the US in Europe via NATO, and this stability was essential for the German Government to implement their *Ostpolitik*.⁷⁰⁹ Thus, the Germans were involved in Spain to an important extent, and tried through several channels including the Government, the SPD, the Ebert Foundation, the German trade unions, the SI, and the EEC to promote a peaceful and ordered transition to democracy in Spain.

Since the Germans considered the Communist parties of Southern Europe to be the main destabilising actors in the West, their strategy consisted of favouring the development and the strengthening of the Socialist parties in the region as a way of containing the advance of the Communists. Consequently, from 1975 onwards, the German Social Democrats focused their support on the PSOE, a party that had the characteristics and leadership that the Germans considered the best to defend their interests in Spain.⁷¹⁰

For France, the Spanish transition opened a new range of possibilities as well as dangers, the latter especially perceived after the radicalisation of the Carnation Revolution. The Fifth Republic of France had maintained relatively good relations with Franco's Spain during the

⁷⁰⁸ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 198. See also: Lemus, *Estados Unidos y la Transición española*; Powell, *El amigo americano*.

⁷⁰⁹ Gottfried Niedhart, "Ostpolitik: Phases, Short Term objectives and Grand Design," *German Historical Institute Bulletin Supplement: American Détente and German Ostpolitik, 1969-1972*, 1 (2003): 118-136.

⁷¹⁰ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*.

1960s and 1970s. France was interested in strengthening their sphere of influence in the Mediterranean, and promoting a peaceful and moderate transition to democracy in Spain, in which the leading actors would be the most liberal sectors of the regime, was the best way to keep some influence over their neighbouring country during and after the transition. Furthermore, the French were interested in reinforcing the southern flank of the EC, and the democratisation of Spain could lead the country to integration into European Community. This would change the geo-political centre of gravity of the EC, moving it towards the south, which should allow the French to keep a leading role in the process of integration and in the EC. All of this led to a situation in 1975 when the French tried to exert what the Spanish literature has called *padrinazgo*⁷¹¹ over the process of transition.

Finally, the Spanish transition was a matter of primary importance for the UK for several reasons. First of all, the UK feared that if the change of regime was not peaceful, it could entail great problems for the interests of the West in the context of Cold War détente. However, there were other concrete interests that made the British engage in a subtle way in the Spanish transition to democracy. The first was the British economic interests in Spain and the possibilities that if a future democratic Spain could be integrated into Europe, a new market could open to the economy of the UK, which in the 1970s was in crisis and in search of new markets. The second was an issue central to Anglo-Spanish relations during the Franco years, and that prevented the British from interfering too much in Spain. This was the conflict over Gibraltar.

Notwithstanding all of this, it is necessary not to overemphasise the centrality of Spain to the UK, or the British involvement in the Spanish transition. At the beginning of the 1970s, only four years before the death of Franco, the British assessed their relations with Spain and considered that despite Gibraltar, their interests in Spain were limited. Their trade with Spain was useful, but it was more important for the Spaniards than for the British, and the UK's

⁷¹¹ This term could be translated as patronage. Despite the fact that there are no monographs on Franco-Spanish relations during the transition to democracy, it is commonly accepted by the Spanish literature that the attitude of France with towards change of regime in Spain was to attempt to exert some kind of patronage and guidance that would lead Spain towards democracy and European integration on terms favourable for France. See: Juan Carlos Pereira Castañares, "El factor internacional en la transición española: La influencia del contexto internacional y el papel de las potencias centrales," *Studia Historica. Historia Contemporánea*, 22 (2004): 185-224; Óscar José Martín García and Manuel Ortiz Heras, ed., *Claves Internacionales en la Transición Española* (Madrid: Catarata, 2010); J. Tusell, J. Avilés, and R. Pardo, ed., *La política exterior de España en el siglo XX* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva-UNED, 2000); Encarnación Lemus López and Juan Carlos Pereira Castañares, "Transición y política exterior (1975-1986)," in *La política exterior de España (1800-2003)*, ed. Juan Carlos Pereira (Barcelona: Ariel, 2003): 517-539; Pereira, Juan Carlos, ed., *Historia de las relaciones internacionales contemporáneas* (Barcelona: Ariel, 2001).

geo-strategic interests were not directly related to Spain—although they recognised the overall importance of the Iberian Peninsula in this respect. Regarding the political interests of the British in Spain, they hoped that Spain would remain stable, without violent oscillations to the Right or the Left.⁷¹² If there was an event that made the British change their perception and their interests in Spain, this was the Carnation Revolution. However, the British involvement in Spain, as we will see, was subtle, moderate, and constrained by the need to avoid political confrontation with Spain over Gibraltar.⁷¹³

4.1.1. The PSOE and the BLP in 1975.

As we have seen in chapter two, at the end of 1974 the British ambassador to Spain Sir Charles Wigg considered that Franco's regime did not have a future. This consideration was not reassuring, however. In the Foreign Office, there were doubts about what could happen in Spain in the near future, especially taking into consideration that the events in Portugal became radicalised at the beginning of 1975, and that contagion to Spain was a possibility. The chance of a chaotic process of regime change that could benefit the Spanish Communists was a fear that was present for the British during all of this year. However, they were also aware that Spain and Portugal were dissimilar, which could lead to thoughts that the political evolution in the former would be more peaceful and controlled than in the latter. The main differences between these countries were that Spain had a vast middle class with a lot to lose, which was a stabilising element that Portugal lacked, and the fact that the Spanish army was considered to be more moderate than the Portuguese one, as it had not suffered a prolonged and humiliating colonial war like the Portuguese army. However, if Franco languished for long time, the British feared that the risks of polarisation and radicalisation in Spain could increase.

As the scholar Sotiris Rizas has shown, the British coordinated their activities in Spain with the US to a significant extent. In May 1974, British and American officials met twice, first in Washington and later in Madrid, with the intention of discussing and putting forward a common strategy of action regarding the future of Spain. What emerged from these meetings was that the US and the UK had a similar, although not exactly equal, approach to the Spanish situation, and that both were disposed towards handling the transition to democracy in

⁷¹² Carolina Labarta Rodríguez-Maribona, "Las relaciones hispano-británicas bajo el franquismo, 1950-1973," *Studia Historica. Historia Contemporánea*, 22 (2004): 88.

⁷¹³ Nicolás Sartorius and Alberto Sabio Alcutén, *El fin de la dictadura: la conquista de la democracia en España* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2007). Martín, "Gran Bretaña y España."

tandem. The common objectives for both Atlantic powers were the peaceful liberalisation of Spain and the anchoring of the Iberian country to the West. However, there was a slight disagreement on the peace that the transition should follow. The Americans were more interested in stability than in democratisation, and considered that the liberalisation of the regime should be subordinated to the maintenance of internal stability.⁷¹⁴ On the other hand, the British were more committed to the democratisation of Spain, and although very interested in keeping Spain stable, they considered that this aim could only be achieved through a controlled but genuine democratisation .

Notwithstanding this divergence, the two Atlantic powers decided to pursue a complementary strategy in order to promote a peaceful and stable transition after the death of Franco. The US would develop its relations with the regime, especially with the reformists and Prince Juan Carlos, who was considered the best alternative for leading the process of change in Spain. The UK in turn, would complement American activities by developing relations with the democratic opposition (especially with the PSOE), except for the Communists and terrorist groups. The BLP had already established contacts with the Spanish Socialists bilaterally and through the SI, as we have seen, and the British government considered that the Spanish Socialist party could be an essential actor for counteracting the attraction of the PCE in the Left. Nevertheless, the British government considered that their contacts should not be exclusively restricted to the PSOE, and they also developed relations with members of the Spanish regime on their own.⁷¹⁵

As for the PSOE, 1975 began with interesting prospects. The party had renovated its programme, advocating the democratic rupture, and it had elected a new executive committee, with Felipe González as first secretary. Once the ideological and organisational renewals were achieved, the party now had to carry out activities against the dictatorship in Spain, improve its implantation and organisation in the country, and work for the unification of all members of the Spanish Socialist family. In order to achieve all of these objectives, the party needed as much international aid as possible. At this moment, despite being the official representative of Spanish Socialism in the SI, the PSOE was not yet receiving substantial international support. The main parties in the International, such as the SPD, were not sure about what kind of party the PSOE was. The political resolutions approved at the Congress of Suresnes, together with

⁷¹⁴ On the American involvement through governmental channels in the Spanish transition, see: Lemus, *Estados unidos y la Transición española*.

⁷¹⁵ See: Rizas, *The Rise of the Left*, 113-115.

the youth and radicalisation of the new leaders, caused the Social Democratic parties to doubt the reliability of the PSOE, and at the beginning of the year the international support enjoyed by the Spanish party can be described as important but limited.

The PSOE was aware of this situation. Felipe González met with his European counterparts on 12th January in London, at the second meeting of the Spain Committee of the SI, and there he could perceive the European feeling towards his party. He explained the significance of the Suresnes Congress held in October 1974 to his European partners, and stated that the aim of the PSOE was to play a central role in Spanish politics. Despite the fact that the resolutions of the Congress had opened the possibility of collaborating with the Communists, an issue that very much concerned the Social Democrats, he told his colleagues that the PSOE would not participate with the Communists in the *Junta Democrática*. Furthermore, he said that the PSOE would not reach any kind of agreement with the PCE that could help the Communists to acquire a greater relevance than they actually had. This was an ambiguous statement because it did not completely discard reaching an agreement with the PCE. In terms of relations with other Socialist parties in Spain, González's position was in favour of the union of the Spanish Socialists, but he envisaged this union within the PSOE, the natural home of Spanish Socialism.⁷¹⁶

The meeting between González and the members of the Spain Committee of the SI was positive for the PSOE, in the sense that the Bureau recommended to the member parties that, "as there is a member party in Spain of the Socialist International, support should be given to the PSOE and to the PSOE only." The Bureau also "reiterat[ed] to all parties the need for financial aid for the PSOE, in line with previous decisions." Notwithstanding these recommendations, it was also suggested that a mission of the SI should be sent to Spain, "the aim being that such a mission would attempt to assess the strength of the Socialists in the regions and also to contact and assess other groupings claiming to be socialists." At this stage, the atomisation of the Spanish Socialists concerned all of the European Social Democrats, and the first step towards promoting their unification was to get first hand information about the situation.⁷¹⁷

However, despite the fact that the SI had recommended a clear line regarding the PSOE already in January 1975, and in spite of the contents of the early talks between the UK and the

⁷¹⁶ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 171-172.

⁷¹⁷ *Spain Committee. Recommendations to the Bureau meeting, 13th January, 1975*, IISH, SI Archives, 812 (Spain, corr. 1975. Docs conc. Process 1001).

US on Spain, the British government and the leadership of the BLP did not become directly engaged with the PSOE until the end of 1975. In the meantime, the documents of the British National Archives and the historical archive of the BLP show that the collaboration between the PSOE and the BLP was rather disconnected from the concerns of the British government about the immediate future of Spain. In 1975, contacts between Spanish Socialists and British Labour were still not very intensive, and occurred through the three parallel channels of the SDDC, the SI, and governmental channels. These parallel relations were maintained until the end of 1975, when Franco died. After that moment, the Labour government would take the lead in the British relations with the PSOE, integrating the actions carried out in the SI into their strategy. The SDDC would lose importance until its dissolution in April 1976.

In the following discussion, I will focus briefly on the relations between the SDDC and the Spanish opposition, which includes the PSOE, in 1975. I will then move on to the relations between the Labour leaders and the Spanish Socialists, which were not much more intense, but were politically more relevant. There are two important differences and two similarities between the approaches of the SDDC and the leadership of the BLP towards the Spanish Socialists. The differences were that the SDDC was almost exclusively led by international solidarity, and in principle they did not exclude any group of the Spanish democratic opposition from their support. The leaders of the BLP, in turn, shaped their actions according to national interests and international concerns, and their approach towards the PSOE was less ideologically-driven than that of the SDDC. Moreover, although the Labour government decided to keep relations with as wide a spectrum of the Spanish democratic opposition as possible, they mainly focused on the PSOE and excluded the Communists from these relations, contrary to the SDDC. The similarities were that both wings of the British Labour movement tried not to restrict their contacts to just one interlocutor, and they coincided in their desire to see a genuine democratic regime established in Spain.

4.1.2. The SDDC and the Spanish opposition in 1975

There is a quotation that gives a clear clue about the nature of the support of the SDDC for the PSOE and other groups of the Spanish opposition. At the beginning of 1975, the Secretary of the SDDC Bob Edwards considered that Spain was “the cause of big concern” for British Labour. As he put it, “[t]hree hundred and seventy-nine years ago, the Rt Hon Sir William Cecil, First Baron of Burleigh, called Spain ‘the cause of big concern’. Sir William could not

have foreseen just how long his words would be repeated, not only by his fellow countrymen but by the whole of Europe, to whom twentieth century Spain is no less trouble than it was in the sixteenth century.” According to Edwards, after Franco’s death there was only one solution to the Spanish situation. “In my view, there are no new roads to old salvation. I for one still believe that libertarian socialism is still the only hope for Spain.”⁷¹⁸

The British support for the Spanish Socialists during most of 1975 did not follow any carefully conceived strategy beyond supporting them in general terms in their struggle against the dictatorship. The main activities of the SDDC in the first months of 1975 consisted of protesting and fighting against the decision of the Spanish Tribunal of Public Order to condemn the ‘Carabanchel Ten’, who trade unionists linked to the Communist-controlled CCOO, and accused of conspiracy.⁷¹⁹ A telling fact about the SDDC activities is that the CCOO contacted the British, asking them for help using the following words: “convinced that we can count upon the solidarity you so often expressed in the past, we appeal to you once again, in the name of all the workers of Spain, for your solidarity support. This could consist in the sending of petitions of protest, letters, telegrams, etc., to embassies and/or consulates of Spain or to the President of the Supreme Court [...] demanding the annulment of the trial and the immediate release of the ‘Carabanchel Ten’.”⁷²⁰

The SDDC accepted sending observers to the new trial of the leaders of the CCOO. Moreover, they decided to send an observer to another trial against three young Spaniards who were accused of trying to form a branch of the anarcho-syndicalist union *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT). In a letter from Bob Edwards to Jenny Little, he explained the why they should be present at both trials: “I think that it is very important that we should have somebody at the trial of the ten and the three CNT people as well, just to show our impartiality.” The trial of the three CNT members would take place on 13th February, and that of the Carabanchel ten on 11th February. The SDDC decided that representatives of the Committee should cover both trials.

The presence of British Labour at these hearings of trade unionists with different ideologies (in principle the CCOO was controlled by the PCE, although not all of its members were

⁷¹⁸ Edwards, Bob, Review of ‘Franco’s Political Legacy – From Fascism to Façade Democracy’ by Jose Amodia. BLP Historical Archive, BOX 5, Bob Edwards papers correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷¹⁹ In Spanish they were accused of *asociación ilícita*.

⁷²⁰ The Exterior Delegation of Workers’ Commissions, *To all Unions, to all Democratic Organizations, to all Workers*. BLP Historical Archive, BOX 5, Bob Edwards papers correspondence 1969-1987.

Communists, and the CNT was anarcho-syndicalist) was a gesture of solidarity with all of the Spanish opposition that shows that the SDDC was not specifically committed to one group over the others. The fact that the people accused were trade unionists made the ideological ascription of the union less important. What was important for the British was that by infiltrating the official *sindicato vertical*, these unions were defending the interests of the Spanish workers, while at the same time, fighting against the regime from within. Moreover, the SDDC obtained most of the economic resources that they destined for Spain from the British trade unions, which implied a commitment to support all of the Spanish trade unionists without ideological exclusions. As Edwards said to Little in the above-mentioned letter, “I understand you have some doubts about us being represented at the trial at the Carabanchel Ten, but I think our trade union supporters would be very upset if we were not represented. In any case we are interested in the Workers’ Commission rather than that some of them may be members of the Communist Party, and I am sure Jack Jones is firmly of the same view as myself [...]”⁷²¹

The Labour lawyer Jeremy Smith was sent by the SDDC to Spain again to assist at the trials as an observer. After his trip to Spain, he reported to the SDDC that the social and political situation in the country was very tumultuous, and that practically all of the social sectors and classes were against the continuation of the regime. He even remarked that “many of Spain’s leading businessmen and industrialists feel that a certain amount of liberalisation is necessary in the interests of the economy, if only to help an eventual entry by Spain in the EEC.” The trial of the Carabanchel Ten was a partial success for the accused. They saw their sentences reduced significantly (some of them were released that very day).⁷²² The case raised great international interest due to the Spanish situation of the end of regime, and this international pressure, according to Smith, influenced the tribunal. In addition, in the case of the trial of the anarcho-syndicalists of the CNT, the regime postponed the sentence in view of the international expectations that had been raised.⁷²³

The sensitivity of the Spanish regime to international demonstrations was because at that moment Spain did not want to disturb the ongoing negotiations for the renovation of the preferential trade agreement with the EEC that had to be adapted to the new situation created

⁷²¹ Letter from Bob Edwards MP to Miss Jenny Little, 06/02/1975. BLP Historical Archive, BOX 5, Bob Edwards papers correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷²² All of them would be reprieved on 25th November 1975, after the death of Franco.

⁷²³ “Report on: 1. The appeal of the “Carabanchel ten”, 2. The trial of Edo, Burro, Urbano and Ferran”, Jeremy Smith, March 1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

by the integration of Great Britain, Ireland, and Denmark in 1973. Since at that time there were Social Democratic governments that were hostile to the Spanish regime in five⁷²⁴ out of the nine countries that composed the EEC, the Spanish authorities were especially wary with respect to the opinions and criticism coming from the West European countries.⁷²⁵

However, in spite of the Spanish European interests and international pressures, the regime responded to the increasing social unrest in Spain in 1975 with harsh repression. From the beginning of the year until the death of Franco, the social conflicts—workers' strikes, student demonstrations, and terrorist attacks—increased in Spain, reaching a dimension never before experienced in Franco's regime.⁷²⁶ The Spanish president at that time, Carlos Arias Navarro, had started his mandate in 1974 by promising limited liberalisation. His announcement was not welcomed by the most conservative sector of the regime, the so-called *bunker*, and was considered insufficient by the opposition. The disappointing stagnation of the government during 1974 and 1975 led to this growing social unrest. However, the increasing number of strikes and demonstrations were not only a response to political reasons, but also to economic ones. The international economic crisis initiated in 1973 affected Spain from April 1974 onwards.⁷²⁷ Although the government tried to ease the repercussions of the price of the oil on Spanish workers, the consequences of the smooth stabilisation, the growing inflation, was added to the political demands behind the workers' unrest. This made the situation explosive,⁷²⁸ and the only answer of the regime to this social crisis was to harden its repressive attitude.

The regime showed its true repressive face between the spring and the autumn of 1975. The radicalisation of the Revolution in Portugal in the summer added fuel to the internal social unrest, and the Right wing of the Spanish regime used the situation of the neighbouring country to argue in favour of hardening the government's stance. In this situation, one of the

⁷²⁴ In 1975, there were Social Democratic governments in the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Denmark, and Luxembourg.

⁷²⁵ Julio Maclennan Crespo, *España en Europa, 1945-2000. Del ostracismo a la modernidad* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2004).

⁷²⁶ See: Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, *Productores disciplinados y minorías subversivas. Clase obrera y conflictividad laboral en la España franquista* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1998).

⁷²⁷ Due to the contracts previously signed with the oil producers, the price of oil for Spain did not increase until April 1974. See: José Luis García Delgado and José María Serrano Sanz, "De la primera crisis energética a las elecciones del 77: tiempo de incertidumbre" in *Economía española de la transición y la democracia*, ed. José Luis García Delgado (Madrid: CIS, 1990): 3-21.

⁷²⁸ For a panoramic view on the workers' contestation to Franco's regime, see: Pere Ysàs, "El movimiento obrero durante el franquismo. De la resistencia a la movilización (1940-1975)," *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 30 (2008): 165-184.

most radical and active groups in the opposition, the Basque nationalist group ETA, intensified its strategy of terror and killed a police inspector in the Basque Country. In response, the regime declared a state of exception in the Basque Country on 25th April, a measure that affected the whole country.

This situation seemed to indicate that the change of regime could be problematic. This concern is evident in a report on Spain that the Department of the Atlantic Region of the FCO wrote a few days before the death of Franco.⁷²⁹ The British drew the parallel between the Spanish situation and the situation in pre-Revolution Portugal. They thought that Prince Juan Carlos would be in a position similar to Caetano in Portugal at the end of the 1960s. The difference was that Spain at this moment was much more tumultuous than Portugal had then been. Thus, they thought that the Prince “would not have space to breathe”. Without the authority of Franco, and with economic, regional and social problems growing, the authority could collapse, which “could be the preface of a revolutionary situation.”⁷³⁰

In these circumstances, on 1st of May, a group of Socialist members of the PSOE and the UGT were arrested as they were trying to commemorate May Day. The Socialists traditionally visited the grave of Pablo Iglesias (founder of the PSOE) in the Madrid Civil Cemetery every year in order to pay him homage. This time the police were waiting for them, and after charging at the demonstrators, some of them were arrested, including a member of the PSOE’s Executive Committee Francisco Bustelo. They were fined under the accusation of “dangerous behaviour, as agitators” and for being a “threat to social harmony and public peace.”⁷³¹ As the fines were very high—between 100 000 and 200 000 pesetas—those arrested could not afford to pay them and were kept imprisoned.

According to the historian Antonio Muñoz and to Francisco Bustelo, the the PSOE reacted to this imprisonment by not paying the fines imposed on Bustelo, and kept him in prison for publicity reasons. The party saw Bustelo’s imprisonment as an opportunity to get a good deal of public visibility, and to silence the criticism that the PSOE was receiving from the Leftist

⁷²⁹ The following document has been quoted in: Óscar J. Martín García, “Crisis del franquismo, conflictividad social y cambio democrático en España. Un análisis desde las fuentes diplomáticas británicas,” in *El fin de las dictaduras ibéricas (1974-1978)*, ed. Encarnación Lemus, Fernando Rosas and Raquel Varela (Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2010): 143-144.

⁷³⁰ *Internal Situation of Spain*. 1975. UKNA, FCO 9/2315.

⁷³¹ *Massive arrests on the 1st of May 1975 in the Madrid Civil Cemetery*, London Section of the PSOE-UGT, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

opposition for having privileged treatment from the government, as we will see in the next section of this chapter.⁷³²

However, the British documentation shows that in this troubled situation, the PSOE decided to resort to the solidarity of the British Labour. This time the SDDC became directly involved with the PSOE, and tried to send some money to help the Spanish Socialists.⁷³³ They contributed towards paying the bails imposed on the PSOE members (it is not specified if Francisco Bustelo was among them), but they found it “difficult [...] to subscribe to any fund for relatives of imprisoned comrades,” making it clear that “all the funds of the Spanish Democrats Defence Committee must only be used for political purposes as we could not face up to large demands for pensions for relatives.”⁷³⁴ At a meeting of the SDDC on 24th July, it was decided that the SDDC would send £1000 to the PSOE.⁷³⁵ After this display of solidarity, the contacts between the SDDC and the PSOE during the rest 1975 were almost non-existent.

The PSOE increased its political activities that summer, and in June 1975 they created the *Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática*, an anti-Francoist coalition composed of sixteen political groups and parties⁷³⁶ that ranged from the extreme-Left to Social Democrats. The fact that PSOE organised the platform gave the party greater visibility and prestige in terms of the regime, but also in terms of the PCE. Now the Socialists seemed to have a similar status to the Communists, since the *Plataforma* and the Communist-led *Junta Democrática* were the main anti-Francoist coalitions, in the event of future unification they could negotiate at an equal level.⁷³⁷

In the summer of 1975, between August and September, several trials against members of the opposition in Spain again attracted the attention of the British Labour movement and practically the whole international community. In August, three militants of ETA were

⁷³² Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 199; Francisco Bustelo, *La historia de España y el franquismo: un análisis histórico y económico y un testimonio personal* (Madrid, Síntesis, 2006): 268.

⁷³³ Letter from Bob Edwards MP to Jack Jones, 15/05/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷³⁴ Letter from Bob Edwards MP to Carmen Rodriguez (London section of the PSOE), 20/05/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷³⁵ Letter from Carmen Rodriguez to Bob Edwards MP, 29/07/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷³⁶ The *Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática* was composed of *Comisiones Obreras de Euzkadi*, *Consejo Delegado Vasco* (*partido Nacionalista Vasco*, *Acción Vasca*, *Comité Central Socialista de Euzkadi*), *Izquierda Democrática*, *Movimiento Comunista de España*, *Organización Revolucionaria de Trabajadores*, *Partido Carlista*, *Partido Gallego Socialdemocrático*, *PSOE*, *Reagrupament Democrático y Socialista de Cataluña*, *Unión Democrática del País Valenciano*, *Unión Socialdemócrata Española*, *UGT*.

⁷³⁷ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 306.

condemned to a death sentence due to the death of a policeman during a bank robbery as well as their terrorist activities. At the beginning of September, five members of the revolutionary Leninist group FRAP⁷³⁸ were tried by a military court because of the death of another policeman, and were also condemned to death. Several Spanish organisations in the opposition, including the PSOE,⁷³⁹ created the Committee Against Death Sentences in Spain. This committee sent a letter to the SDDC to try to get us much support as possible from British Labour. They considered that this kind of support “cannot change the whole system but we can pressure the regime enough to stop them from carrying out the death sentences [...]. We can only do this with your help, and we ask you to send a telegram expressing your outrage to the Spanish Foreign Secretary [...] and/or the Spanish Ambassador in London [...] letters to the Press are another effective means of protest.”⁷⁴⁰

The BLP publicly condemned the death sentences at their Annual Conference in Blackpool in September. Jack Jones stated his hope that “[...] from this Conference there would develop spontaneous reactions of people everywhere into a maximum harassment of the activities of the Franco regime.”⁷⁴¹ Furthermore, James Callaghan, on behalf of the National Executive of the Party, stated that the international isolation of the Spanish regime should be sustained and intensified, especially in terms of its relations with the EEC and NATO, and that the British government would oppose closer ties between Spain and the EEC as long as the regime existed.⁷⁴²

Despite the international protests, on 27th September five of the sentences were executed. The international community unanimously denounced Franco’s regime. The British condemned the Spanish executions, but the Labour movement (the trade unions and the SDDC) reacted with greater intensity than the government. While the leader of the Transport and General Workers’ Union (TGWU) Jack Jones reacted violently and proposed to boycott Spain in almost every sense, a move that that was supported by members of the SDDC, the Government was more moderate. The Labour Government was cautious in its statements because they were concerned about any accusation of interference in Spanish internal affairs,

⁷³⁸ FRAP: *Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriota*.

⁷³⁹ Besides the PSOE the members of the Committee were: *Comissió Democràtica Catalana*, *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT), *Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriota* (FRAP), *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria-ETA VI* (LCR_ETA VI), *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE).

⁷⁴⁰ Special meeting on Spain, October 20th, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷⁴¹ *Report from Spain*, October 1975, Observer for the Spanish Democrats’ Defence Committee, BLP Historical Archive, Box 43/4.

⁷⁴² Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 110.

especially as this event happened immediately after the signature of the Helsinki Accords, and at a moment when British involvement in Portugal was significant. Moreover, the British government was not interested in provoking the overreaction of the Spanish regime over Gibraltar and they also thought that a harsh condemnation could provoke the radicalisation of the internal situation in Spain.⁷⁴³

The tempered reaction of the Labour government was criticised by the Left wing of the BLP and the trade unions. The government tried to cool down the Labour movement in Britain. In a reply to a resolution issued by the TUC that called for the support of all those in Spain fighting against Franco's regime for the establishment of democracy, Callaghan responded to the General Secretary of the TUC Len Murray that although the government was in favour of the establishment of a pluralist democracy in Spain, "this was a matter for the Spanish people and we must beware of intervening in the internal affairs or of contributing to a polarisation of Spanish politics with consequent danger of civil war."⁷⁴⁴ The fear of a new civil war in Spain was to certain extent real, but Callaghan probably overemphasised it in order to keep calm the unions and the rank and file of the party.

Unilaterally, the British government did not go beyond verbal condemnation of the Spanish regime, and it tried to persuade the Labour Party and the unions against taking stronger measures against Spain. However, in the framework of the EC, the British and the other member countries decided in October to freeze the negotiations for renewing the Preferential Trade Agreement signed between the EEC and Spain. This measure was more symbolic than punitive, because it did not cancel the existing trade agreement; it merely suspended the negotiations for its renewal.⁷⁴⁵ The superficiality of this measure is shown by the British decision to reverse it as soon as possible because of the damage that it caused to their own economic interests—the existing trade agreement with Spain had obliged the British to lower their tariffs for the benefit of Spain, while the Spanish had kept their tariffs untouched. In the delicate economic situation of Great Britain at the end of 1975, this was a problem, and although the British respected the decision of the EEC, soon after the death of Franco they advocated for resuming the negotiations with Spain.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴³ Martín, "Gran Bretaña y España," 161-162.

⁷⁴⁴ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 111.

⁷⁴⁵ Fernando Guirao, "The European Community's Role in Promoting Democracy in Franco's Spain, 1970-1975", in *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community's Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion, 1969-1975*, ed. Jan Van Der Harst, (Brussels: Nomos, 2007) 163-193.

⁷⁴⁶ Martín, "Gran Bretaña y España," *Relaciones y estrategias para el fin de una dictadura*, 163.

Although the suspension of the negotiations between the EEC and Spain was not an especially harsh measure against the interests of the Spanish regime, the symbolic power of that decision was very important for the opposition. This measure went together with the withdrawal of all of the ambassadors of the EC member countries except for Ireland,⁷⁴⁷ and with demonstrations and public condemnation. The PSOE interpreted the European reactions very positively. They thought that “Europe had responded vividly expressing its rejection [to the Fascist brutality] through popular demonstrations, summons of the political parties and trade unions and statements and diplomatic actions of the governments and European institutions.” These reactions gave the Spanish Socialists “renewed hopes”, as the Europeans had acted with “rigour [...] against the Fascism remaining in Europe in defence of the freedom and the human rights of the Spanish people.” Furthermore, the PSOE considered that “the response of the democratic Europe [...] [was] a fundamental factor in the process of isolation and weakening of the regime.” The measures that the governments and the European institutions were adopting “contributed in a definitive way to the deterioration of the Francoist system and could provoke, if the measures are coordinated and intensified, the fall of the regime.”⁷⁴⁸

In addition to the measures taken by the EC, the SI also condemned the Spanish regime. The Bureau of the organisation decided to create the Socialist International Spanish Solidarity Fund. It took £4000 from the Reserve Fund of the Socialist International, and gave £2000 directly to the PSOE, placing the other £2000 into an account to start the new fund for the party. Moreover, the Bureau asked the member parties to give urgent and generous financial and material aid to the PSOE.⁷⁴⁹ On 20th November, just ten days after the creation of the Spanish Solidarity Fund, which was also the day of Franco’s death, the Swedish Social Democratic Party donated 75000 SEK to the PSOE through this fund.⁷⁵⁰ Furthermore, the SI made specific recommendations to its member parties. The member parties should publicly emphasise their solidarity with the PSOE, and get involved in campaigns in favour of the Spanish party. The SI also recommended to its member parties in government that they should keep the Spanish regime isolated internationally. This meant that the EEC should

⁷⁴⁷ The Irish government argued its own problem with the IRA for not withdrawing the ambassador.

⁷⁴⁸ “España-Europa,” *El Socialista*, 49 (first half of October 1975): 1-2.

⁷⁴⁹ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 39-40.

⁷⁵⁰ Letter from Bernt Carlsson to Rodney Balcomb, 24/11/1975. IISH, Socialist International Archives, 812.

maintain the suspension of the trade negotiations with Spain until a real democracy was established there, and that relations should not be established between Spain and NATO.⁷⁵¹

4.1.3. The British Government and the PSOE after Franco's death

In the last months of 1975, the British Government started to take charge of relations with the Spanish opposition, gradually moving the SDDC aside, until the eventual dissolution of this committee in April 1976. Franco's health problems and the intensification of the dynamic of social conflicts and subsequent harsh repression in Spain led the British to think that the end of the dictator, and thereby probably the end of his regime, was very close. In order to prepare for the transition in Spain, it was necessary to intensify contacts at a governmental level with the reformist sectors of the regime and with the opposition.

However, the British government found it hard to engage with Spain to prepare for the transition after Franco's death. In August 1975, Roy Hattersley, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, warned Callaghan about the fact that "we lack an overall plan of action" regarding the future of the Iberian country. The British considered "the possibility that the Communist Party will be able to so disrupt society and confuse the agencies of law and order that Juan Carlos and his supporters may not automatically succeed." Furthermore, the British considered the possibility of a popular government being formed in Spain, which would grant the Communists a level of influence that was disproportionate to their actual social support. In this light, Hattersley recommended "at least examining whether we ought not do all we can to prepare ourselves for what might happen after Franco's death." The main reason for the British delay in engaging with Spain was the open conflict between the British and the Spanish governments over Gibraltar. As Hattersley put it, "in all our dealings with Spain we have to bear in mind complications that arise because of the Gibraltar dispute." The Minister of State urged the Foreign Secretary to be prepared to respond suitably to the future events in the summer of 1975, which included establishing contacts with the democratic forces that would emerge after Franco and making discreet public statements in their favour, as well as with the Spanish army.⁷⁵²

⁷⁵¹ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 40.

⁷⁵² Minute from Mr. Hattersley to Mr. Callaghan, 12/08/1975, document published in Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon, ed., *Documents on British Policy Overseas. The Southern Flank in Crisis*, Series III Vol. V (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2006), 475-478.

And yet, immediately after the death of Franco, the British government still did not have a clear pre-established plan for the future of Spain. They were clear that they wanted Spain to democratise, they wanted the transition to democracy to be peaceful, and they wanted Spain to move closer to the EC and NATO as a result of this transition, but they did not have a clearly established strategy to follow. They considered that decisions should be made “from day to day in the light of what the new regime says and does.” This wait-and-see attitude meant that if the Spanish government started to advance in the direction of democracy, even if the path at the beginning was slow, it would be appropriate “to give them the benefit of the doubt.”⁷⁵³

This pragmatic approach of the British government caused a clash inside the British Labour movement. Until now, the SDDC’s relations with the Spanish opposition were based on the principle of solidarity, and the change of paradigm found some opposition within the BLP. The first symptom of this change caused a clash between the party and the government, and happened some days before the death of Franco. The issue that provoked disagreement in the Labour movement was whether to send or not representatives to Franco’s funeral.

On 28th October 1975, Bob Edwards wrote a letter to James Callaghan in which he expressed the concern of the rank and file of the BLP, as well as the concern of their “Spanish friends”, because “the [British] Government may send condolences to the Spanish Government when Franco passes away.” “I hope [...] that no such message will be sent. It would greatly help our cause in the struggle for a democratic Spain if you ignored the usual protocol in this connection.”⁷⁵⁴ This feeling was widely shared by the members of the SDDC and the BLP in general. Representatives of the SDDC thought that “Franco may be dying, but his regime could linger on during a vital period”, and therefore, “maximum harassment” against the Spanish regime was “a socialist priority, and it is the Labour Government which should play a leading part. Unfortunately, we hear that the Government plans to send a representative to Franco’s funeral. Surely it should be made quite clear that any such move would be abhorrent to the British Labour movement.”⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵³ Letter from Mr. Hibbert to Mr. Wiggings (Madrid), 01/12/1975, *Policy towards Spain*, document published in Hamilton and Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, 496-499.

⁷⁵⁴ Letter from Bob Edwards MP to James Callaghan MP, 28/10/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷⁵⁵ *Report from Spain*, October 1975, Observer for the Spanish Democrats’ Defence Committee, BLP Historical Archive, Box 43/4. Document already quoted in Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 138-139.

However, Franco died on 20th November 1975, and against the will of the majority of the Labour Party, the British Government sent Lord Shepherd as an official, low-key, representative to Franco's funeral. The justification given to the party can be seen in the answer to Bob Edwards' letter quoted above. The answer came directly from the Prime Minister Harold Wilson. He said: "I understand your point of view, but the conventional courtesies at the funeral of a Foreign Head of State do not, in any view, involve any change in our long declared and unchanging total opposition to Franco's dictatorship. The fact is that the Spanish people have now reached a turning point in their history."⁷⁵⁶

This meant that the Government was not willing to antagonise the regime during this initial phase of change, but at the same time, Wilson did not admit that their opposition to Franco had relaxed. However, the gesture of the British Government was not interpreted like this by either the Labour Party or the PSOE. In the light of these events, the PSOE was afraid that now that the dictator had died, the Western Europeans would relax their pressure on the Spanish regime, and the Western representation at Franco's funeral increased that feeling. On the day after the death of Franco, the PSOE published an article in a special edition of their newspaper *El Socialista* titled *Europa ante el cambio* in which they expressed this concern. For the PSOE, the dictator had died, but the dictatorship was still alive. They announced that the Prince Juan Carlos was just a liberalising façade that the regime would use to gain the support of the European governments. Thus, the Socialists considered it crucial to see "what is the answer of Europe." They wanted to remind the Europeans that, despite the disappearance of Franco, the repressive regime still existed. They warned Europe to not use "two systems of measurement: democracy in Spain means the same as in France, Germany or Holland. Without free political parties, without true trade unions [...] there is no democracy."⁷⁵⁷

Immediately after the death of Franco, the PSOE made public the requirements that should be fulfilled in order for them to recognise that democracy existed in Spain. These were freedom for all political prisoners, freedom for the political parties, trade union freedom, freedom of assembly, the right to strike, the organisation of free elections within a year, and the right of self-determination for the Iberian nationalities.⁷⁵⁸ Along these lines, the SDDC organised a

⁷⁵⁶ Letter from Harold Wilson to Bob Edwards MP, 08/12/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷⁵⁷ "Europa ante el cambio," *El Socialista*, 52 (second half of November 1975): 1.

⁷⁵⁸ "Posición Política del PSOE," *El Socialista*, Número Especial (22/10/1975): 2.

Conference for Solidarity with the Workers of Spain on 9th December. “The object of this Conference [was] to promote support for the demand of the workers and progressive forces generally in Spain for free Trade Unions, free collective bargaining, and freedom of speech and assembly within a democratic Spain.”⁷⁵⁹ The Committee of Solidarity with Workers of Spain was created. They decided to appeal for financial aid to national Unions, and £200 were collected from miners’ areas.⁷⁶⁰ This Committee kept functioning and met again in February 1976, but this was the last big action organised by the SDDC.

At the end of November, the Bureau of the SI held a meeting in Brussels to discuss the possibilities raised by the new situation in Spain. This meeting might have been reassuring for the PSOE, as the Bureau passed a statement in which it deplored the fact that some European governments led by SI member parties had sent representatives to the funeral of Francisco Franco.⁷⁶¹ The Bureau also asked for cooperation among all of the Social Democrat governments of Europe to exert pressure on the Spanish regime to promote the establishment of a real democracy in Spain. Furthermore, it demanded amnesty for all political prisoners in Spain and the reestablishment of basic freedoms, and it also urged Europe to keep Spain internationally isolated until democracy was established.⁷⁶² The Bureau reaffirmed “its unconditional support for the PSOE.”⁷⁶³

In the first months after Franco’s death, very little things changed in Spain. Prince Juan Carlos created his first government on 13th January, and he maintained the same President as the last Government, Carlos Arias Navarro. The composition of the cabinet was quite heterogeneous, including reformists and hardcore Francoists. The reformist included former Spanish Ambassador in London Manuel Fraga as Interior Minister, José María de Areilza as Foreign Affairs Minister, Antonio Garrigues as a Justice Minister, and Adolfo Suárez as the Minister of the *Movimiento*. The Francoists had precisely one representative—the President Arias Navarro. There were only two significant gestures that showed a positive swing towards liberalisation. The first was the symbolic—although very limited, since the law had not changed—reprieve for the political prisoners granted by Juan Carlos. Although it was a positive gesture, its significance was not in fact great, since such reprieves were very common

⁷⁵⁹ *Solidarity with Workers of Spain*, letter from Bill Paynter to all Sponsors of the Proposed Conference, 25/11/1975, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷⁶⁰ *Solidarity with Workers of Spain, Decisions of meeting, December 9th 1975*, W. Paynter, BLP Historical Archive, Box 5 Bob Edwards papers, correspondence 1969-1987.

⁷⁶¹ The Austrian, German and Dutch member parties were opposed to this resolution.

⁷⁶² Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 62-63.

⁷⁶³ “Reunion del Bureau de la Internacional Socialista,” *El Socialista*, 53 (first half of December 1975), 1.

during the last years of Franco. The second was the speech given by Juan Carlos at his investiture as King of Spain. Juan Carlos referred to the European character of the Spanish, and to the fact that the idea of Europe was incomplete without Spain. As the EEC required democratic credentials for joining their club, the words of the new King of Spain were considered inspiring.⁷⁶⁴

Despite the fact that nothing had changed in Spain, the Council of Ministers of the EEC declared in January 1976 that the suspension of the negotiations for a preferential trade agreement between the EEC and Spain that had been imposed before Franco's death could not be justified anymore. Only two months after the demise of the dictator, there seemed to be a relaxation of the pressure that the country had been suffering through since the last days of Franco. As the historians Fernando Guirao and Víctor Gavín have noted, the 'Governments of the Nine', which were mainly led by member parties of the SI, did not respect the agreement reached by the SI in November 1975. As we saw above, the International had recommended that the governments led by its member parties keep the suspension of the trade negotiations between the EC and Spain as long as there was no real democracy,⁷⁶⁵ but national interests prevailed over the recommendations of the SI.

In the case of the British government, they thought that resuming the negotiations between the EEC and Spain would not have any implications for a closer relationship between the EEC and Spain. Moreover, it was in the interest of Great Britain. The argument of James Callaghan was that restarting the negotiations "would be of no advantage to Spain, but would lead to reduced import tariffs on Britain's substantial industrial exports to Spain." Once again, the pragmatic approach of the British Government towards the Spanish situation provoked a clash with other members of the Labour movement. The leader of the TUC Jack Jones considered that the resumption of the negotiations with Spain was a mistake. According to the TUC, the Government should only support the resumption of negotiations when the situation in Spain had clearly moved in a democratic direction.⁷⁶⁶

Eventually in February 1976, the Council of Ministers of the EC decided, with British support, to resume negotiations with Spain. This opened a new phase in the relations between Spain and Europe, in which the Europeans seemed to give the Spanish Government a chance

⁷⁶⁴ Raimundo Bassols, "Europa en la Transición española" in *La política exterior de España en el siglo XX*, ed. Javier Tusell, Juan Avilés and Rosa Pardo (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2000), 461.

⁷⁶⁵ Del Pero et al., *Democrazie*, 208.

⁷⁶⁶ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 111-112.

to carry out the transition to democracy. This had been the intention of the British Government from the beginning, and the British had reserved a role for the PSOE that suited this strategy of wait-and-see.

From now on, the British started to monitor the Spanish party with several linked aims. They aimed to ensure that the PSOE would give the government a chance to carry out the transition to democracy, while at the same time acting as arbiters of democracy in Spain—meaning that they would have to confirm that the process of democratisation being marketed by the regime was actually real. They also aimed to help with building up a strong Socialist party that could become the biggest party in the Spanish Left, and would therefore have the option of winning future elections. In order to achieve this second goal, a crucial issue had to be tackled first: the union of the Spanish Socialists in a party or in a coalition of parties.

On 28th January, the Spanish government made its programme for political reform public; the only changes envisaged were cosmetic. It was very conservative and introduced few novelties. These were the government's willingness to open some channels of political participation, the acknowledgement of the regional realities within the frame of a strong and centralised State, some concessions to the political parties (excluding the Communists), and the proposal of a bicameral system, which would be composed of a non-democratically elected Senate and a Congress that would be chosen in elections that would be held in 1977.⁷⁶⁷ The result of these reforms would bring about, in the words of Arias Navarro, “*una democracia a la española*”, which can be translated as ‘a Spanish kind of democracy’.

Some weeks later, on 18th February, the British Ambassador in Spain Charles Wiggin began formal relations with the leaders of the PSOE. He gave a lunch for Felipe González, Luis Yañez, and Alfonso Guerra, where Mr Wilkinson (the Second Secretary at the British embassy in Spain) was also present. During the lunch, the British allowed the Spaniards to talk about the political situation in Spain, and specifically about the Government's attempts to introduce democratic reforms. According to the British, the views of the PSOE leaders were, “while sceptical, on the whole moderate and undoctinaire.”

Although the PSOE was sceptical, it seemed to be open to considering taking advantage of the limited reforms proposed by the Spanish Government.⁷⁶⁸ Based on the Portuguese

⁷⁶⁷ Álvaro Soto, *La transición a la democracia* (Alianza Editorial: Madrid, 1998), 32-33.

⁷⁶⁸ This interpretation is shared by Santos Juliá, who considers that although Felipe González rejected an elected but powerless lower chamber, he was willing to take the chance offered by the government, inspired by the

experience, they could imagine possible future scenarios in Spain that encouraged them to take the limited chance that the Government was offering. Since the political reform advocated by the Spanish Government was based on the institution of a bicameral parliamentary system with the lower house (the *Cortes*) elected by universal suffrage, and an unelected Senate that would continue to choose the Government as before, the Portuguese comparison was handy. In Portugal, “the Government was in theory no more controlled by the Constituent Assembly than was the Government in Spain by the *Cortes*. But in fact once elections had determined the relative strength of the different political forces [...] the Government naturally tended to be constituted in accordance with the respective strength of the political parties.” Moreover, González thought that the “the first chamber elected by universal suffrage might come to find itself playing the role of a Constituent Assembly even though theoretically it had not been summoned for that purpose.”

Thus, the Portuguese experience of the imposition of the electoral legitimacy despite the fact that the elections, in theory, were not planned to have consequences at the governmental level gave the Spanish Socialists some hope. They expected that if the reforms of the regime were limited, something similar to what had happened in Portugal after the elections could happen in Spain. This means that the legitimacy drawn from the people’s support expressed in the democratic polls would be irrefutable. It seemed that the PSOE had learned from the Portuguese Revolution that one of the priorities for the Socialists should be to ensure democratic elections, because the legitimacy provided by the vote could set further changes in motion.

Another issue that concerned the leaders of the PSOE was how to act with respect to the Government. They found it difficult to establish a balance “between pressure on the Government in the form on demonstrations, strikes and political activity strong enough to bring home the inevitability of change, and disorders that might arouse Right-wing reaction by giving the impression that the country was sliding into anarchy.” The British believed that the army was crucial in this. In González’s opinion, the majority of officers in responsible positions were against intervention. They would probably accept full liberalisation if public order was maintained.

historical experience of the PSOE. In 1910, the founder of the party, Pablo Iglesias, entered in the bourgeoisie parliament with the aim of denouncing the existing *caciquismo* from inside the institutions, and González contemplated the same possibility. See Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 459.

Only a minority within the army “might be willing to step in solely to maintain a Right-wing regime.” He added that “the one thing on which the great majority of officers still seemed to be united was in their aversion to the PCE, though it was difficult to be sure of even that [...]”

The PSOE was also concerned about how the relative freedom that they were enjoying could be interpreted in Spain, especially in terms of the PCE. The Socialists were allowed to speak freely, and they would be accepted in the future pseudo-democracy proposed by Arias Navarro, while the PCE would not. The PSOE was worried about the fact that “the Government, by permitting [us] to speak and hold meetings were increasing the potential influence of those who they still forbade to operate openly.” The PSOE was convinced “that only the legalisation of all shades of political opinion would enable the Communists and other extremists to be shown up for the minority that they [are].”

The leaders of the PSOE were convinced that the support for the Communists in Spain was not too high, and persisting in banning them could only make them appear as martyrs. According to González, “the PCE aspired to a position similar to that of the Italian Communist Party, in which they would represent the only serious alternative to centre or Right-wing government,” and keeping them banned could help them in this aspiration. Although the PSOE hoped that “democratic socialism would represent a much greater force than the Communists,” it was better not to help them to appear as martyrs. At this point, the British subtly suggested that if the Socialists wanted to be a strong force, they had to overcome their factionalism. They said that “there was a lesson to be learnt from the fate of the Italian socialists who had lost their chance of wielding true political power through their fragmentation and through their past alliances with the Christian Democrat Party.”⁷⁶⁹

The parallel with the Italian Socialists drawn by the British shows that their main preoccupation regarding the Spanish opposition was the lack of unity among the Spanish Socialists. Furthermore, it shows the subtle way they used to push the PSOE towards some kind of agreement in favour of Socialist unity. By using the Italian example of Socialist fragmentation, they were arguing that a similar situation in Spain could help the Communists to overtake the Socialists, as it had happened in Italy. This possibility was aggravated by the fact that the PCE had adopted a conciliatory rhetoric that put them ideologically close to the

⁷⁶⁹ All the quotes regarding this meeting correspond with the same document: *Record of meeting with PSOE leaders*, 19/02/1976, BNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

strong Italian Communist Party. In the report written about this meeting, the British acknowledged that they had used the Italian example to “encourage our guests to work for Socialist unity [...]”, although they considered that the PSOE was well aware of this need, “in theory we found ourselves preaching to the converted.”⁷⁷⁰

After the meeting, the British still wondered about the PSOE’s intentions and feelings regarding the PCE. As we have seen in chapter two, the public statements of the Socialists seemed to show that they were in favour of some kind of union of the Left, and the meeting between the British diplomats and the PSOE did not allow the former to get a clear idea about this issue. The Ambassador in Spain wrote in his report to the Southern European Department of the Foreign Office that “[...] as usual with the PSOE, I found it difficult to gauge their attitude towards the PCE and their future intentions in that respect. They tend to speak of the PCE as enemies and allies almost in the same breath.” These doubts especially concerned the British because they did not know how the PSOE would react if the Spanish Government organised democratic elections banning the PCE. They wondered if “[the PSOE] will be prepared if and when the time comes to participate in elections, municipal and/or national, with the PCE outlawed.” Wilkinson thought that they probably would, but Wiggan was less sure “if only because of their fear of being outflanked on their left by illegal martyrs.”⁷⁷¹

This meeting shows that in February 1976, the British Government was mainly collecting information from the PSOE, without engaging very much with them. They exchanged information and points of view, and the only suggestion from the British was that the Spanish Socialists should overcome their factionalism. However, now their relations were established at the highest level and the British considered the PSOE leaders “moderate and undoctinaire,” which made them the right partners in Spain.

The PSOE was receiving the same suggestion that the British had given from almost all their international partners: they had to look for Socialist unity. Between 13th and 17th of January, a delegation from the SI visited Spain, hosted by the PSOE. It was composed of the Secretary General of the SI, Hans Janitschek, and representatives of the BLP (Jenny Little), the SPD (Veronica Isemberg), the PS (Jaime Gama) and the PSF (Pierre Guidoni).⁷⁷² At the numerous press conferences given by the SI, the issue of Socialist unity was always emphasised.

⁷⁷⁰ *The PSOE*, C. D. Wiggan, 19/02/1976, BNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁷⁷¹ *The PSOE*, C. D. Wiggan, 19/02/1976, BNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁷⁷² “Declaracion de la Internacional Socialista sobre su visita a España,” *El Socialista*, 56 (second half of January 1976): 5.

However, as we saw in chapter two, the leaders of the PSOE were in favour of the union of the Spanish Socialists, but only if it happened on the PSOE's terms, which meant that all of the other Spanish Socialist parties should be integrate into the PSOE. The leadership of the party was aware of the symbolic value of the initials of the historic party;⁷⁷³ after almost 40 years of dictatorship, they were an important asset and they did not want to renounce them. Thus, when the PSOE covered the visit of the SI in its official newspaper, rather than emphasising the message of unity passed on by the SI, they emphasised the fact that the representatives of the International had said: "the PSOE represents the core of the union of Socialism in Spain."⁷⁷⁴

The issue of unifying the Spanish Socialists, however, was far from simple. The proliferation of small Socialist groups, especially regional parties, linked the issue of Socialist unification with the issue of the future shape of the Spanish State. In April 1975, most of the regional Socialist parties were gathered in a federal organisation called the *Federación de Partidos Socialistas* (FPS). This federation was born after the failed attempt to bring all of these parties and the PSOE between 1974 and 1975 in the *Conferencia Socialista Ibérica*. As we saw in chapter two, this conference had failed because the PSOE did not accept the conditions of these parties, and it only conceived unification within its own organisation. The main problems in bringing these parties together were the hegemonic pretensions of the PSOE,⁷⁷⁵ personal differences between the leaders of the parties, and the different understandings of the issue of the Spanish regions and the different solutions envisaged for this problem.

Despite the fact that the PSOE recognised the right of self-determination for all of the Iberian nationalities, its understanding of the problem of the different Spanish regions did not please the parties gathered in the FPS. The PSOE understood that the regional problems were the manifestation of the pressure exercised by the ruling class over the people. Therefore, the solution they proposed was class-based. They thought that only through the liberation of the working class from the exploitation of the ruling class could the Spanish nationalities be free.⁷⁷⁶ On the other hand, the FPS were more aware of the cultural specificities of the Spanish regions. The solution to the regional problem proposed by the FPS thus relied less on

⁷⁷³ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*.

⁷⁷⁴ "La Internacional Socialista 'El PSOE es el eje de la unidad de los socialistas españoles,'" *El Socialista*, 56 (second half of January 1976): 5.

⁷⁷⁵ "¿Reunificación?," *El Socialista*, 55 (first half of January 1976): 7.

⁷⁷⁶ FBB, 431, Resoluciones Políticas del XIII Congreso del PSOE; and FA, 2483, Propuestas. Política. XIII Congreso del PSOE, Archive FPI.

Marxist analysis. The FPS was in favour of a Socialism based on self-management/*autogestión*. Therefore, they claimed the self-determination of natural communities formed by peoples and regions.

In addition to these two parties, there was the PSP led by Tierno Galván. This party was ideologically closer to the PSOE, and it seemed natural that they should reach some kind of agreement that would bring them together. However, the main issues that kept them apart were personal ambitions and differences, as Tierno knew that joining with the PSOE would imply adopting a subordinate position.⁷⁷⁷ Both parties wanted to become the main Socialist party at the national level, and both of them enjoyed a positive reputation; PSP gained this from Tierno Galván, commonly known as “*el viejo profesor*,” who was a prestigious scholar respected by the more open sectors of the Spanish regime.⁷⁷⁸ However, the fact that the PSP was part of the *Junta Democrática* led by the PCE damaged its credibility among the West European social democrats, because they thought that the PSP could become a Trojan horse for the PCE.⁷⁷⁹

At this early stage of the transition to democracy, the desired unification of the Spanish Socialists did not seem to be favoured by the international support received by the PSOE, since it created envy among the existing Socialist parties that led to public criticism. After the visit of the delegation of the SI to Spain, the PSP and another coalition of regional parties called *Confederación Socialista*,⁷⁸⁰ sent a letter of complaint to the SI in which they expressed “deep concern” about the visit. They thought that the propaganda of the regime would take advantage of this visit, presenting it as international recognition for the democratic process. This was negative for the Spanish people’s struggle for democracy and for “the credibility of Socialism in our country.” Furthermore, they were irritated because this visit “[supposed] a

⁷⁷⁷ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 436-437.

⁷⁷⁸ An overview of the factionalism in the Spanish Socialist movement at the beginning of the transition to democracy can be found in: Abdón Mateos López, “Del ‘laberinto’ socialista al ‘partido de la transición’” in *Los partidos en la Transición. Las organizaciones políticas en la construcción de la democracia española*, ed. Rafael Quirosa-Cheyrouze y Muñoz (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2013), 221-234.

⁷⁷⁹ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 181.

⁷⁸⁰ The *Confederación Socialista* was integrated in the FPS between March and June 1976, which left the PSOE, FPS and PSP as the three main Socialist groups in Spain. See: “Se disuelve la Confederación Socialista, formada por ocho grupos”, *El País*, 17/06/1976. http://elpais.com/diario/1976/06/17/espana/203810405_850215.html

preferential treatment to one of the Socialist options existing in the Spanish State, [which] entails a grave damage to the interests of Socialism and to its unification.”⁷⁸¹

However, the SI understood the presence of its representatives in Spain in a completely different way, considering that it would reinforce the PSOE. They believed that this visit was very valuable in this sense for several reasons. It would let the Government know that Europe was watching the treatment given to the PSOE, public opinion would start to focus on the PSOE and its young leaders and connect them with the progressive forces of the most prosperous European countries (which would make the party attractive for the less radical people in the Left), and finally it would reinforce the authority of the leaders of the party within the organisation.⁷⁸²

This interpretation was shared by the PSOE. In the article published in *El Socialista* that covered the visit of the SI to Spain, the PSOE highlighted that the answer offered by the International to the problem of unity in Spanish Socialism was as follows: “the PSOE represents the focus of the unity of Socialism in Spain.”⁷⁸³ The party was concerned because of the consequences that the factionalism of the Socialist family could have for their own future. They considered that both the regime and the PCE were overemphasising the fragmentation of Spanish Socialism in order to weaken the PSOE.

This objective coincidence ‘power(Fraga)– PCE’ has a clear aim: to polarise the Spanish political life, minimising Socialist expression by atomisation, or obliging to choose between a compromise with the Right-wing or the Communists, with the Socialist party being—in both cases—a backing force, submitted to the hegemony of its ally.

The PSOE rejected this secondary role, and considered that the visibility that the member parties of the SI gave to the party could be “fundamental” to avoiding this end. The Socialists considered that if the International wanted to strengthen Socialism in Spain, it had to

⁷⁸¹ *A la delegación de la Internacional Socialista presidida por su Secretario Sr. Hans Janitschek*, Letter from Alianza Socialista de Andalucía, Alianza Socialista de Castilla, Democracia Socialista Asturiana, Federación de Independientes Socialistas, Movimiento Socialista de la Baleares, Partido Autonomista Socialista de Canarias, Partido Socialista de Aragón, Partido Socialista Popular, IISH, SI Archives, 813 (Spain, Spain Committee 1976, Solidarity found 1976).

⁷⁸² Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 291.

⁷⁸³ “La Internacional Socialista «El PSOE es el eje de la unidad de los socialistas españoles»,” *El Socialista*, 56 (second half of January 1976): 5.

“intensify the solidarity with the PSOE,” and at the same time avoid any kind of contact with other Spanish Socialist groups.⁷⁸⁴

During the first months after the death of Franco, the PSOE exploited all the signs of international support as much as possible. This was useful for the Socialists in several ways. Firstly, it was used to put pressure on the regime to move towards democracy. In their public statements, the European Social Democrat leaders were constantly demanding the democratisation of Spain, a condition *sine qua non* for a closer relation between Spain and Europe, and this was a strong argument that backed up PSOE’s demands in favour of democracy. Secondly, it was a way to appear as a respectable Leftist party in Spain, even as a party in government that could bring Spain closer to Europe, since many of the SI party leaders were in power in their countries. This does not at all contradict the argument that I am developing in the case study of the relations between the PSF and the PSOE. In fact, the exhibition of the support of the European Social Democracy complemented the use that the PSOE made of the relations with the PSF and other international parties in the far Left or Communists.⁷⁸⁵ While the PSF provided a Leftist image to the PSOE that was useful in its relations with the PCE and with the other Spanish parties in the Left, the Social Democrats granted an image of respectability, success, and reliability that was important in negotiating with the regime and seducing the middle classes. Finally, the support of the SI sent a clear message to the rest of the Socialist opposition, meaning that the Socialist option with better prospects in Spain was the PSOE. This message, combined with the seductive power of some French ideas such as *autogestión*, was aimed at making the PSOE the home of all the Spanish Socialists.

Thus, the PSOE devoted large sections of its official newspaper to the international relations of the party. At the end of January, the party was involved in several international meetings that were extensively covered in *El Socialista*. Immediately following the SI representative visit to Spain, the leaders of the International met in Denmark. One of the main topics at this meeting was “the situation in Spain.” González appealed to all of the European Socialist parties, especially those in government, to support the struggle of the Spanish people for the

⁷⁸⁴ The PSOE Reports, 14/01/1976, Archivo del PSOE, Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 69-H 3.

⁷⁸⁵ As an example, the PSOE publicly exploited its friendly relations ideological coincidences with the Cuban Communist Party and Fidel Castro, and also with the Chilean Socialist Party. See: *El Socialista*, 65 (25/06/1976).

democratic rupture.⁷⁸⁶ Some days later, on 24th and 25th January, the Conference of the Socialist parties of Southern Europe took place in Paris, to which I will devote more space in the next section of this chapter. However, I would like to note here that at this meeting, all of the participants (the PSOE, the PS, the PSF, the PSB, and the PSI) approved a resolution on Spain that considered the PSOE to be the focus for the construction of Socialism in Spain, supported the PSOE in its efforts to achieve a union of all the Socialists and all the Spanish democratic forces, and they condemned any kind of rapprochement between Spain, the EC, and NATO until the establishment of democracy.⁷⁸⁷

Meanwhile, the Spanish Government decided that the Foreign Minister Areilza, would travel to the capitals of the nine countries of the EC between January and February 1976. The aim of this tour was to explain the situation in Spain, and to present the programme of the new government to the Europeans. This demonstrated that the main international interest of the regime was to integrate Spain into the EC. Areilza was supposed to explain that the regime had a well-defined programme for transforming the political system that would make it homologous with those existing in Western Europe. He was also meant to convey the message that on the completion of this programme, Spain would apply for the membership of the EC.

Areilza visited London at the end of February. In the English capital he met with the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs James Callaghan. Areilza presented the Spanish programme to the British, and Callaghan gave him encouraging words, boosting the Spanish government to carry out reforms, but he did not make any compromise regarding the future of Spain in the EC.⁷⁸⁸

The PSOE took this visit as an opportunity, and the federation of the party located in London wrote a letter to Callaghan in which they “call[ed] upon the British Government not to make any deal which supports the repressive regime in Spain.” They reminded the British that “nothing has changed in Spain since Franco’s death. The Prime Minister is the same, the repressive fundamental laws and institutions are the same, and the Monarchy has been

⁷⁸⁶ “Relaciones internacionales del PSOE. La Internacional Socialista en Dinamarca,” *El Socialista*, 57 (first half of February 1976): 3.

⁷⁸⁷ See: “Relaciones internacionales del PSOE. Resolución sobre España aprobada por aclamación,” *El Socialista*, 57 (first half of February 1976): 3.

⁷⁸⁸ On Areilza’s trip to the European capitals see: José María Areilza, *Diario de un ministro de la monarquía* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1977). Also: Crespo, *España en Europa*.

imposed to ensure their continuation.” Therefore, the PSOE’s branch in London expected “in regard to Spain’s efforts to enter the European institutions [...] your position, and that of the British Government, to remain as it was expressed at the meeting of the European Council of Ministers in Brussels on January 20th of this year.”⁷⁸⁹ At that Council of Ministers the British, once again, had been in favour of opposing the entry of Spain into the EC until a real democracy was established.

Mr McNally, the political adviser for Callahan, replied to the PSOE’s London federation on behalf of the Foreign Secretary immediately after his meeting with Areilza. He said that both Callaghan and Harold Wilson expressed to Areilza the following message:

The people of Britain will be watching Spain’s progress to democracy with great interest. Mr Callaghan emphasised the particular importance that we attach to government based on universal suffrage, free political parties, the release of political prisoners, and proper [trade] union freedoms, including freedom of association, and the right to organise and bargain collectively. It was made clear to Sr. Areilza that in the view of the British Government a democratic Spain would be a great addition to the vitality of Europe, but that there could be no question of Spain becoming member of the EEC until a true democracy had been achieved.⁷⁹⁰

As we can see, in these first months after the death of Franco, the British Labour Government and the PSOE had reciprocal interests. For the British, the peaceful but real democratisation of Spain in a Western European fashion was important. This implied that the regime should make credible liberalising reforms, and also that the Socialists should overcome their factionalism, in any manner, in order to become the strongest force in the Left in the future Spanish democracy. For the PSOE, the union of all the Socialists was also desirable, but only if it happened within their own organisation. In order to appear as the strongest party within the Socialist realm, they used the international support from Western Europe. Furthermore, it was essential for the PSOE to keep pressing the regime to make deep reforms, and to keep it out of the EC until democracy was implanted in Spain. The support of the British Labour Government was very important for this strategy.

To return to the issue of the division of the Spanish Socialists, the British embassy in Madrid wrote a report to the Foreign Office in February in which they related an anecdote that was very telling. The British Professor Hugh Thomas, a historian who specialised in Spanish

⁷⁸⁹ Letter from Lorenzo Campos to James Callaghan, 29/02/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁷⁹⁰ Letter from Mr. McNally to Mr. Lorenzo Campos, 15/03/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

history, had the chance to present a book on the Civil War in Spain. After the press conference, he asked “the 15 journalists present which parties they would support when free elections came. They had given 15 different answers.”

Professor Hugh Thomas took advantage of his visit to Spain to meet with some members of the PSOE in Madrid. He reported the most relevant parts of the conversation with the Spanish Socialists to the British embassy. According to Thomas, “They had all condemned the present Government and had asked for more foreign condemnation of it.” However, the impression received by Thomas was that “this was more because they wanted to keep up progressive pressure on the Government rather than because they really wanted them to fail.” In fact, some of the PSOE members had said openly to Thomas that “they thought a period of conservative government [...] was what Spain needed for the next few years.”⁷⁹¹

These comments show that the PSOE was willing to give the Government a chance, so that they could lead a peaceful transition to democracy. However, the Socialists kept pressing the government. The articles published by the party in its official newspaper during the months of March and April do not denote the attitude described above. The party kept affirming “the necessity of a Democratic Rupture”⁷⁹² and criticised the Government for being unable to democratise Spain. They stated the Democratic Rupture was “the only process able to return freedom to the Spanish people and to lead the Spanish society to democracy.”⁷⁹³

At the beginning of March, an event occurred that outraged the opposition, and created serious doubts about the willingness of the regime to change. On 3rd March, in a context of social unrest and strikes, the Government violently suppressed a meeting of workers in the city of Vitoria that had been organised by extreme-Leftist groups in the Basque Country. The police shot against the strikers who were holding an assembly in a church, with the result that 5 of them were killed and 150 suffered bullet wounds. A week later, on 9th March, disturbances in the industrial area around Madrid were repressed by the police, causing hundreds of injuries. The intensification of the repression against social unrest showed too many similarities with the situation during Franco’s last years of life. This fact brought the opposition together. On 26th March, the *Junta Democrática* and the *Plataforma de*

⁷⁹¹ Hugh Thomas, Report by R. L. Wade-Gery, 17/02/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁷⁹² Example of the articles that argue for democratic rupture in these months are: “El gobierno pide tregua,” *El Socialista*, 58 (10/03/1976): 1; “Qué hace el gobierno?,” *El Socialista*, 59 (25/03/1976): 3; “El gobierno y la oposición,” *El Socialista*, 60 (10/04/1976): 1.

⁷⁹³ “Qué hace el gobierno?,” *El Socialista*, 59 (25/03/1976): 3.

Convergencia Democrática merged, creating a new platform composed of almost all of the opposition groups, the *Coordinación Democrática* (CD), commonly called *Platajunta*.

The aim of the CD was to peacefully transform the Spanish regime into a democratic State. Their immediate political actions would be to work towards the liberation of all the political prisoners, respect for human rights and political freedom as well as trade union freedom, and the fulfilment of the “democratic rupture or democratic alternative.” This democratic rupture or alternative was understood as an open constituent period that should lead, via referendum based on universal suffrage, to a decision on the shape of the State and on the kind of Government to be adopted. The coalition was meant to last only until the democratic elections, without compromising the freedom of the parties that composed the platform.⁷⁹⁴ After the creation of this platform, the Spanish government showed how uncertain the way to democracy in Spain was and arrested some of the leaders of the CD.

The British Government did not react immediately to the fact that the Communists and the Socialists reached an agreement and unified their platforms. In fact, the documents of the Foreign and Commonwealth office as well as the documents from the Labour Party show that between April and June, there were very few contacts between the British and the PSOE.

Between March and May 1976, most of the energies of the BLP and the Government were consumed by the election of a substitute for Harold Wilson as Prime Minister. James Callaghan was elected Prime Minister, and he made few changes to the cabinet. His disciple Anthony Crosland became the new Foreign Secretary, which implied that the political line of the Government would not undergo important changes.⁷⁹⁵

The new Government resumed relations with the PSOE in June. In that month, the BLP invited a delegation of the PSOE to visit England. The initiative came from the party and not from the British Government; however, the Southern European Department of the Foreign Office and the British embassy in Madrid considered that it would be advisable if the new Secretary of State Crosland, could meet González.⁷⁹⁶ Even though the first secretary of the PSOE eventually did not make the trip, they recommended that Crosland receive “any other senior PSOE member who may lead the delegation.” Regarding the points to be made at that meeting, Wiggin thought that it was “more difficult” to say. According to the embassy, “the

⁷⁹⁴ “A los pueblos de España,” *El Socialista*, 60 (10/04/1976): 5.

⁷⁹⁵ Andrew Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁷⁹⁶ Telegram from the FCO to the British Embassy in Madrid, 21/06/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

political situation here [in Spain] remains confused [...] not only generally, but among the Left opposition, in both political and trade union sectors.” Nevertheless, the embassy kept emphasising the main ideas that led their actions in terms of the PSOE. They thought that Crosland should make these recommendations to the Spanish: “The PSOE [should concentrate] on working for democratic socialist unity, and preparing for active participation in the prospective elections.” The British understood that at this time, it was unrealistic to attempt to form a single unified Socialist party, but they thought that “an electoral alliance providing a credible alternative government of the democratic Left” would be positive.

Of the intentions of the PSOE, the ambassador thought that “in private the PSOE’s natural inclinations seem on balance in favour of exploiting any openings the opposition are offered [...]. But in public they still tend to take the government’s plans as inadequate and, moreover, that they will not participate [in future elections] unless the PCE are allowed to play too.” Against this backdrop, the British ambassador thought that “it might be best [...] to start by encouraging the PSOE to explain their current attitude to the Spanish Government’s reform programme and thereafter take whatever openings are offered to steer them towards participation and away from the Communists.” He continued along this line, stating the guidelines of the British strategy regarding the PSOE. “It could be put to the PSOE that it is vital that democratic socialism should become the strongest left-wing force in Spain.” This implied that the Socialist strength should not be fragmented and dispersed among several groups, but united in a single party or coalition.

Wiggins warned Crosland about two factors during PSOE’s visit to England. These were that “we have reason to suppose that the PSOE may be somewhat disappointed at the level of support they have had from the British Labour Party hitherto; second that while the SPD have been very active here both they [the PSOE] and the Germans generally are on occasion prone to preach too much.”⁷⁹⁷

The German Social Democrats had been a great support to the PSOE since May 1975. This support had the same objective that the British were pursuing, namely to make the PSOE into a moderate Socialist party, move it away from collaboration with the Communists, and make it into the strongest force in the Spanish Left. However, in contrast to British Labour, the Germans were giving substantial economic aid to the PSOE through the Friedrich Ebert

⁷⁹⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Spain to the Southern European Department of the FCO, 22/06/1976. UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

Foundation,⁷⁹⁸ as well as political, moral, and technical support through the SPD, and important support at diplomatic and governmental levels.⁷⁹⁹

The day after this message, the British ambassador in Spain wrote another telegram to the Southern European Department, in which he went into the issue of the relations between the PSOE and the BLP in more depth. Wiggin had mentioned that there was “some reason to suppose that the PSOE may feel a bit disappointed about the level of support that enjoy from the British Labour Party,” and he gave a further explanation: “over the past year and a half I have heard the occasional minor and good-tempered grumble to this effect [...]” According to Wilkinson, “Felipe González had mentioned to him in the course of a talk about the PSOE’s external relations that the PSOE’s relations with the British Labour Party were not all that good.” The British believed that this could be explained by the fact the Spanish were comparing the assistance provided by the SPD and the PSF with the support given by the BLP. Moreover, Wiggins thought that it was possible that the Spanish “may have felt at times that the British Labour Party should concentrate their contacts on the PSOE, more or less to the exclusion of other socialist elements here.”

Regarding the comparison that the PSOE made between the BLP and the SPD, Wiggin said: “when I have heard the odd invidious comparison in the past I have mentioned the resources which the SPD enjoy, and the point has been taken. I am not disposed to take the grumbles too seriously. But allied to the general confusion here they reinforce the case for proceeding gently in trying to steer the PSOE along the right path. [...] The Germans at time run the risk of overdoing advance.”⁸⁰⁰

In July, the crisis of the Spanish government, which was internally divided and unable to implement the announced reforms, led to the resignation of the President Arias Navarro. In June, King Juan Carlos made an official visit to the US, where he met with Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger.⁸⁰¹ Among other things, they talked about the need to consolidate the slow but safe process of political reform in Spain, about the rapprochement between Spain and the EC and NATO. Juan Carlos criticised the obstructionist role played by Arias Navarro, and

⁷⁹⁸ Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, “La Fundación Friedrich Ebert y el socialismo español en la Transición” in *Transición y democracia. Los Socialistas en España y Portugal*, ed. Abdón Mateos and Antonio Muñoz Sánchez (Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesias, 2015), 79- 96.

⁷⁹⁹ See: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*.

⁸⁰⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Spain to the Southern European Department of the FCO, 23/06/1976. UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸⁰¹ On the visit of the king Juan Carlos to the US see: Lemus, *Estados Unidos y la Transición española*, 171-194.

soon after the King returned, the president resigned on 1st July. A new government was formed two days later under the presidency of Adolfo Suárez.

On 2nd July, representatives of the PSOE in London met with David Lipsey. They were rank and file militants, but their opinions were interesting. They considered the liberalisation of the regime that had been achieved so far to be “phoney.” Regarding the relations between the Spanish Left-wing parties within *Coordinación Democrática*, their opinions are worth reproducing. They said that the relations within this platform were good, and that “the unity would continue until a [democratic] break came.” After the democratic break, they thought that there would be good grounds for the union between the PSP and the PSOE.

Regarding the relations between the PSOE and the PCE, they considered that “there would [...] be no question of this unity embracing the Communist Party.” This was due to ideological differences, and because the PSOE did not trust Carrillo. “[...] despite Sr Carrillo’s relatively liberal line [...] the Party might return to a hard line at any time.” The British considered that the memory of the PCE’s behaviour in the Civil War was still strong within the PSOE, which was a reassuring factor that indicated that the Socialists would not come closer to the Communists.

Finally, they gave their opinion on what attitude a PSOE government would take towards the EEC and NATO. They considered that the party would seek to join the EC, but they were not so sure about NATO. Lipsey’s answer to this uncertainty was that “if the PSOE adopted an anti-NATO line this would inevitably create difficulties for Socialist governments in power in NATO countries such as the UK and Germany.”⁸⁰² Thus he let the Spanish Socialist know that they expected a change of attitude regarding this issue. As it was mentioned in chapter two, the PSOE did not change its attitude on NATO until the 1980s, which shows that despite the international influences the Spanish party adopted its own ideological line with relative but substantial autonomy.

In the summer of 1976, the new Spanish government started to work on the elaboration of a new law for the political reform, and the first symptoms of a sincere liberalisation arrived, such as a new and more widespread amnesty. In fact, the first contacts between the president and the leadership of the PSOE occurred in July and August. At these meetings, the president

⁸⁰² Note of a meeting between PSOE London representatives and David Lipsey, Political Adviser, 02/07/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

told the Socialist not to have a defined programme yet, but he showed his willingness to negotiate and to keep in touch with the Socialists.⁸⁰³

Meanwhile, in the summer, the British diplomatic service was gathering information about the Spanish Socialist parties and the prospects for their union. The Foreign Office requested the Research Department to produce a paper on this topic by the end of the year, and most of the activities in the British embassy in Spain and in the Southern European Department were aimed at collecting information for working in this direction.⁸⁰⁴

There were several meetings with experts on the topic, and with members of these parties that provided heterogeneous information and opinions to the British. At the end of July, the Atlantic Region Research Department informed the Southern European Department about a discussion with George Hills, who worked for the BBC Overseas Service and had recently visited Spain, on the Spanish Socialists. He was impressed by the FPS and by their non-formally linked trade union USO. He considered that they were young and enthusiastic, and he believed that their main ideas of self-determination for the Spanish regions and *autogestión* were very attractive to the Spanish. On the other hand, he considered the PSP and the PSOE to be stagnated in terms of growth. In terms of possible alliances, he believed that the PSOE wanted, like the PS in Portugal, to succeed on its own, hoping that its history and international backing would help to achieve this objective. However, in the Spanish regions, the FPS would do better than the PSOE. Hills did not answer the question of an alliance between these two groups, but the British diplomats believed it to be unlikely.⁸⁰⁵

There were other visits and opinions that the British took into account, but especially relevant was the meeting that A.C Goodison, member of the Southern European Department, held with Fernando Morán,⁸⁰⁶ a member of the PS who worked for the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Morán was on holidays in London, and he took the opportunity to establish contact with the British FCO. He wanted to meet British officials, as “he thought it important that the British Government should be well informed on the Spanish scene.” This was because Morán expected that they could be helpful in bringing together the Socialists. “He thought it

⁸⁰³ Manuel Ortiz, *Adolfo Suárez y el bienio prodigioso (1975-1977)* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2006), 110-111.

⁸⁰⁴ Letter from R.P. Flower, Southern European Department to A.R. Thomas, Spanish Socialists, 04/08/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸⁰⁵ Letter from Denise Mills. Atlantic Region Research Department to Mr. Flower, Southern European Department, Spanish Socialists: Discussion with Mr. Georges Hills, 02/08/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸⁰⁶ Fernando Morán, at this time member of the PSP, would be Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs with the PSOE between 1982 and 1985.

very important [that] the PSOE, the PSP and the Federacion Socialista should work together. [...] He hoped that HMG would encourage Socialist unity in Spain [...].” According to Morán, this would be very important before the elections of 1977 and the main obstacle to Socialist unification was that the PSOE did not want to merge, for reasons including the fact that Felipe González “was not very sure of himself and this made him very intransigent.” On the other hand, the PSP could not accept being absorbed and becoming merely members of the PSOE.

The British answer to Morán’s petition was evasive, but the intentions of the Foreign Office were clear:

Though I ducked Sr. Moran’s question about whether HMG would encourage the PSOE, PSP and FPS to work together, it is [...] my view that co-operation between the separate groups in the democratic left will be very much in the interests of these groups, of democracy in Spain and of HMG, and I hope that Ministers as well as the Labour Party will use their influence in that direction.⁸⁰⁷

At this meeting, Morán briefly mentioned how dangerous a ban on the PCE’s participation in the elections could be for the non-Communist Left. This made David Lipsey reflect on the consequences that not legalising the PCE before the elections could have in Spain and in Britain. He considered that it would be very difficult for a Labour administration to recognise those elections as democratic, especially if the PSOE kept arguing that without the PCE, the elections would not be democratic. Lipsey thought that the union of the Socialists was desirable, and he welcomed all of the proposed meetings. However, he noted that the BLP had official relations with the PSOE through the SI, and therefore its relations with this party had to be privileged.⁸⁰⁸

The union of the Spanish Socialists did not happen until after 1977, when it became clear that the PSOE was by far the strongest party in the Socialist realm. However, at this point, the reticence of the PSOE to merge with other groups without absorbing them must be explained in terms of its relations with the SPD. After the replacement of Arias Navarro by Adolfo Suarez as President of Spain, Felipe González became the main interlocutor of the opposition with the regime. This was for several reasons, with a major reason being the diplomatic effort made by Germany to advance the goodwill of the Spanish government towards the PSOE.

⁸⁰⁷ Letter from A.C. Goodison, Southern European Department, to Mr. Lipsey, Views of a member of the Spanish Popular Socialist Party, 19/08/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸⁰⁸ Letter from David Lipsey, Political Adviser, to Mr Goodison SED, Views of Sr. Moran (Spanish Popular Socialist Party), 25/08/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

The German support for the PSOE was so important that the party believed that it could be possible to stand in the elections without reaching an agreement with the rest of the Spanish Socialist parties. However, if the PSOE wanted to be successful with this strategy, the support of the Germans was not enough. It was essential for the PSOE to make sure that the European Socialist parties would keep their contacts and public statements exclusively focused on them. In general, this was the line followed by the SI member parties. Furthermore, the SPD gently pressed the Spanish government to stop trying to exploit the factionalism of the Spanish Socialist family (as this favoured the Communists) in the media, to consider giving some autonomy to the Spanish regions (as this would damage the separatists), and to give special treatment to the PSOE.⁸⁰⁹

Thus, contrary to what the Europeans intended, the international support for the PSOE did not facilitate the union of the Spanish Socialists; it actually made the union more difficult, because this support nourished PSOE's hegemonic pretensions regarding the Spanish Left. Taking into consideration the impressive electoral results of the independent candidature of the PSOE in 1977⁸¹⁰ (they were the second force with 29% of the votes), the international exclusive support to the Socialist party cannot be considered a failure, rather the contrary. However, at the end of 1976, this was not so clear. In October, the British might have greatly contributed to this tendency, hampering the possibilities for achieving the union of the Spanish Socialists by enhancing the image of González at the national and international level. They invited the leader of the PSOE to the annual Conference of the BLP, and he was the only international personality to deliver a speech.

Before analysing the role of the leader of the PSOE at the Conference of the BLP, it is necessary to devote some lines to explaining the evolution of the political situation in Spain during the autumn of 1976. The Government led by Suárez moved very quickly, and prepared a programme of reforms that should be approved by the Spanish *Cortes* and by the Spanish people in a referendum at the end of the year. This programme of reforms envisaged the total transformation of the regime into a democracy. However, the issue of the referendum caused confrontations between the government and the opposition. There was disagreement on the kind of question that the government should ask to the people, and on the order that the political reforms should follow. According to the members of the *Platajunta*, before organising the referendum, the government should legalise all of the political parties, give a

⁸⁰⁹ Muñoz, *El Amigo Alemán*, 326-329.

⁸¹⁰ They reached an agreement for a coalition with the Catalan Socialist Party as we will see below.

total amnesty, recognise the basic freedoms of reunion, expression, association, and demonstration, suppress the unique official party, *Movimiento*, and guarantee to all of the opposition parties equal opportunities for appearing in the media.

4.1.4. Felipe González at the October 1976 BLP Conference

Between 27th September and 1st October, the BLP held its annual National Conference in Blackpool, and Felipe González was the foreign personality invited to deliver a speech. This was a great gesture of support for the PSOE, and it gives a clue to the importance that the British, and the whole European Social Democracy, gave to the democratisation of Spain and the role that the PSOE should play in the process.

Before the Conference, González and Francisco López Real were invited to have lunch with the British Secretary of State, Crossland, on 27th September.⁸¹¹ Representatives of all the international delegations attending the Conference were invited to this lunch, but the Foreign Office considered the major personalities to be Felipe González and Bettino Craxi. This means that the political importance of the conversations with both the Spanish and Italian leaders were considered to be very high, and that a report would be transmitted to Number 10 Downing Street. The British delegation was composed of party leaders and members of the Foreign Office, and included Anthony Crosland, Foreign Secretary; David Owen, Minister of State; John Tomlinson, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State; Tom Bradly, Chairman of the Labour Party; Ron Hayward, General Secretary of the Labour Party; Ian Mikardo, Chairman of the International Committee of the Labour Party; Tom McNally, Political Adviser to the Prime Minister; Jenny Little, International Secretary of the Labour Party; David Lipsey, Political Adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary; and Ewen Ferguson, Private Secretary.⁸¹²

During the lunch, González explained the situation in Spain to his British hosts. He showed a mixture of pragmatism and commitment towards the PSOE strategy of democratic rupture, which by now had been transformed into a “pacted rupture,” meaning that the PSOE would let the government move towards democracy if the reforms were sincere. He said that the

⁸¹¹ Telegram from Crossland to the British embassy in Madrid, Labour Party Conference, 21/09/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸¹² Guest List for Luncheon to be given by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on Monday 27th September at the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool, 23/09/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

Spanish regime had increased formal freedoms, and he expected that it would develop them even further. However, despite the increasing liberalisation, he was concerned about the commitment of the regime to transforming itself. He thought that if it did not move fast, there was the risk of following the pattern of Portugal under Caetano. He assured his interlocutors that “it was PSOE’s intention to work for gradual change”, but he considered that the contents of the government’s proposals were not sufficient, which made external pressures an essential element in helping “to bring about more rapid internal reform.” González’ pragmatism, and the concession made by the government to lead the reforms, can be seen in a sentence that he repeated several times in Blackpool. He considered that “freedom was not negotiable, only the methods by which it is achieved.”

Regarding the medium to long-term aim of the PSOE, González was rather ambiguous, and he told the British that his aim was “to create a genuine social democracy on the French, Italian, or UK pattern, though Spain would find her own appropriate methods for doing so.” This can be interpreted as the will of the leader of the PSOE to create a democratic welfare state in Spain, but it can also be interpreted as a way of downgrading the verbal radicalism of his party, in line with the Socialism of Southern Europe, by putting in the same category the Italian, the French, and the British Social Democracy. This line is certainly open to interpretation; my reading is based on the fact that I have considered it strange to use Italy, France, and Great Britain together as examples of a model of Social Democracy. Whatever the case may be, González confirmed that the PSOE “believed in the sovereignty of parliament based on independent political parties, on individual liberty and on free collective bargaining in such a way that the voice of the people could make itself felt.”⁸¹³

After lunch, González and López Real met with Crossland again, although this time privately, for an in depth talk about the Spanish situation and the relations between Spain and the EC. Regarding the political situation in Spain, González’ reflections were in line with those he expressed during lunch. He went into more detail on the reasons why he was against the referendum called by the regime. His support for it depended on the kinds of questions that would be asked. According to him, the referendum could only be valid if the questions were easily understandable, and they offered the choice of a genuine democracy.

⁸¹³ Record of remarks made at a lunch given by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool on Monday, 27 September 1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

Then Crosland asked González about the prospects for success over the next year, a question that led the conversation towards the relations between Socialists and Communists. González replied that everything depended on the evolution of the economic situation—at that moment the inflation rate was 20% and unemployment 7%—because the improvement of the situation could only be achieved with the agreement of the working class and the government. Thus, the government should have to make concessions to the working class parties, the PSOE and the PCE. González believed that the Socialist strength at the base was stronger than the Communist, although the latter had to be taken into account.

Regarding the intentions of the PSOE in terms of the PCE, Crossland asked:

whether he would be right in summing up Sr. Gonzalez's remarks by saying that the Spanish left would not follow the Italian Socialist's example because the Socialists were more powerful than the Communists. They would not follow the Portuguese example because they were not looking immediately for independent socialist government. Their posture was more like that of the French Socialists looking for a united left—a Socialist government with Communist support.

González's answer was that "at present they were not even looking for the French solution." The leader of the PSOE thought that a popular front would be a big mistake in this first phase of democracy, because it would provoke "massive counter-reaction." The best solution would be a government of the centre-Right, composed of a Christian Democrat majority and a Francoist minority, with the Left in opposition, the Socialists having approximately 30% of the votes and the Communists approximately 20%. According to this analysis, he thought that the Socialists should go to the elections free of alliances.

The meeting ended with a discussion of the relations between Spain and the EC. At this stage, González was still sure that any concession from the EC to Spain would be favourably exploited by the regime, and that the Community should be cautious. Crossland reassured González that he had made the UK's position about this clear to the EC.⁸¹⁴

Two days later, on 29th September, González delivered a speech at the Conference of the BLP in Blackpool. He spoke in front of a thousand delegates and about 600 international journalists.⁸¹⁵ In his speech, he criticised the Spanish government for not having realised how urgent it was to establish democracy in Spain, and for keeping the old repressive methods

⁸¹⁴ Record of conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Sr. Felipe Gonzalez at the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool, at 1600 on 29 September 1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸¹⁵ "González en Blackpool. Con categoría internacional," *Cambio 16* (10/10/1976).

against political opposition. With this criticism, he wanted to cool down the optimistic reception that the reforms of Suarez were receiving outside Spain. He explained a dilemma to the Conference: to support the project of reforms of the regime, which he thought would not bring about democracy to Spain, or to support the democratic opposition as much as possible to re-establish democracy in Spain.⁸¹⁶

His speech was cheered to the rafters, but the greatest relevance of this Conference for the PSOE was that it drew the attention of all of the important Spanish journals and newspapers, ranging from the conservative *ABC*, to the progressive journal *Cambio 16*.⁸¹⁷ The government had granted a greater freedom of the press that summer, and Suárez's cabinet was keen to let the public exposure of the PSOE increase. They envisaged a future democracy in which the electoral system would be composed by a weak extreme-Right, a strong centre-Right, and also a strong centre-Left (all of these groups presumably coming from the regime), and finally a weak Socialist Left that would be represented by the PSOE.⁸¹⁸ Thus the visibility of the Socialists increased. However, the greater visibility of the PSOE had unexpected consequences for the Spanish government as well as for the Socialists.

The government had to deal with unfavourable statements that had a great impact in Spain, such as the one made by Michael Foot in Blackpool. He said that London would not support the entry of Spain into the EC as long as the leaders of the PSOE were not satisfied with the democratic conditions being offered by the Spanish state.⁸¹⁹ This statement of unconditional support for the PSOE annoyed the Spanish government. A member of the Spanish embassy in London called Crosland to discuss this statement, and told him: "the article [were this statement appeared] would harden attitudes in Spain, and that such remarks would constitute an interference in Spanish internal affairs." The British tried to appease the Spanish government by saying that they were not sure about the accuracy of that quote as it was pronounced at a Party occasion. However, whenever Spain applied to join the EC, "HMG

⁸¹⁶ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 141.

⁸¹⁷ "Don Felipe González planea en Blackpool la disyuntiva ante el futuro español," *Informaciones* (30/09/1976); "Felipe González pidió apoyo al «Labour»," *Diario de Barcelona* (30/09/1976); "Intervención de Felipe González en el Congreso Laborista," *La Voz de Galicia* (30/09/1976); "González en Blackpool. Con categoría internacional," *Cambio 16* (10/10/1976); "Unico orador extranjero. Felipe González interviene en el Congreso laborista de Blackpool," *La Región* (03/11/1976); "Entrevista Felipe González-Callaghan," *Arriba* (10/11/1976); "Viaja," *ABC* (28/09/1976). All of these articles were collected by the PSOE and can be found in: Archivo del PSOE, Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 88-G.

⁸¹⁸ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 331-333. Also, Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*, 456.

⁸¹⁹ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 142.

would be concerned solely to determine whether a genuine democracy had been established [in Spain].”⁸²⁰

For the PSOE, the increasing presence of the Socialists in the media aroused a wave of criticism from the rest of the opposition, who complained about the privileged treatment that the government gave to the PSOE. As we will see more in detail in the next section of this chapter, this worried the party because other Socialist groups and the Communists had ammunition for portraying them as the favourite option of the regime, and therefore not real representatives of the Left. Nevertheless, the increased public exposure of the party was in general positive and desirable.

After the Conference of the BLP, the PSOE started to organise its first legal Congress in Spain since 1932. The Socialists had been allowed to celebrate the Congress of the UGT in Spain in April, and now they expected to organise the Congress of the party in November. International representation at the Congress would be very important for the PSOE, since the presence of international leaders in Spain would underpin the image of the PSOE as the main party in the opposition. Thus, the Spanish Socialists invited the British Prime Minister and a representative of the BLP to be present in the Congress. The BLP decided to send Michael Foot, who was in the Left-wing of the party, and he was the Lord President of the Council at the governmental level.

When the Spanish government had notice of Foot’s visit, the Director General for Europe of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nuño de Aguirre, telephoned Crosland to complain about it. He protested in moderate terms, considering Foot’s visit inappropriate. As Foot was a British Minister and he had not visited Spain previously in his ministerial capacity, visiting the country to attend the Congress of a still illegal political party was considered offensive. The British were concerned about the possible repercussions that this trip could have for the relations between the Spanish government and the UK. Both governments were keeping down the political conflict over Gibraltar, and after Foot’s statement at the Conference of the BLP, the British did not know whether his presence in the Congress of the PSOE could be harmful in this respect.⁸²¹

⁸²⁰ Telegram from Crossland to the British embassy in Madrid, Spain/EEC, 07/10/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸²¹ Letter from I.S. Winchester, Southern European Department, to Mr Sutherland, Labour Party Attendance at the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) Conference in Madrid on 4-6 November, 29/09/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

Although the Foreign Office considered that Foot's attendance of the PSOE's Congress was a party matter, the British were not sure about the convenience of Foot's visit to Spain until they compared information with their embassies in Portugal and Germany, and they found out that the same kind of messages had been sent to the Portuguese and German governments. The decision of these governments to send Mário Soares and Willy Brandt to the PSOE's Congress encouraged the British to support Foot's attendance.

Eventually, PSOE's Congress was postponed to December 1976. In the autumn of that year, the internal situation in Spain continued to be delicate. The handling of the economic crisis by the government was unpopular, which led to the organisation of a general strike on 12th November by the UGT, CCOO, and USO.⁸²² Moreover, the terrorist activities of ETA, which killed the civil governor of Gupúzcoa Juan María Araluce on 4th October, were provoking the hardening of the positions of the extreme-Right. In this context, a disagreement between the PSOE and the Spanish government postponed the plans of the Socialists.

The government wanted the PSOE to register legally under the political association law before the holding of the Congress. Moreover, it did not want the PSOE's Congress to coincide with the important and delicate discussion of the constitutional reform proposal in the Spanish *Cortes* in November, which presumably would find opposition among the Francoist die-hards. The PSOE, in turn, rejected registering under that law, arguing that the decision would have to be discussed and approved at the party's Congress. However, according to British diplomacy, "behind this lies their dislike of seeking legality from a government they regard as illegitimate, and also their calculation that their best chance of negotiating a satisfactory electoral law with the government lies in withholding for the present any indication or willingness to play electoral ball."⁸²³ Thus, the government did not allow the celebration of the Congress in November. The PSOE's answer was to threaten to hold it abroad, which would have had a very negative impact for the credibility of the government's project of political reform.

⁸²² These trade unions were together in the unitary platform Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales (COS), the syndical equivalent of the *Coordinación Democrática*. On this topic see: José María Marín Arce, "La Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales (COS): una experiencia de unión de acción sindical durante la transición," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, Serie V, H.^a Contemporánea, 9 (1996): 295-313.

⁸²³ Telegram from Wade-Gary to the FCO, PSOE, 08/10/1976, UKNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

Eventually, the government and the PSOE reached an agreement, thanks to the mediation of the German government.⁸²⁴ The Congress was banned in November, but it would be permitted a month later. This solution pleased the PSOE. They could celebrate their event, and at the same time the ban to their Congress provided them with an unexpectedly good argument for countering the criticism of being privileged by the government made by the opposition.⁸²⁵ This was useful because in the summer the regime had previously allowed the Congresses of other parties that were still illegal, such as the PSP and the historic faction of the PSOE(h).

4.1.6. Towards democracy: From the 27th Congress of the PSOE to the elections

The Spanish *Cortes* approved the Law for Political Reform presented by the government on 18th November, and Spain seemed to be moving towards political democracy. Less than three weeks later, the PSOE celebrated its 27th Congress in Madrid. It was attended by delegates who represented 9.141 members, which was not an impressive number, but it was much larger than the number of militants at the Congress of Suresnes. This was the first time that the party had held a Congress in Spain since 1932,⁸²⁶ which made it the most important event of the PSOE during the transition. The coverage in the media was exceptional, and the international attendance was impressive. The most prominent leaders of European Socialism, such as the recently appointed president of the SI Willy Brandt, François Mitterrand, Olof Palme, Michael Foot, and Pietro Nenni were present. This created an image of the PSOE as the facilitator of the desired rapprochement between Spain and Europe.⁸²⁷

At the level of ideological principles, at this Congress the PSOE approved a line that was very Leftist, and clearly anti-Capitalist. The party committed itself to a Socialism characterised by self-management, it confirmed that it was a revolutionary as well as a democratic mass class-based party, and it officially adopted the definition Marxist. For the Spanish Socialists, the most important methodological tool that Marxism provided was the dialectical method. Using this method, the PSOE considered that the period of transition towards Socialism should be

⁸²⁴ See: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 339-345. Published in Hamilton and Salmon, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, 496-499.

⁸²⁵ “Discriminaciones contra el PSOE,” *El Socialista*, 73 (25 October- 10 November 1976): 2.

⁸²⁶ See: Aurelio Martín Nájera, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (Madrid: Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 2009).

⁸²⁷ “El abrazo de Europa,” *Cambio 16*.

based on a mixture of parliamentary struggle and popular fights. This meant that the party accepted participation in the parliamentary democracy that the regime was building, provided that the above-mentioned conditions imposed by the opposition were fulfilled.⁸²⁸

In terms of the concrete policies approved at the Congress, the PSOE advocated a planned economic policy that implied the socialisation of the basic means of production and the basic economic sectors (financial, energetic, alimentary, etc.), and the restructuring of the taxation system, making it more progressive and more tax collecting. The aim of this policy was to put an end to the social and regional inequalities in Spain, and to develop an infrastructure that would facilitate the creation of a welfare system.

The PSOE was especially adventurous in terms of foreign policy. It confirmed its opposition to all of the existing international military blocs, and to Spain joining NATO. Moreover, it repudiated the treaty of the US bases. In terms of the EC, the PSOE was in favour Spain's participation in the process of European construction. However, they considered that the objective of this process should be the development of a democratic and Socialist Europe that would be independent from the imperialist blocs and closely linked to the Third World. In order to do so, the PSOE envisaged that once Spain was a member of the EC, one of the concrete measures to be adopted would be to implement democratic elections to the European Parliament and to strengthen economic planning and regional policy within the EC. The PSOE also considered that they needed to strengthen the collaboration and mutual aid among the progressive forces of the south of Europe and the Mediterranean, in order to contain the reactionary forces in the region, and also to make the Mediterranean a place free from superpower rivalries. Regarding Gibraltar, the PSOE supported the Spanish claim of sovereignty over the Rock, but it was willing to open the Spanish frontier, and in favour of negotiating a solution with the people of Gibraltar.

At an organisational level, the PSOE approved a resolution in favour of the federal structure of the Spanish State. It was also decided that this federal structure would be reflected in the organisation of the PSOE. This meant that the national committee that was in charge of exercising control over the executive committee would be replaced by a federal committee, in which each of the regions that composed the Spanish State would be represented. This implied that each regional federation would have its own executive committee and power to make decisions at the local level, respecting the lines drafted by the Congress. However, the

⁸²⁸ As was said above, these conditions were the legalisation of all the political parties,

federalisation and decentralisation of power in the PSOE was not completed until the end of the 1980s, and Alfonso Guerra kept the power in the party apparatus.⁸²⁹

Last, but not least, the Congress approved a flexible policy of alliances, but emphasised its independence. The PSOE considered that it had been unfairly attacked from both the Right and from the Left in recent years, and for this reason they considered it necessary to establish the image of the party as an *autogestionario* Socialist party. This would confirm that the PSOE was the “central axis of the historical progressive forces.” From that basis, the party manifested its independence and its freedom to establish or avoid alliances with other political forces, depending on the objective and subjective conditions of every moment. Regarding the union of the Socialists, the PSOE was in favour of Socialist unity achieved on a democratic basis, meaning that the bases of the parties concerned (the FPS, the PSP, and the PSOE) should build unity.⁸³⁰ In practice, this implied the absorption of these parties by the PSOE, as it had more militants than the other two parties.

The executive committee elected at the Congress was very similar to one that already existed. The President was Ramón Rubial, the General Secretary Felipe González; the Organisational Secretary Alfonso Guerra; the Secretary of Political Relations Enrique Múgica; Secretary of International Relations Luis Yañez; Secretary of formation and Documentation Luis Gómez Llorente; the Secretary of Press and Information Javier Solana; the Secretary of Propaganda Guillermo Galeote; the Syndical Secretary Eduardo López; the Secretary of Administration Carmen García; the Youth secretary José María Benegas and the Secretary of Emigration José Luis Albiña.⁸³¹

According to the British government, the PSOE’s Congress was a great public success for the Spanish party, as it was the largest and most impressive Congress organised by an opposition party so far. “[It] would have been [a success] even without foreign participation.” The most relevant points of this Congress for the British were that the Spanish had committed themselves to participating in the elections, providing that they were held under satisfactory conditions, even if the PCE was not legalised. The Congress also showed that the PSOE was in favour of a federal solution for the regional problems in Spain, and most importantly for

⁸²⁹ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 324.

⁸³⁰ A 70, XXVII Congreso. Memoria de gestión de la Comisión Ejecutiva, Historical archive of the PSOE, FPI.

⁸³¹ Nájera, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español*, 47.

the British, it confirmed that the PSOE was against Spain entering into NATO, but favourable to opening the Spanish frontier with Gibraltar.⁸³²

The speech of the representative of the BLP Michael Foot, at the Congress had a very good reception. His main points were that the language of democratic socialism was international—a gesture in favour of the cohesion of the European Socialism—and that the mistakes of the 1930s should not be repeated; if Spain achieved a credible democracy, as seemed likely, the British would support its accession into the EC. He reiterated that the British (he said “we”, which did not make clear whether he was talking about the BLP or the British Government) would only consider Spain to be a democratic country when the PSOE considered it as such.⁸³³

The radical rhetoric used by González and other members of the executive in this party event has been considered by the literature as a way of disguising from the radicalised rank and file that the party was actually undergoing a turn to the Right. The PSOE displayed their traditional double image as a revolutionary as well as a moderate party. However, as Richard Gillespie argues, there were several reasons to explain the radicalisation of the PSOE. It reflected the ideological accumulation built up during the clandestine struggle, and it was also due to the economic conjuncture of a crisis in capitalism and the experience of Chile that had shown the extent to which Socialists could rely on the bourgeois political institutions.⁸³⁴ Moreover, the party needed to show its Leftist credentials at a moment when they had decided to go to the elections even if the PCE was not allowed to participate.

This Leftist rhetoric was criticised, and created doubts among the international partners of the PSOE. The main study of the relations between the PSOE and the SPD argues that the Germans expected a great deal of radicalism in the Congress, and that they were not surprised by it. They were satisfied with the re-election of the executive committee, because it was a guarantee that the party would move in the direction of moderation. However, rumours spread about the Germans being upset because of the radicalism of the PSOE, which was willing to accept the material solidarity of the Social Democratic parties while at the same time rejected their ideological principles. The SPD did not try to deny these rumours, as they considered

⁸³² Letter from I.S. Winchester to Mr. Hibbert, 23/12/1976, *PSOE Conference*, UKNA, FCO 9/2422, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸³³ “Michael Foot, líder del laborismo inglés. Nunca pensé que se llegaría a esto,” *El Socialista*, Especial XXVII Congreso, 8.

⁸³⁴ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 321-322 and 378-379.

that they would send a sign to the leaders of the PSOE to “accelerate its ideological maturation.”⁸³⁵

In this light, the British documentation suggests that the German Social Democrats not only avoided refuting this rumours, but they also nourished them. After the Congress, the British reflected on the doubts that the leadership of the PSOE, and especially Felipe González, had aroused among their international partners. Although the British seemed to be well aware of the tactical use of radical rhetoric by the leaders of the party, they had received several negative comments about PSOE’s secretary general from different sources. On 21st December, at an EEC Commercial Officers lunch, the Federal German Representative told the British representative Alan White that “Brandt had left Madrid unhappy about the performance of Felipe González and his PSOE colleagues.” The new president of the SI considered that the Spanish had not shown real awareness of the situation in Spain, nor ideas on how to cope with the problems of their country in the future. According to the German representative, Brandt thought that the PSOE leaders had been “more concerned with their personal positions than the future of their party,” and he was “especially disappointed with González”, to the extent that he described the Spaniard as “an opportunist whose only concern was to achieve personal power, and who possessed few ideas on what to do with it afterwards.” Brandt was especially irritated because there was a widely-held assumption that he was some kind of patron of González, in the position of guiding and advising him.

For the British ambassador to Madrid, it was difficult to express an opinion of González, who was sometimes described as a lightweight. However, he did not take this criticism too seriously because “the extent to which Gonzalez has been lionised by foreign Socialists may not have helped him [...] both by engendering jealousy here [in Spain] and accusations that it has gone to his head.” However, Wiggins thought that despite the fact that at the Congress González “subscribed to some proposition which one would have preferred him to resist and which he himself probably does not endorse,” he handled things quite well, and that “he showed a certain strength of character in doing so.”

The important thing for the British was that González had committed the PSOE to participating in the future elections, even if the Communists were excluded. This was considered a good outcome for the British ambassador, who stated that “if [González] can get

⁸³⁵ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 354-355.

PSOE to participate in the elections in reasonably good order that would be an important achievement to his credit.”⁸³⁶

After the Congress of the PSOE, Spain seemed to move firmly towards democracy, as the referendum on the law of political reform organised by the government demonstrated on 15th December 1976. The question to the citizens in the referendum was “do you approve the project of law for the political reform?”, and the Spanish voted yes by a massive majority—94% of the votes were in favour, and the participation was quite high with 77% of the electoral roll voting. Once the law for the political reform was approved, the government legalised all of the political parties, including the PSOE in February, apart from the PCE.

In the first months of 1977, the activity of the British embassy regarding the Spanish Socialist parties was relatively quiet. Now that it was more clear that democracy would be established in Spain, the British focused their attention on the union of the Spanish Socialists. After the success of the Congress of the PSOE, negotiations between the party and some parties who belonged to the FPS, including the most important party, the Catalan PCS began, and they led to an agreement of unification between the Catalan federation of the PSOE and the Catalan Socialist Party led by Joan Reventós. This was a great achievement for the PSOE because the PSC was one of the pillars of the FPS, and the strength of the party in Catalonia, where the issue of national identity was very important, was relatively weak before this pact. Days later, another party member of the FPS, the *Convergencia Socialista Madrileña* (CSM), reached an agreement with the Madrid federation of the PSOE to join the party. Other similar agreements with member parties of the FPS were about to be reached, but for the PSOE, the main problem in the Socialist realm was the independent existence of the PSP.

The British gathered information about the intentions and chances of achieving the union, or at least an agreement between these two parties before the elections. Felipe González proposed at the Congress of the PSOE that the union of the socialists should happen within the structure of the PSOE, and Tierno Galván did not accept these conditions that entailed the disappearance of his group. In turn, he proposed as an immediate and initial step towards

⁸³⁶ Letter from Charles Wiggins to RP Flower, 24/12/1976, *Felipe González and the PSOE*, UKNA, FCO 9/2422, Spanish Socialist Parties.

unity with the creation of a new label such as *Unión Electoral Socialista*, with each person on the united list of candidates being described by his original political party.⁸³⁷

In March, two of the leaders of the PSP, Raul Modoro (secretary general of the PSP) and Fernando Morán visited London and met with the recently appointed Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Frank Judd. They had lunch together on 15th March, and they discussed several things, with the most relevant being the prospects for the elections that would be held in summer, and the union of the Socialists.

Judd began the conversation by reminding his interlocutors about the fact that the BLP had formal links with the PSOE, rather than with the PSP, but he was interested in knowing if “[w]as there any hope of the different Spanish Socialist groups agreeing to work together before or after the elections?”

Modoro started explaining the prospects for the elections. He thought that the discussions between the opposition and the government to carry them out were satisfactory, but he was aware that the elections would be hard for the opposition, as the government still controlled the apparatus of the former single party. He believed that all the political parties, including the PCE, which still was outlawed, would be legalised. But if this did not happen, he considered that it “would be a serious problem for the Left.”

Judd used this situation to comment as follows: “in the circumstances described, the case for integration of the Socialist parties seemed very strong.” Modoro agreed, but he considered that his party could not do more. The PSOE, which he described as being in decline due to their immature behaviour towards the government’s reforms, and badly shaken by the confusion that the government’s recognition of the PSOE(h) brought about, was not willing to merge. Modoro considered that one of the reasons was that “the Socialist International, and within the [SI] the SPD in particular, was making a mistake in backing only the PSOE, since this made it difficult for the groups to come together by making mutual concessions.”

The leader of the PSP was obviously trying to undo the exclusive international support for the PSOE, and warned the British about the possibility that without a Socialist electoral alliance, “the PCE would put itself forward as a social democratic party in an attempt to capture the

⁸³⁷ Letter from RD Wilkinson to RP Flower, 14/02/1977, *Views of Tierno Galván*, UKNA, FCO 9/2637, Spanish Socialist Parties.

floating vote.” Then he added that the PSP would do anything to secure unity, “but we needed help. Both in the campaign and in persuading the PSOE to compromise.”

The British made their stance clear to Modoro. Lipsey told him that “it would not be easy to change the position of the Socialist International”, and Judd explained the specific attitude of the BLP. “He hoped that Britain might be able to help in the problems described to some extent, but emphasised that their solution was strictly a matter for the Spanish people themselves.”⁸³⁸ With this statement, Lipsey was politely rejecting support the PS.

Thus, the British attempts to bring together the Spanish Socialist family did not have any concrete direct result. Along 1976, the Labour government recommended the PSOE the union of the Socialists, gathered information on this issue and tried to press very subtly in this direction. However, as they recognised, they were “preaching to the converted”⁸³⁹ and, although they tried to contribute to make the conditions of this union favourable, the British did not influence directly the solution to the Socialist unity in Spain.

As an example of the positive view that the British Labour held regarding the process of democratisation in Spain, this chapter will finish with the report that Bob Edwards, former leader of the SDDC and one of the most committed anti-Francoist people in the BLP, made of his visit to Spain in April 1977. He visited Madrid with the Bureau of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament, and he reported to the BLP that “it was a very emotional visit for me” because the last time he had been in Spain, he had been arrested and interrogated for 14 hours for trying to be present at a trial of some young rebels against the regime. This time, the police did not intervene: “indeed they followed me and my colleagues as a kind of protection.”

He was there for some weeks before the beginning of the electoral campaign, and he attended several public meetings of the PSOE. He was emotional about being able to assist at these free Socialist demonstrations in Spain, for which he had fought a war forty years ago. Edwards thought that the chances that the PSOE had of winning the elections were scarce because of the advantageous situation of the moderate Right-wing coalition led by Suárez. However, he also thought that this government would not last long, as it would not be able to handle the rising inflation and unemployment that was affecting Spain. As a result, he

⁸³⁸ Call by Sr Raul Modoro and Sr Fernando Moran of the Spanish Popular Socialist Party on Mr Judd at 11:00 hours on Tuesday 15 March, UKNA, FCO 9/2637, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁸³⁹ *The PSOE*, C. D. Wiggin, 19/02/1976, BNA, FCO 9/2421, Spanish Socialist Parties.

expected that in “maybe 2 years” there would be a Left-wing government in Spain, as the Socialists were a party with a great future.

His overall opinion on the PSOE was the following:

The Spanish Socialist Workers Party is essentially a young party, strong in the cities but weak in the villages and smaller towns. They lack money and the normal facilities for electioneering, but they are meeting this colossal problem of fighting the general election in June with tremendous vigour enthusiasm and courage. The leadership is young, and this Spanish party [...] will bring new and needed inspiration to the whole European Socialist Movement, many of the leaders of which have been in and out of government for so many years they have become tired radicals and we need this new young vigorous party [...] to bring into our movement the new ideas based on old socialist principles.⁸⁴⁰

The electoral campaign was long, and the PSOE used the slogans “Socialism is freedom” and “freedom is in your hands.” The party focused especially on the image of the leader, Felipe González. Since the Congress of December, the party had cultivated a double image. On the one hand, they used a Leftist image to compete with the PCE, and on the other hand, they had a more moderate image that would grant them the votes of the less ideological people. Thus, the PSOE criticised the moderate stance of the PCE, and at the same time they practically ignored the resolutions of the Congress of December at their public meetings. As the historian Richard Gillespie has pointed out, although the PSOE was afraid of the organisational strength of the PCE, they realised that this did not have to imply electoral strength. Beyond the militants, the Socialists knew that they were more attractive than the Communists.⁸⁴¹

Although it is hard to say due to the lack of reliable documentation, the European Social Democracy probably financed the electoral campaign of the PSOE to an important extent. At a Bureau meeting of the SI in March 1977, it was recommended that all the party members support the PSOE, through public statements or materially, and the SPD was willing to support the Spanish with an important economic contribution.⁸⁴² An oral source has confirmed that “all the electoral campaign was financed by the Europeans,” and that the party received briefcases full of money from the German and the Swedish Social Democrats, but that this was something hard to prove because no one in the PSOE made a note of this influx

⁸⁴⁰ Edwards, Bob, Spain Revisited, 29/04/1977, BLP Historical Archive (Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester), Box 5 Bob Edwards, Spanish Workers Defense Committee.

⁸⁴¹ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 325.

⁸⁴² Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 384.

of money.⁸⁴³ Whatever may be the case, the sources placed in the historical archive of the BLP alone do not make it possible to argue that the British contributed materially to the electoral campaign of the PSOE.

On 15th June 1977, general elections were held in Spain, and the PSOE had an impressive result. It came second, only after the amalgam of political parties that formed the winning coalition of Adolfo Suárez, *Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD), which had 34.4% of the votes. The Socialist party had 29.3%, which confirmed that they were the electorally strongest party, not only in the Left, but also in Spain. The PCE 9% of the votes, and the PS had 4%.

4.2. PSOE and the PSF 1975-1977

4.2.1. PSF-PSOE relations from the beginning of 1975 until Franco's death

From the beginning of 1975, the leaderships of the PSF and the PSOE increased their contacts and established closer relations than before. As was shown in chapter two, the PSOE needed international recognition, and they had been influenced by the PSF in their organic and especially their ideological renovation. Several characteristics of the French party were attractive to the PSOE, who adopted and adapted them to their own reality. The most attractive characteristic of the PSF was that they represented, or wanted to represent, a new kind of Socialism that was different from the existing Social Democracy and Soviet Communism. This new way to Socialism required the adoption of a kind of strategy whose core ideas were *autogestion* (as a way of going beyond capitalist management and State centralisation of the economy), and the union of the Left (as a way of uniting the working class and its representative organisations and also as a way of coping with the strength of the Communist party). Thus at the beginning of 1975, the PSOE considered the PSF to be its natural international partner, and sought to strengthen links with the French party in order to have their political, technical, ideological (in the sense of the education of the militants), and economic support. During this phase, between the Congress of Suresnes and the summer of 1975, the Spanish were very receptive to French ideas, to the extent that the PSOE started to call itself a Southern European Socialist party. This was a concept meaning that there was a kind of Socialism in the South of Europe that was different to the already existing ones, that

⁸⁴³ Interview with José Luis del Hierro, historical member of the PSOE, 20/07/2011.

had the characteristics of the abovementioned need for the union of the Left and *autogestion*, and essentially included the PSF, the Portuguese PS, the PSOE and the PSI.

On the other hand, the PSF saw the right conditions to spread and help to implant this kind of Socialism in the South of Europe, especially in the Iberian Peninsula, where the Portuguese Revolution had opened up an interesting opportunity for structural economic and political change in the region. This possibility affected France directly, as Socialists and Communists were trying to beat the Right electorally and implement their Common Programme of government. What could happen in the Iberian Peninsula was very interesting to the French as they could learn new ways of responding to the demands of their society for “*changer la vie*” from the Iberian examples.⁸⁴⁴

The PSF was willing to help the Spanish Socialists, but its support was limited by their scarce economic resources and by tactical constraints. Regarding these limitations, the French Socialists were concerned by a change in strategy from the PCF that threatened the union of the Left, and it seems that one of the ways that the Socialists used to appease the Communists was through supporting the union of the Left in Spain. As we have already seen, in the last months of 1974 the French Communists started a campaign of harsh criticism against the Socialists, accusing them of being Social Democrats and having forgotten the Common Programme. This criticism began after the Socialist electoral boost in the presidential elections of 1974, and reached its peak at the beginning of 1975. The PCF interpreted that the Socialist electoral improvement was made at the expense of the Communists, they had to rethink their role within the union of the Left. The Portuguese Revolution also brought about the different approaches of the PSF and the PCF towards the transition to Socialism. This had international as well as domestic implications for the French Communists that jeopardised their need to regain prominence within the union of the Left. At the international level, the PCF's stance on the Portuguese Revolution made the PCF appear closer to Moscow than to the Eurocommunist trend initiated by the PCI. At the national level, this fact made them look Moscow-dependent, an image that was exploited by the government of Giscard d'Éstaing. For all of these reasons, the PCF developed a strategy aimed at regaining their hegemonic position within the union of the Left as well as democratic credibility. What they did was enhance

⁸⁴⁴ Michel Schifres, “Vers une réunion des socialistes de l'Europe du Sud. Le modèle Latin de François Mitterrand,” *Le Quotidien*, 26/05/1975.

their Eurocommunist image and criticise the PSF.⁸⁴⁵ The French Socialists, in turn, responded to this criticism by enhancing their support for the union of the Left in Spain.

As the Socialists were profiting from the union of the Left more than the Communists, the PSF was interested in preserving this union and in keeping down any polemic with the PCF. In this light, the public promotion of the union between Socialists and Communists in Southern Europe, especially in Spain and Portugal, was a way for the PSF to pacify their Communist partner and to clarify any doubts about their commitment to the common programme in France. In addition, at the beginning of 1975, the PSOE had consolidated their renovation at the Congress of Suresnes, and the situation in Spain, where Franco was very sick, would have to change in a very short time. This last factor also contributed to the fact that the PSF started to support PSOE more decidedly than before. This does not mean, however, that the support provided by the French was satisfactory for the Spanish. The tactical use that the PSF made of the international partners as a response to the struggle in the French union of the Left alienated the PSOE.

The immediate domestic objectives of the PSOE after their Congress of 1974 were to keep clarifying the ideological position of the party—although this issue was not as urgent as it had been before the Congress—and to make this ideological renewal known publically, to bring together the Spanish Socialists, and to find a way that would allow them to establish relations with the PCE on equal terms. The PCE had created the *Junta Democrática* in 1974 without the participation of the PSOE, and only later were they invited to join the *Junta*. The PSOE did not want to enter that platform, since it would have implied conceding the prominent role in the coalition to the Communists. Therefore, finding another way to relate to the PCE became an overriding necessity.

The ideological clarification that placed the party at the Left in the first months of 1975 was carried out by combining the historical revolutionary character of the PSOE with new ideas from the renovation of French Socialism. The Spanish Socialists therefore quoted the *Programa Máximo* of the party in almost every number of *El Socialista*, they kept quoting the historical leaders of the party, and they published articles that stated the main priorities and objectives of the party. As the editorial of *El Socialista* stated in January 1975, the aims of the party were to first achieve the democratic rupture, and then implant a democratic regime in

⁸⁴⁵ Jean-Pierre Cot, “Autogestion and Modernity in France” in *Eurocommunisme and Eurosocijalism. The Left Confronts Modernity*, ed. Bernard E. Brown (New York and London: Cyrco Press, 1979), 92-94.

Spain, which would make it possible to start the struggle for Socialism (including freedom). The party did not want “[...] any doubt [about] the nature of the objectives that our party pursues.” The PSOE felt the need to clarify that the party “was not willing, once political power was reached, to leave intact the capitalist economic mechanisms, becoming a good administrator of the neo-capitalist society.” Regarding the implantation of a democratic regime in Spain, “[t]his is the immediate objective the PSOE is working for here and now” because “without freedom of expression, unionism, association, and reunion, it is practically impossible to organise an effective struggle against capitalism.” However, for the PSOE formal democracy was “no more than a ‘means of reaching reach those objectives’ [the radical transformation of the capitalist society into a socialist society] as our political declaration says.”⁸⁴⁶

However, beyond recovering the original revolutionary character of the party, the ideological update of the PSOE entailed a substantial change in the line of the party, that given the scant publicity that its activities had, needed to be explained in public. Immediately after the PSOE Congress, Felipe González conceded an interview to the newspaper *El Correo de Andalucía*.⁸⁴⁷ The questions that journalist Juan Holgado Mejías asked him reflect the interest aroused in Spain by the ideological redefinition of the PSOE, but also the fact that their new position needed further clarification. This clarification had to be made by relating the party to its international partners and to its own history,⁸⁴⁸ since these were existing examples that made possible to imagine how the PSOE wanted to look. González was asked about his frequent travels abroad, and whether his destination was usually Paris. He answered as follows: “[n]ot exactly. My trips to Paris are almost always circumstantial, although I also have very good friends in France, among whom I highlight the French Socialists and trade unionists.” After this answer, the journalist asked “[b]etween Soares and Willy Brandt, who do you prefer?” and González answered: “Socialism in Spain is not identifiable with Socialism in Germany, and we do not know what will happen with Portuguese Socialism.” Then he was asked about what the Spanish Socialists had to learn from the historic Socialists. The answer of the PSOE’s first secretary was: “we have to assume the history of Socialism in

⁸⁴⁶ “Editorial. Nuestros objetivos,” *El Socialista*, 32 (second half of January 1975) 1. In the same argumentative line see: “Socialdemocracia y comunismo burocrático,” *El Socialista*, 32 (second half of January 1975): 11.

⁸⁴⁷ This interview was reproduced entirely in *El Socialista*, 30 (first half of December 1974). Immediately after the interview, González was arrested.

⁸⁴⁸ Santos Juliá has argued that PSOE’s need for legitimacy in the transition to democracy was pursued through the emphasis on its history and its theory; see: Juliá, “The ideological conversion,” 270. In agreement with him, I add that the theory on which the PSOE relied needed to be related to other, foreign, models.

Spain. [This] history is linked to eloquent names such as [Pablo] Iglesias, [Julián] Besteiro or [Francisco] Largo Caballero. There is no rupture between the thought of those men and what the Socialists represent today in our country. There is, logically, an adaptation to a new economic, political and social situation that is completely different.”⁸⁴⁹

As the questions posed by Meías show, the new model of Socialism proposed by the PSOE still had to find some example or reference to which it could be related. Relating the PSOE to its own history was useful because of the weight that the party had in the historical memory of the Spanish people.⁸⁵⁰ However, the past did not represent a valid model for society, since the Spanish Socialists were never able to fully implement their ideas, and their experience in the Second Republic ended in a Civil War. Where the PSOE could find existing examples and models was abroad. As we have already seen, the party rejected the Social Democrat models that had been successful in Northern Europe (now in crisis), as well as the bureaucratic authoritarian Socialism existing in Eastern Europe. Although the Chilean way to Socialism was an interesting experience for the PSOE, it could not be used as a reference because it had ended dramatically, and it had too many similarities with the recent history of Spain that had to be avoided. This lack of valid referents made the PSOE propose an original way to Socialism that had common characteristics with the also untested projects of the PSF and the PS. In around mid-1975, this still-underdeveloped model was labelled Southern European Socialism

At the core of Southern European Socialism lay the issue of the union of the Left. As we have seen in chapter two, the PSOE was in favour of some kind of collaboration with the Communists. However, there was a degree of reticence and ambiguity regarding this issue among the leaders of the PSOE, who after the Congress of Suresnes had been granted freedom of action in relations with the PCE.

This can be observed in another interview that González gave to Radio Paris in November 1974. If the PSOE was not identifiable with Socialism in Germany, and it was too soon to give an opinion on Portuguese Socialism, could it be considered to be in the same ideological line as the PSF, which based its strategy on the union of the Left? The answer of González to

⁸⁴⁹ “Entrevista a Felipe González,” *El Socialista*, 30 (first half of December 1974): 6.

⁸⁵⁰ A beautiful anecdote that exemplifies very clearly how the historical memory played in favour of the PSOE can be seen in: Mateos, “La Transición del PSOE,” 27.

this question,⁸⁵¹ was that “the analysis made by Mitterrand for France has been perfectly right, not only from the general point of view of making a great service to the working class, but also from the point of view of the Socialist Party as an organisation that has made a considerable leap forward.” Notwithstanding this fact, he did not see “any possible point of comparison [...] between the situation in France in 1974 [...] and the pre-democratic Spain [...],” although he considered that “at a theoretical level, a very theoretical level, the union of the Left is always desirable.” When González was asked about the more concrete issue of PSOE’s relations with the Communist-led *Junta Democrática*, he stated his rejection of that coalition. The reasons that he provided for adopting that stance were not very clear; he argued that “the analysis would have to be too long”, but in essence the main reason was that the PCE had conceded prominence to the forces of the Right in the struggle for freedom, and the PSOE could not tolerate this.⁸⁵²

Alfonso Guerra gave another interview some weeks later to the German media, in which he provided a clearer explanation on PSOE’s rejection of an agreement with the PCE within the frame of the *Junta Democrática*. The reasons were that the *Junta* was composed of the PCE and Right-wing personalities (the monarchist Calvo Serer and Carlists), as well as the group led by Tierno Galván. This had led to the elaboration of a Right-wing programme that the PSOE rejected. Moreover, for the PSOE, the *Junta* was an alternative to take power after the fall of the dictatorship, something that they did not desire. The PSOE thought that what was necessary at this stage was the union of the opposition in order to overthrow the regime,⁸⁵³ and not curtailing their political future after the death of Franco.

Beyond the statements of the leaders of the party, the PSOE’s official stance regarding the *Junta* included other divergences from this coalition. The Socialists argued that the *Junta* was too conciliatory. They disagreed with the fact that the *Junta* considered the Civil War to be a confrontation between two sectors of the Spanish people, while they considered it to be a military coup against the *Republica*. They also disagreed with the fact that the *Junta* did not mention anything about the dissolution of the repressive mechanisms of the regime, and that it

⁸⁵¹ The question was formulated slightly differently, he was asked about his opinion of the French union of the Left and the prospects to copying it in Spain.

⁸⁵² “Entrevista con el primer secretario del PSOE,” *El Socialista*, 32 (second half of January 1975): 4. The interview was broadcast by Radio Paris in November 1974, but it was published by *El Socialista* in January 1975.

⁸⁵³ “Entrevista con el secretario de Informacion y Prensa,” *El Socialista*, 34 (second half of February, 1975): 4.

did not question the maintenance of Spain's international agreements with the USA.⁸⁵⁴ This last point contrasted with the open anti-Americanism of the PSOE, which as we saw in chapter two, was one of the main characteristics of its international policy.

If these were the official reasons, there was another motive behind the PSOE's rejection of the *Junta*. This was the fear of subordination to the PCE. The Socialists were aware of the organisational strength of the Communists, and they feared that entering this platform with the PCE would put them in a subaltern position, since they did not have as many active cadres and militants as the PCE.⁸⁵⁵ This is why the PSOE attacked the *Junta* from the Left, arguing that it was too conciliatory and that it had a Right-wing programme, and that is the main reason why they rejected to join it.

Therefore, the PSOE's claims for the union of the opposition, especially the Leftist opposition, could not happen by integrating the party in the *Junta*. The PSOE had to find another formula for relating to the Communists that would not imply its own subordination. The problem of the Spanish Socialists was that they believed that their party would be stronger and more attractive for the future Spanish electorate than the PCE. They had justification for this belief, since the sociological studies carried out by the regime in the 1970s pointed in that direction. However, at that precise moment they knew that they were organisationally weaker than the Communists.⁸⁵⁶ Thus, if they wanted to play a prominent role in the overthrowing of the dictatorship, and at the same time emerge as an independent party in the period of regime transition⁸⁵⁷ they needed to ally with the Communists as equal partners.

The objectives, requisites, and conditions to achieve the union of the Left in Spain were published on the first page of the PSOE's newspaper in January 1975. According to the Socialist party, the liberties they were fighting for would be achieved through grassroots popular mobilisations, not through pacts and negotiation with the regime. Therefore, it was at this level that the main unitary efforts should be carried out. For the PSOE, the policy of alliances at a higher level only made sense if it was complemented with unity in the struggle

⁸⁵⁴ "Rueda de prensa del PSOE," *El Socialista*, 39 (first half of May 1975): 4.

⁸⁵⁵ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 304.

⁸⁵⁶ See: Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*. Also: "Los Españoles se mantienen a favor del socialismo," *El Socialista*, 33 (first half of February 1975), 13. In this survey the results were that the Spanish in the hypothetical event of future elections would vote 33% Socialist, 24% Social Democrat, 34% Christian Democrat and 10% Communist.

⁸⁵⁷ Juliá, *Los socialistas en la política española*.

at grassroots level. This approach was suitable for the Socialists since it was at the grassroots level where the PSOE could profit the most from the Communists, who were more active and had better implanted than the Socialists. Moreover, it was at the grassroots level where the PSOE suffered more pressure to pact with the Communists. Pacts or agreements from the top, between leaderships, were less interesting for the PSOE, since they would have to pact with the PCE within the frame of the *Junta Democrática*. The Socialists risked losing their identity by entering into a coalition in a subordinated position to the Communists—the regime normally identified all the opposition as the Communists for obvious reasons (Cold War and Spanish Civil War), and entering a coalition led by the PCE would go against PSOE's interests, especially now that the Socialists had been trying to reassert their own identity since 1972.

Other conditions that the PSOE considered essential for achieving an effective political accord were that the party would not be included in any group with a previously established name; this was an indirect reference to the *Junta Democrática*. The PSOE also demanded that any group or party involved in the future alliance would not use the alliance for publicity purposes. Therefore, they demanded loyalty from their potential partners. Once these conditions were accepted, the PSOE considered that the alliance should not exclude any organisation willing to work for democratic rupture, which was the ultimate objective of the alliance. Moreover, the alliance with other forces would be valid only until the democratic rupture, and no longer. Finally, the PSOE wanted to highlight that the basis for any accord was the recognition that the working class and the organisations that represented this class were the protagonists in the recuperation of freedom in Spain. The party acknowledged that it was making a great effort in clarifying its self-image, and they did not want that this alliance to lead to more confusion among the Spanish society.⁸⁵⁸

However, the ideological renovation of the PSOE went further than being open to collaborating with the PCE. In the first months of 1975, the party reflected on the implications and possibilities of another ideological novelty introduced in the Congress of 1972: *autogestión*. In this year, the PSOE emphasised their aim of establishing an original way to Socialism that would be different to existing experiences and that would allow them to combine Socialism and freedom. The key concept of this new way to Socialism was *autogestión*.

⁸⁵⁸ “El problema de la alianzas,” *El Socialista*, 31 (first half of January 1975): 1-2.

Although I have not been able to establish a direct link between the adoption of this concept by the French and by the Spanish Socialists, and therefore it would be risky for me to see here a transfer from the PSF to the PSOE, it is evident that there are important similarities between the PSOE, the PSF and the Portuguese PS' adoption of this concept. Despite the fact that the main international reference regarding *autogestión* in the 1970s was Yugoslavia, and although this concept had been used in Spain during the Second Republic, and from the 1950s onwards in the frame of the university contestation to the regime,⁸⁵⁹ it only was included in PSOE's ideological discourse after 1972. Between 1972 and 1974, this concept was not central to PSOE's ideology, but in 1976, the leaders of the party made of this concept the base of a new way to Socialism. If we consider that the first Western European Socialist parties adopting this concept were French, and that after 1974—when Michel Rocard and part of the PSU joined the PSF—it became the core of the French way to Socialism, it seems reasonable to think that the PSOE could have adopted this concept mirroring the PSF, an assumption that is strengthened by the fact that the PSF was considered a model for the PSOE.

In this respect, the PSF offered the PSOE an ideological model to confront and compete with the several Spanish Socialist parties, and the trade union USO, that had been created in the 1960s, and that tried to differentiate themselves from the PSOE by occupying a political space to the Left of the historic Socialist party. These parties called themselves revolutionary Marxists, and *autogestionarios*, and had adopted the concept self-management as a distinctive feature. Therefore, the PSF offered the PSOE an overall ideological model that was suitable to respond to the challenges that the party was facing in the Spanish Left.

This concept was understood in the PSOE as the key to overcome two problems that very much concerned the Socialists, namely the combination of Socialism and freedom and the need of the regions of Spain to manage themselves autonomously. They envisaged an *autogestion* not limited to the working places, but extended to all the social institutions.⁸⁶⁰ Reflecting theoretically on the issue of combining Socialism and freedom, one of PSOE's theoreticians, Gregorio Peces Barba, wrote that from a practical perspective “it is interesting the last programme of the French socialist party [*Changer la vie*, 1972], with the introduction

⁸⁵⁹ Francisco Fernández Buey and Jordi Mir García, “Apropiación del futuro: revuelta estudiantil y autogestión durante el tardo-franquismo y la transición,” *Desacuerdos. Sobre arte, políticas y esfera pública en el Estado español*, 6 (2011): 161-181. Accessed March 22, 2013, http://ayp.unia.es/dmdocuments/desacuerdos_6.pdf

⁸⁶⁰ A. Torres, “Tribuna Libre. Socialismo y autogestion,” *El Socialista*, 31 (first half of January 1975): 2.

by François Mitterrand, and the common programme of government of the Left [...] in France.”⁸⁶¹

The previous pages have provided a context for me to argue that the PSOE at the beginning of 1975 was very receptive to the influence of the PSF. As I have been emphasising, at the beginning of 1975 the PSOE was renewing its image and reasserting its position in the Left as a way to recover the position they had lost to the Communists and other Socialist forces that had found inspiration in the New Left during the years of exile. The PSOE had to fight two parallel struggles, one against the regime and another one for hegemony within the Leftist opposition; the ideological solutions they found were similar to the ideological developments of the French Socialists. The PSOE looked for a way to relate to the Communists on equal terms, and envisaged *autogestion* as the cornerstone of their new way to Socialism. Therefore, if the PSOE and the PSF were that close ideologically in 1974 and 1975, what kind of relation did they have after PSOE’s Congress of Suresnes?

4.2.2. Bilateral relations PSOE-PSF from January 1975 until the death of Franco

As was mentioned in the second chapter, Mitterrand was present at the PSOE’s Congress of Suresnes in October 1974, where he became familiar with the new executive committee of the Spanish Party. This official meeting opened a period during which the relations between both parties were strengthened. Two months later, the PSOE’s new leadership visited the headquarters of the PSF in Paris, and met again with François Mitterrand on 4th December 1974. At this meeting, both parties started a new relationship, in which the PSF tried to help the PSOE within the realm of ideology, as well as by giving them public visibility.

The PSF wrote a manuscript record of this meeting that shows that one of the PSOE’s problems at that time was their scarce presence in the media, and the scant reproduction of their new ideas. In Spain they appeared in the press very little, and all of the information was “tendentious.” There was nothing that the French could do regarding this problem in Spain, but they considered it necessary to correct this shortcoming in their own press. The PSF acknowledge that their newspaper *L’unité* had not published enough articles on the PSOE in the recent past, and that when they had written on Spain, they had focused more on the pro-Communist trade union CCOO than on the Socialist UGT. Therefore, they decided to “restart

⁸⁶¹ Gregorio Peces-Barba Martínez, “El socialismo y la libertad,” *Sistema. Revista de ciencias sociales*, 9 (April 1975): 69.

their articles [on the PSOE]” and improve the communication between the parties by sending each other information.

Another overriding concern for the PSOE was the issue of the poor training of the militants. It was decided to establish closer relations between the people responsible for formation in the two parties, Francisco Bustelo in the PSOE and Lionel Jospin in the PSF. However, the French were not sure about what to do or how to improve relations in this sense. As can be seen in their manuscript report on the meeting with the leaders of the PSOE, the PSF wondered “*que faire?*”

When they moved on to analysing the political situation in Spain, the PSOE’s representatives tried to persuade, even to urge, the French to support them more decisively than they had done so far. The PSOE’s opinion was that the Spanish regime wanted to perpetuate itself after the death of Franco. Proof of this was the promotion of the political associations within the regime as a way of giving the impression of political liberalisation. The PSOE was against accepting this legal channel opened by the regime, because as was explained in the previous chapter, it would imply that the associations would accept the moral, legal, and ideological principles of the regime before being legalised. Therefore, the Spanish Socialists presented the situation that they were facing as an “historic moment”, in which “the PSOE had an important role to play” in halting the continuation of the regime.

According to the Spanish, “the situation [in Spain] was a bit like in Portugal”, in the sense that among the political parties that would follow the collapse of the regime, the situation was quite confusing.⁸⁶² There was the party of Tierno Galván that called itself Socialist, but in reality resembled the Portuguese PPD. The latter was undermining the influence of the PS in Portugal, and the Spanish feared that Galván’s party could do the same to the PSOE. They only mentioned Galván’s party because Mitterrand had recently received Galván and had a friendly relationship with him.⁸⁶³ Moreover, many Socialist groups were emerging in Spain, taking the opportunity now that the death of Franco was close. Thus, the leaders of the PSOE concluded that “the French PS have to measure the reality of each of these formations. We are the only PS in Spain. [Although], of course, there can be regional PSs.”

⁸⁶² In the PSOE’s public statements the leaders of the party would never establish similarities between the Spanish and the Portuguese situations, but in this case this comparison is clearly made to downplay the Socialist credentials of the PSP, as the PSOE wanted to be the only Spanish party to have relations with the PSF.

⁸⁶³ Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 158.

The PSOE's representatives urged the French to act, arguing that "the situation in Spain cannot last a long time. The Spanish working class had a great tradition of organisation and combat." Taking all of this into account, they considered that "working in common is particularly important for the Mediterranean Socialists." Thus, the PSOE demanded directly that the PSF to have "permanent, tight and unique relations with the PSOE", to which the French answered that they would keep "privileged links [with the PSOE], but we cannot refuse to meet honourable personalities", probably referring to Tierno Galván. The PSOE also wanted the PSF to help them to reach to the 700 000 Spaniards living in France, to which the French agreed, and finally, the Spanish Socialists wished to see Mitterrand in Madrid at a meeting that would be visibly organised by the PSOE. Despite the risks that this entailed, the French agreed because it could be very interesting for both parties.⁸⁶⁴ On the one hand, it would be useful for the PSOE because it could grant them a good deal of visibility and a positive Leftist reputation in Spain. On the other hand, it would be interesting for Mitterrand, because it could favour him to appear as a promoter and champion of democracy in Spain, something that was "of great interest for the presidential campaign", and as the sponsor of the Spanish Socialists, who had the reputation of being at the far Left of the SI⁸⁶⁵ and willing to pact with the Communists.

At this meeting, the issue of the union of the Left was not discussed in detail, perhaps because the main objective of the PSOE leaders was to ensure the exclusive support of PSF. However, the French briefly touched upon this question. They reflected on the situation of the Leftist opposition in Spain, and although they saw that there were several problems, including the issues of the Spanish nationalities and their unity, they seemed to be rather optimistic. Regarding the union of the Leftist opposition, the PSF considered that "they are making some progress in this sense", and if there was some resistance, it came from the Christian Democrats, who were "the only anti-Communists." In terms of the problem of the nationalities, the Spanish seemed to be in the right direction as "they were looking for a federal solution."⁸⁶⁶

After this meeting, the PSF issued an official statement in which they emphasised that both the PSOE and the PSF had agreed on "intensifying their relations in every field, especially in the formation and the exchange of information." The statement also emphasised that

⁸⁶⁴ 424 RI3, Rencontre avec le PSOE (4 décembre 1974), 4/12/1974, CAS, Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁸⁶⁵ Gillespie, *The Spanish Socialist Party*, 299.

⁸⁶⁶ 424 RI3, Rencontre avec le PSOE (4 décembre 1974), 4/12/1974, CAS, Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Mitterrand had expressed the solidarity felt by the PSF towards the PSOE's struggle for democracy in Spain, and finally—and this was very important for the PSOE vis-à-vis other Socialist groups in Spain—Mitterrand “has specified that the [PSF] recognises the PSOE as the only qualified representative of Socialism in Spain, and the UGT as the representative of the Spanish workers.”⁸⁶⁷

Following the initiatives that they had discussed with the PSOE at this meeting, the PSF started to publish articles on the Spanish party more often in their newspaper *L'unité*. Already at the end of 1974, immediately after the PSOE's Congress of Suresnes, the French published an article in their newspaper covering the event. They highlighted the organic renovation of the PSOE, and the fact that the new leadership of the party had total freedom to “negotiate accords with all the anti-Francoist forces without exclusion. But they had insisted on the fact that all of the interclass accords must be preceded by an accord between the forces of the Left.”⁸⁶⁸ From 1975 onwards, the articles on the PSOE and the situation in Spain started to appear with certain regularity in *L'unité*, as we will see in the following pages.

At the beginning of 1975, the PSF and the PSOE also increased their collaboration in the formation of PSOE's militants, a crucial aspect in the ideological consolidation of a political party. On 2nd January, Carmen García Bloise⁸⁶⁹ wrote a letter to Lionel Jospin, the secretary of formation in the PSF, in which she told the French that Francisco Bustelo, the PSOE's secretary of formation, would visit Paris with the aim of setting in motion the collaboration between the PSF and the PSOE in the formation of the Spanish militants. She asked Jospin if he could organise everything to “permit the Spanish militants to study on site how do the diverse services (technical and political) of party work, as well as the municipal life, etc.”⁸⁷⁰

Jospin's answer was affirmative, and some days later, Bustelo visited Paris. He and Carmen García met with representatives of the PSF. They discussed the collaboration between both parties, especially in the field of formation of the militants, and decided to improve their relations by establishing a copy service for each of their publications, as an essential way of

⁸⁶⁷ 424 RI2, Communiqué du secrétariat international du PS, 04//12/1974, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès. This *communiqué* has already been quoted in Ortuño, *Los socialistas europeos*, 161.

⁸⁶⁸ “Socialistes espagnols: à gauche d'abord,” *L'unité*, 128 (18-24 October 1974): 6.

⁸⁶⁹ She was the previous Secretary of formation of the PSOE executive committee from 1972 to 1974. Although she abandoned the executive after the Congress of Suresnes, her role within the party in attracting and organising the militants was very important. See: Manuela Aroca Mohedano, “Mujeres en las organizaciones socialistas durante la dictadura. Antecedentes en la segunda República.”

http://web.archive.org/web/20140904135552/http://www.ugt.es/filc/hemeroteca/2008_mujeres_socialistas.pdf

⁸⁷⁰ 424RI1, Letter from Carmen García to Lionel Jospin, 02/01/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

exchanging and sharing information about the ideas, points of view, and proposals of each party within their own countries. They also decided that a member of the PSOE would spend a sojourn of two to eight days at the headquarters of the PSF. This would allow him or her to become accustomed to how the French party worked in practice. At the same time, the PSOE invited two or three members of the PSF, including Lionel Jospin, to visit Madrid for two or three days, although they did not settle any date. Finally, the Spanish asked the French if they could provide a venue for the organisation of formation courses in May and August, where the PSOE militants from the interior and exile could improve their theoretical awareness.⁸⁷¹

The collaboration between the Spanish and the French Socialist parties was promising at the beginning of 1975. This feeling was strengthened by the fact that at the PSF's Congress of Pau at the end of January, Felipe González was one of the personalities invited to deliver a speech. In this way, the PSF started to actively support the PSOE by giving it public visibility, along the lines decided at their meeting of December, and also following the recommendation that the SI had given to all its member parties. It is a hypothesis, not tested with empirical evidence, that the PSF could also have invited González to speak at the Congress as a way of minimising the sense of increasing moderation within the party due to the reduced influence of CERES.⁸⁷²

Whatever the case may be, the fact is that González had the opportunity of appearing publicly with the PSF. In his speech to the Congress, he analysed the situation in Spain very briefly, using arguments in line with what I have already mentioned in the previous section of this chapter—that the the Spanish regime was in crisis, and due to its internal contradictions it could not continue existing because it was no longer the best frame for the bourgeoisie. However, the most interesting part of his speech for this thesis is that he concluded by remarking that “the Spanish Socialists are willing to reinforce the Socialist International. This is why the Commission Executive of our party has endorsed the proposition of François Mitterrand of bringing together the Socialists of Southern Europe, who have common interests, namely to organise together the future of Socialism.”⁸⁷³ The newspaper of the PSOE echoed the speech of the first secretary of the party, and also mentioned González' willingness to “take the suggestion of the French PS to intensify the relations between the

⁸⁷¹ 424RI1, Note à Lionel, 10/01/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁸⁷² This is just a hypothesis, but it might be relevant because if proved, it would enrich our understanding of the motives behind the support of the PSF to the PSOE. Other International speakers were Carlos Altamirano, of the Chilean Socialist Party, Marcelo Curto of the PS, and Victor Larok of the PSB.

⁸⁷³ “Felipe (P.s.o.e.): «Un même combat»,” *L'unité*, 144 (7-13 February 1975): 13.

Socialist parties of Southern Europe, whose relations with other forces of the Left have many similarities, [which makes] necessary the exchange of experiences and the construction of an authentic internationalism.”⁸⁷⁴

My argument is that this was an important turning point for the PSOE’s ideological clarification. As mentioned above, the Spanish party was proposing a new way to Socialism that had never been tried before, and they needed an international referent to which they could be linked in Spain. It was at this point that the PSOE overtly took up the line of the PSF, and thereby found an international referent to relate to, which was labelled Southern European Socialism or Latin Socialism. This ephemeral ideological trend was created thanks to the efforts of the PSF to spread its ideological model in the Iberian Peninsula, but also thanks to the willingness of the Spanish Socialists to develop a new trend within the SI according to the ideas that the Latin Socialist parties shared. The PSOE adopted this initiative eagerly because of the benefits that it could entail for their public image in the context of the illegal opposition in Spain. As French Socialism represented all of the characteristics of the unique way to Socialism proposed by the PSOE in Spain, being part of this international trend provided the Spanish with ideological legitimacy, and a kind of seal of quality as a party truly committed to Socialism.

For the French, in turn, the relations with the PSOE acquired a new dimension in light of the events in Portugal. On 21st April, the PSF realised that it was “more and more useful that FM [Françoise Mitterrand] reacts to Spain”.⁸⁷⁵ As we have seen, after 11th March in Portugal, the relations between the PS and the PCP deteriorated, and the core idea that the PSF was promoting in the Iberian Peninsula—the union of the Left—seemed to have become invalid. However, in Spain the PSOE was working on the configuration of a platform for democratic opposition that would make it possible for the Socialists to establish relations on equal terms with the PCE and its platform *Junta Democrática*. This implied a second opportunity for the French to see their strategy validated in Spain.

Following the agreement to exchange information between both parties, in May 1975, the PSOE sent the French their statement of purpose, in which they explained and further developed their strategy of democratic rupture that was adopted in their Thirteenth Congress. The Spanish Socialists explained that the activities of the party that aimed at democratic

⁸⁷⁴ “Congreso en Pau,” *El Socialista*, 33 (first half of February 1975): 14.

⁸⁷⁵ 424 RI3, Telegram, 21/04/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

rupture—which implied the total collapse of the institutions of the regime—were taking place on three levels. The first level was the making the struggle of the working class dynamic. In this struggle, the PSOE realised that their only possible allies were “the political organisations and trade unions that represent the interests of the working class [...]” For that reason, the party needed “to establish button up accords” in order to conquer spaces of freedom and power for the workers. On the second level, the PSOE was trying to extend and strengthen the infrastructure of the party in the different regions of Spain. Finally, the party was working on the “compromises, pacts or alliances with all the democratic forces.” They recognised to have made “serious and loyal efforts of relation and agreement with the forces that compose the Communist tendency [and] with the components of the Christian democracy.” At this moment, the PSOE saw the union of the opposition essential. “The construction of a unitary platform, democratic and antifascist, [...] is a requisite indispensable.” Thus they proposed to unify their platform (which would be officially created in June) with the *Junta Democrática* led by the PCE, in order to “create an effective counter power against the dictatorial power that would facilitate the [...] passing from dictatorship to democracy.”⁸⁷⁶

When François Mitterrand took the initiative of organising a meeting between the Socialist leaders of Southern Europe at his country house in Latche, the PSOE had already established a close relationship with the PSF and welcomed the initiative, as the Spanish were also interested. As we saw in Chapter 3, this meeting took place on 23rd and 24th of May 1975, and its official aim was to work on the organisation of the future Conference of the Socialist Parties of Southern Europe. However, the meeting was also used by the Socialist leaders to discuss the situation in Portugal, and to a lesser extent, the situations in Spain, Italy, and Greece as well.

Once in Latche, Felipe González had the opportunity to explain the Spanish state of affairs to his colleagues. His intervention was in line with the PSOE’s public statements. He considered that the crisis of the regime did not have a solution. It had lost the support of the industrial bourgeoisie and the peasants, who wanted a change towards a political regime that would better suit their economic interests. The timely coincidence between the interests of the workers and those of the bourgeoisie impeded the continuation of the regime, and provided an interesting opportunity for change, but this coincidence also entailed the risks inherent to

⁸⁷⁶ 424 RI3, El Partido Socialista Obrero Español y la Ruptura Democrática, 16/05/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

class collaboration, meaning that if there were pacts between the parties of the Left and bourgeois parties, the interests of the working class would not be respected.

Against this backdrop, González focused on the situation of the opposition. He explained that the Spanish opposition had the same composition as in the other Southern European countries: currents of Socialism, Communism, and Christian Democrat thinking. However, there was a general problem of unity, because each of these currents contained various political groups. Moreover, there were the Basque and Catalan nationalists. According to González, “the conjunction of these currents was difficult”, especially because of the different tactics followed by the PSOE and the PCE. The Communists had reached an agreement with the Right in the *Junta Democrática*, while the PSOE thought that the political change had to come from the permanent mobilisation of the workers. He complained about the fact that the PCE had renounced certain kinds of fights, and that it was pursuing an interclass tactic.

Then González said that the Socialists had attempted to reach some kind of agreement with the PCE, but they had failed, the main reason being that PCE always wanted to negotiate within the frame of the *Junta*. The PSOE rejected the *Junta*, as they thought that in order to build a formal democratic frame, and later a new frame in which the working class would have the power, it was essential to avoid giving up the direction of that process to the forces of the Right.

González considered that the PCE was afraid of being excluded from a future democratic Spain, which had led them to make a pact with the Right, and paradoxically to reject a pact with the PSOE. In fact, PCE had a pact with Tierno Galván in order to keep up the fiction of having a pact with the Socialists. These considerations made the collaboration between PCE and PSOE difficult, and damaged the Socialists, since the Communist strategy led public opinion to think that the Socialist movement was factionalised and the Communist unified.

When it came to the fall of the regime, González foresaw three possible scenarios after the death of Franco. The first was the return to Fascism and repression. Although in principle this solution would have neither social nor economic support, the deterioration of the situation in Portugal could favour the reactionaries in Spain. The second scenario would be controlled liberalisation led by Prince Juan Carlos. At this stage, González doubted the feasibility of this option, as the forces of the regime could not evolve towards democracy, and this evolution should be done with the collaboration of the forces that were outside the system. The third

scenario would be the democratic rupture praised by the opposition. This rupture could take place in different ways, one of which was through violent confrontation, which was not desirable since it would entail the response of the military and the reactionary forces. Therefore, it was necessary to find a different way of overthrowing the regime. The PSOE needed to find an interlocutor within the regime, which was also difficult, as they would not want their own “self-destruction.”

With this last sentence, González expressed his thoughts on the best way to overthrow the regime. This sentence implies that he considered that a negotiated way out of the dictatorship would be the best option for achieving this aim. However, for this to happen, the Socialists needed an interlocutor within the regime, which was difficult for them to obtain, and which the French Socialists could not help with, as they were not in government and they lacked contacts within the Spanish regime.

After González’ presentation of the situation in Spain, Mitterrand asked him what the similarities were between Spain and Portugal regarding the Common Market. “In the case of controlled democratisation, was there a [general] desire to enter in the Common Market?”

González answered that the Spanish bourgeoisie needed to establish contacts with Europe. However, among the working class, this need did not exist. Then he explained the position of the PSOE in terms of the European integration of Spain. He said that the party did not have a clear position regarding the Common Market, especially taking into account its current capitalist nature that did not allow the integration of democracy into the structures of the Common Market. Therefore, in the phase of transition that would follow the death of Franco, the PSOE would not support Spain joining the Common Market, because this would strengthen the regime of the Prince Juan Carlos.

Taking into account the words of PSOE’s leader, the other European Socialist leaders agreed on the need to prevent a Spain ruled by Juan Carlos from joining the the Common Market. François Mitterrand concluded that it was necessary “to use the Spanish need to join the Common Market to exert pressure on the regime” in order to favour democratic evolution.⁸⁷⁷

The relevance that the meeting of the Southern European Socialist leaders had for PSOE went beyond what has been discussed there. To assess the real significance of this meeting, it is

⁸⁷⁷ 41RI1, “Latche, Landes, 23/24.5.75”, Conférence des PS de Europe du Sud (Latche) mai 1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

necessary to analyse its public repercussions. As the PSOE was the only participating party that was illegal, the public dimension of this international meeting was especially valuable for them. This was not only because Felipe González appeared together with internationally popular personalities such as Françoise Mitterrand and Mario Soares, but also because the PSOE was representing a new international Socialist trend, which enhanced its public image and put the party in the ideological avant-garde of international Socialism.

Thus, the coverage of this encounter in the media is as interesting as González's presentation itself. Although the Spanish media was censored by the regime, the meeting of the Southern European Socialist leaders was extensively covered. *Cambio 16*, one of the most popular progressive journals being legally published in Spain, considered this meeting to be "informal but historic."⁸⁷⁸ They interpreted that a new international trend was emerging. According to *Cambio 16*, what was at stake at this meeting was the constitution of a new Socialist tendency, "Latin Socialism", that entailed an alternative to the Social Democracy of Northern Europe. This alternative implied the need for establishing some kind of alliance between Socialists and Communists.

The idea of initiating a new international Socialist alliance was also present in the statements of the leaders of the PSOE and the PSF. *Cambio 16* interviewed several members of the parties involved with this meeting before it took place. Pablo Castellano (the PSOE's international secretary), who often collaborated with *Cambio 16*, said: "we [the PSOE] give an enormous importance to this meeting of Mediterranean Socialists. It will be a very strong first step for renouncing to the social democratic versions that prevent us from being true socialists." For the leader of the CERES, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, this meeting was corroboration that the model set by the PSF, the union of the Left, was valid for all of the Southern European Socialists. In his own words, "what happened in 1974 created a new situation for the union of the left. [...] The presidential election in France, with the Left almost touching power, the Portuguese April, the defeat of the Italian Right on the referendum against divorce, the democratic change in Greece and Spain, with all the hopes that it inspires for the future. [The union between Socialists and Communists] will be hard, but the French example is present: it took years to arrive to the 27th of June 1972, to the signature of the common programme [...]."

⁸⁷⁸ "Socialistas del Sur," *Cambio 16*, 183 (09/06/1975): 63.

Despite the divergences that existed within the PSF regarding the situation in Portugal, the view expressed by Chevènement was in general shared by the whole party. The main representatives of the moderate factions of the PSF, Mitterrand and Pierre Mauroy, also considered that in theory, this strategy was the best for the Southern European Socialist parties. The first secretary of the PSF stated that “in the five countries (considering Greece a temporary exception) there exists a strong PC, and therefore, comparable data that could allow a Leftist coalition to reach power.” Mauroy considered that the union of the Left was useful because “in order to ensure Socialism neither us nor the Communists are interested in the fact that one of the parties would be stronger than the other one.”⁸⁷⁹

The coverage of this meeting in the French media, which had a relatively high readership in Spain, especially among the political elites, the illegal political parties, and the almost one million Spaniards exiled in France, also highlighted the fact that a new Socialist trend was created. However, the French media emphasised the hegemonic pretensions of the PSF over the Southern European Socialist parties. As we have already seen, the general interpretation of this meeting was that it had been an attempt by the PSF to become the leader of the Socialists of the south of Europe, thus counterbalancing the influence of the Social Democracy of the north.

Mitterrand’s official statement after the meeting was as follows: “For the Socialist parties of the South of Europe [there is] the original problem. [...] How to develop the union of the masses around and with the political parties’ representative of the popular forces. This arouses the problem of the alliance, union, cohesion between the PS and the PC. [...] Thus, we have examined the problems of bringing together the masses through each of our experiences [...]. This is the particular, new, modern aspect of our concerns.”⁸⁸⁰

The newspapers of the PSF, *L’unité* and *Le poing et la rose*, covered this meeting extensively. It was considered a success. Although it was only an informal meeting, it had been fruitful, and the leaders of the Southern European Socialist parties had discussed and agreed on common points in order to plan a formal conference for the end of the year in Marseilles, which eventually took place at the beginning of 1976 in Paris. It was also considered successful because “taking into account the particular situations of each country, [the

⁸⁷⁹ “Socialismo Latino,” *Cambio* 16, 175 (14/04/1975): 17-19.

⁸⁸⁰ “Rechercher l’union avec les P.C. ... malgré le Portugal,” *Le Figaro*, 26/05/1975.

Southern European Socialists] are today sensitive to the necessity to find a basis for common action between the different currents of the labour movement.”⁸⁸¹

This conference was covered in a special number of *Le piong et la rose* dedicated to the international relations of the PS. This reveals the importance of the international dimension in the political strategy the French Socialists, as well as the fact that promoting Southern European Socialism was part of the overarching international plans of the PSF. The French believed that they were assisting a process of transformation in international relations. A new international order was to be established as a consequence of the defeat of the US in the South East of Asia, the situation of the Mediterranean and “the new issue of confrontation between the superpowers”, the relations between rich countries and the Third World, and the crisis of international capitalism. The PSF was trying to take a leading role in this transformation and was crossing the established boundaries by increasing contacts with the USSR [...] but also by promoting a new Socialism in the South of Europe.⁸⁸²

If this meeting held enormous relevance for the public image of the PSOE, its political relevance for the Spanish was smaller. The main reason for this is that at the same time as the PSOE was creating a Southern European brand together with the PSF, PS and PSI, they were also beginning a fruitful collaboration with German Social Democracy. As Antonio Muñoz has shown, at the beginning of May, the Germans decided to provide the PSOE with “all the imaginable support” for helping them to become the main party of the Spanish Left, thus counterbalancing the Communist influence on the Spanish working class.⁸⁸³ This was another turning point for the PSOE, since the economic, political and diplomatic support that the German Social Democrats could offer through the Government, the SPD, and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was greater than any other party in the SI. In this new situation, the partnership between the PSOE and the PSF acquired a different dimension. If until now the French had been the PSOE’s main international partner, from now on the relations between the Spanish and French Socialists would relatively loose importance.

The German support for the PSOE was based on their fear of the rise of the Communist parties in Southern Europe. Although some sectors of the SPD, such as the Jusos,⁸⁸⁴ had shown interest in the now-moderate and conciliatory Mediterranean Communists, for the

⁸⁸¹ “Une verite a Paris une autre a Lisbonne?,” *L’unité*, 160 (30/05/1975): 1.

⁸⁸² Pontillon, Robert, “Spécial International,” *Le piong et la rose*, suplement to the n. 41 (June 1975): 1.

⁸⁸³ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 184.

⁸⁸⁴ The Jusos is the Routh organization of the SPD.

leadership of the German party, Eurocommunism was pure façade. The SPD leaders believed that the Communist parties of Southern Europe still had Moscow as their main reference-point and the electoral attractiveness of their change of strategy was very much feared because of the destabilisation that they could cause in Europe in the context of détente. Thus, the main objective behind the German support for the PSOE was to make it into a strong and moderate Socialist party that would prevent the increasing Communist influence in the Mediterranean area and the potential influence of the PCE in Spain. In order to reach this objective, one of the cornerstones of the German strategy was to counteract the French strategy of the union of the Left in Southern Europe, as the policy followed by the PSF was considered to be an invaluable favour for the international interests of the Soviet Union.⁸⁸⁵

In fact, as was mentioned above, at the same time as the Southern European Socialist meeting was taking place, there was a meeting between the German, Swedish, and Austrian Social Democratic parties in Vienna that contrasted with the meeting of the Southern European Socialists. At this second meeting, the main message of the Social Democrats was “against any kind of collaboration between Social Democrats and Communists”.⁸⁸⁶ This international Socialist confrontation affected the relation between the PSOE and PSF, and the latter started to lose their relative influence as a role-model that they had held so far.

Thus, the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula became the battlefield for two different understandings of Socialism within the SI: Southern European Socialism represented by the PSF, and Social Democratic Socialism represented by the SPD. The French Socialists, who were rather surprised by the fierce reaction of the Germans to the meeting of Latche, were well aware of this struggle,⁸⁸⁷ but also astonished by the “hardening of the German Social Democratic party (SPD) with regards to the French PS”. The new dimension of the confrontation between the ideological lines of the PSF and the SPD was directly related to the situation in Spain and Portugal, and to the influence that the French ideas had in both the PSOE and the PS.⁸⁸⁸ The German Social Democrats wanted to counteract the influence of the PSF in the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula, and the PSF wanted to counter the

⁸⁸⁵ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 141-150.

⁸⁸⁶ “Socialistas del Sur,” *Cambio 16*, 183 (09/06/1975): 63.

⁸⁸⁷ Christelle Flandre, *Socialisme ou social-démocratie? Regards criosés français allemands, 1971-1981* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006).

⁸⁸⁸ “Le SPD est mal informé,” *L’untité*, 166 (11/07/1975): 8.

international influence of the SPD and its ideological model in Europe and in the Third World.⁸⁸⁹

From now on, the role of the French as an ideological reference point for the PSOE would be maintained, and it would still have importance at the public level. However, the bilateral relations between both parties lessened in intensity and deteriorated (in part due to the increasing influence of the SPD on the leaders of the PSOE, but also due to the inconsistency showed by the PSF in their support for the PSOE) and these relations would lose political relevance. By May, it had become evident that the support that the PSF could offer the PSOE was political and technical. Moreover, the French party provided public visibility and ideological guidance and legitimacy to the Spanish that was—and would continue to be—valuable for the PSOE. However, the French could not offer economic, material, and diplomatic support at the same level as the Germans could.⁸⁹⁰ This kind of aid was very important, because at that time the PSOE needed money to reconstruct its organisation at the national level, and also needed a channel for establishing relations with the regime, as González had pointed out at the meeting with the Southern European Socialist leaders in Latche.

Thus, González met with Willy Brandt in May, and was aware of how crucial it was to obtain German support. In this context, he clearly told the German Social Democrat that he was against working with the Communists.⁸⁹¹ Although this seems inconsistent with being the leader of a party that aligned with the new Southern European Socialist trend, the PSOE leader's basic analysis had not changed. He considered that during the transition to democracy, the main struggle would be between the PCE and the PSOE, and the Socialists were in such a poor economic situation that they were clearly at a disadvantage. What changed from this meeting onwards were the PSOE's tactics for overtaking the Communists as the main force of the Left. If until now, some kind of version of the French union of the Left was considered to be a way of counterbalancing the power of the Communists, now the German economic and political support made it unnecessary to pursue this adventure. This does not mean that the PSOE changed its public discourse, however.

⁸⁸⁹ Flandre, *Socialisme ou social-démocratie?*, 128.

⁸⁹⁰ 424 RI3, Antoine Blanca, *A propos des socialistes espagnols et de leurs rapports avec le P.S. français*, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁸⁹¹ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 186.

Although the impact of the German support for the PSOE from this moment onwards would be noticeable in the political behaviour of the Spanish Socialists, the PSOE still needed to enhance its Leftist image and deal with the still-predominant PCE. A survey carried out among the Spanish political journalists that was published in April showed that the leaders of the PSOE were still little-known in Spain. The survey revealed that none of them considered that the PSOE could play an important role in the future transition, and they conceded the leadership of Socialism in Spain to Tierno Galván and his co-founder Raul Modoro.⁸⁹² Therefore, despite entering into a period when the bilateral relations between the PSOE and the PSF would lose importance, the image of the French Socialists was still very valuable for the hegemonic project of PSOE in the Left.

Paradoxically, it could be argued that the German support for the PSOE even increased the need for the Socialist leaders to radicalise their discourse and move closer to the PSF in public. This was because after the privileged relations between the SPD and the PSOE were established, the Socialists began to be criticised by the rest of the Socialist opposition for being close to Social Democracy, and for having privileged relations with the regime. Moreover, the PCE criticised the PSOE for not wanting to join the *Junta*, and considered that the main reason for this rejection was that it was negotiating the future of Spain with the regime.⁸⁹³ This “attempt to distort and defame the PSOE” worried the party very much, and although the leaders of the party argued in public that they would not be “constantly giving proofs of our purity of blood”⁸⁹⁴ to counteract these attacks, this was actually what they were doing.

As an example of this, the PSOE’s newspaper *El Socialista* devoted a great part its early June 1975 number to highlighting the PSOE’s relations with the PSF. At that date, the Spanish Socialists could announce an event planned during the meeting between the PSF and the PSOE in January, which was the visit of François Mitterrand to Spain at the invitation of the PSOE. Although this visit eventually did not take place, its announcement was a blow to the rest of the opposition, especially for the Socialist groups outside the PSOE. Moreover, it was also a challenge to the regime. It is worth reproducing the main parts of the text published by the PSOE in *El Socialista*, in order to show the significance of this visit for the party:

⁸⁹² *Informaciones*, 23/04/1975. Quoted in Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 198.

⁸⁹³ “El PSOE, hoy,” *El Socialista*, 38, (second half of April, 1975): 1.

⁸⁹⁴ “Pureza de sangre,” *Cambio 16*, 177 (28/04/1975).

The notice of the visit of François Mitterrand – First Secretary of the French Socialist Party – to Madrid, invited by the PSOE, aroused a wave of commentaries in the Spanish political media. Just announcing his visit has been useful, since many of the ‘politicians’ that want to have a future have [shown themselves] by making desperate attempts to avoid the presence of a Socialist with the worldwide prestige of F. Mitterrand.⁸⁹⁵

This visit would have shown the preference of the PSF in Spain, as well as the international influence of the PSOE. It would have been very important for enhancing the role of the PSOE within the Socialist opposition. This can be perceived in the statements of Tierno Galván regarding this visit. He considered that “it is better if the visit does not take place,”⁸⁹⁶ arguing that the visit would only favour the fake liberalising image of the government of Arias Navarro.⁸⁹⁷ The PSOE described Galvan’s reaction as “political envy.” The leaders of the Catalan and Valencian Socialist Parties, Jordi Solé Tura and Vicent Ventura respectively, also reacted negatively to Mitterrand’s visit. The response of the PSOE to these reactions is very telling, as the party criticised these reactions by saying: “It looks like Ventura does not like the French Socialism [...],”⁸⁹⁸ as if disliking it were something negative.

On the other hand, with this visit the PSF would also help the PSOE to challenge the regime. As they put it:

The PSOE has invited Mitterrand to visit Madrid. The objective is to know the reality of Spanish Socialism and to provoke Franco’s regime, Arias’ government, with a political act. The act can be prohibited or authorised by the regime. If it is prohibited that would be a hard blow for the pretended aperturist image of Arias. If [the act] is celebrated, the government will find itself in the difficult position of facing a statement in support for the Socialists, [who are] persecuted by the regime, [coming from] an internationally prestigious personality such as Mitterrand.⁸⁹⁹

The use that the PSOE made of the visit of Mitterrand shows that the image of the leader of the PSF (and of French Socialism in general) was still very important for them to enhance their public image. And although the PSOE claimed that they did not need to show their “purity of blood”, this was actually what they were trying to do.

⁸⁹⁵ “Mitterrand a Madrid,” *El Socialista*, 41 (first half of June 1975): 1.

⁸⁹⁶ “Mitterrand a Madrid,” *El Socialista*, 41 (first half of June 1975): 1.

⁸⁹⁷ “Des socialistes espagnols souhaitent que M. François Mitterrand renonce à son voyage à Madrid,” *Le Monde*, 14/04/1975.

⁸⁹⁸ “Mitterrand a Madrid,” *El Socialista*, 41 (first half of June 1975): 1.

⁸⁹⁹ “Mitterrand a Madrid,” *El Socialista* 41 (first half of June 1975): 1.

Previously, on 7th May, Felipe González was interviewed by the correspondent of *Le Monde* in Madrid Jose Antonio Novais. In the interview, the journalist implied that the PSOE's leaders were better tolerated by the regime than the leaders of other groups of the opposition. Then he asked González if the "benevolence" of the regime "was due to the fact that the PSOE has stopped being Marxist to be closer to the German social democracy." González' answer is described as follows: "the young lawyer answered vehemently: 'no, we are a Marxist party. Let's make it clear: we believe in Marxism as a method for analysing society. But we are not dogmatic Marxists. We are a worker's party that believes in the class struggle'." ⁹⁰⁰ González's answer also shows that the concept of Marxism, in the same way as the identification with the PSF, was an ideological reference point used by the PSOE to legitimise the Leftist credentials of the party within the radicalised Spanish opposition to the regime. ⁹⁰¹

However, the increased repression by the Spanish government also contributed towards diluting the accusations of the opposition to the PSOE. As we have already seen, in mid-1975, the tensions within the regime were very high, especially after the victory of the Socialists in the Portuguese elections and increasing social unrest in the Basque provinces. The 'aperturist' stance of President Arias Navarro and his willingness to open some limited ways for political expression encountered the opposition of the die-hard Francoists known as the *bunker*, and this led the government to harden their stance towards the opposition.

On 1st May 1975, several members of the PSOE were arrested at the civil cemetery of Madrid when they were paying their respects to Pablo Iglesias. As we saw above, the repression of the police was brutal. After the intervention of the police, one member of the PSOE's executive committee, Francisco Bustelo, was imprisoned and the party gained a good deal of visibility. This helped the PSOE to silence the critics coming from the Leftist opposition by showing that they were also affected by the repressive stance of the regime. ⁹⁰² Notwithstanding this fact, Lionel Jospin sent a telegram on behalf of the PSF to the Spanish government, protesting and demanding the immediate liberation of the PSOE's secretary of formation. ⁹⁰³

⁹⁰⁰ "Entrevistas prohibidas en España," *El Socialista* 41 (first half of June, 1975): 7-8.

⁹⁰¹ See: Elias Díaz, "Pensamiento socialista durante el franquismo," in *El Socialismo en España. Desde la fundación del PSOE hasta 1975*, ed. Santos Juliá (Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesias, 1986), 367-402.

⁹⁰² Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 199.

⁹⁰³ 424 RI3, Telegram from Lionel Jospin to Carlos Arias Navarro, 13/05/1975, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

The support of the German Social Democracy for the PSOE started to be noticeable almost immediately after the establishment of closer relations between both parties. At the end of April 1975, the PSOE abandoned the *Conferencia Socialista Ibérica*, failing in its attempt to absorb the regional Socialist Groups of Spain. Antonio Muñoz and Richard Gillespie suggest that this decision was linked to the increase of the international assistance to the PSOE, and especially, although not exclusively, the German aid in these months.

In June, González and Enrique Mújica, the PSOE's secretary of coordination, were deprived of their passports at the Spanish frontier with France when they were travelling to meet with Mitterrand. Proof of the PSF's and the German Social Democrats' differing capacity of influencing Spanish events lies in the fact that while the leaders of the PSOE were travelling to meet with the leader of the PSF, it was the German government that pressed the regime to get the passports of the leaders of the PSOE back. They negotiated with the Spanish government, arguing that the PSOE was the best defence against Communism in Spain, and that the international activities of their members should not be halted. Eventually the Germans got González's passport back, just in time for him to attend the Congress of the SPD in Mainz in mid-November.⁹⁰⁴

From this moment onwards, the PSOE would focus on its public visibility, its organic reconstruction in Spain, and the creation of a platform of the opposition that would be an alternative to the PCE's *Junta Democrática*.⁹⁰⁵ In June 1975, the opposition members that were not included in the *Junta* joined together in a platform created under the initiative of the PSOE, the *Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática*. This started a period in which the PSOE, looked for an agreement with the PCE-led *Junta* through the *Plataforma*. An agreement between both opposition platforms would grant the PSOE a position of equal partnership with the PCE, which was very different from the subaltern position that entering the *Junta* as an individual party would have implied. That summer of 1975, characterised by the radicalisation and uncertainty of the situation in Portugal, and the increasing repression of Franco's regime in Spain, brought together the Spanish Socialists and Communists. However, the process was not easy.

The initial stance of the PSOE was to invite all of the democratic parties that were willing to join the *Plataforma*. The PSOE argued that all of the ideological tendencies of the

⁹⁰⁴ On the negotiations between the German and the Spanish government to get Felipe González's passport back see: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 202-215

⁹⁰⁵ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 198.

opposition—Socialists, Christian Democrats, and Communists—already composed the *Plataforma*, since some minority Communist parties had joined the coalition. Furthermore, they let the parties on the outside know that they would meet open doors if they wanted to join the coalition.⁹⁰⁶ By doing so, they challenged the PCE, since through the *Plataforma* they could argue that they represented all of the forces of the opposition as much as the PCE did through the *Junta*. The indirect invitation to the PCE to join the *Plataforma* was not realistic, as the Communists reputation was at its peak, thanks to the international promotion of Carrillo and the legitimacy that the pacts made via the *Junta* granted them. On 11th July, Carrillo met with Enrico Berlinguer, the leader of the PCI, and they issued a common statement in which they truly committed their parties to the values of freedom and social justice. Moreover, they stated that Socialism in Spain and Italy could only be developed via democracy, and they envisaged a new policy for Western Europe based on these values.⁹⁰⁷ However, this invitation allowed the PSOE to place itself at the same level as the PCE, who had invited the Socialists several times to join the *Junta*. This way of balancing the relation of forces between Socialists and Communists was necessary for the former in order to establish any kind of alliance with the latter.

With the new balance of forces between Socialists and Communists, each of them leading the two main coalitions opposed to the regime, the savage repression of the government facilitated the agreement between the *Junta* and the *Plataforma*. As we have already seen, in the summer of 1975, the regime condemned eleven members of ETA and FRAP to death. In this delicate context, the PSOE considered that the union of the opposition was an overriding necessity. The best way to answer the hardening of the dictatorship was to “offer a united front of all the opposition against the repression.” The repression of the government brought the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* closer, although not quite together. On 16th September, both platforms reached an agreement and issued a common declaration condemning the regime. Furthermore, they promised Spanish society to work for the union of the opposition in order to offer a democratic future in which the people could freely choose the shape of the State and government.⁹⁰⁸

⁹⁰⁶ “Una tática común,” *El Socialista*, 45 (first half of August, 1975): 1.

⁹⁰⁷ 424 RI3, “Déclaration commune signée le 11 juillet 1975 par Enrico Berlinguer et Santiago Carrillo”, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁰⁸ Declaración Común de la oposición española Septiembre 1975.

Now that both platforms seemed to be closer to agreeing to some kind of collaboration, the PSOE reflected on the union of the Left, not only for overthrowing Francoism, but also as a way of implanting Socialism in Spain. For the PSOE, Spain represented the situation in the Southern European countries, where the working class was divided between Socialists and Communists. In Spain, the Socialists were strengthening their organisation, and the Communists seemed to accept pluralism and the fact that they were not the only representatives of the working class.⁹⁰⁹ These facts opened the possibility of collaboration between both parties, which seemed to be necessary for advancing towards democracy and Socialism. As the PSOE put it in editorial of their newspaper: “could a separate Communist or Socialist triumph be conceivable?”; “can we fall in the illusion of a government exclusively Communist or Socialist?” The answer was no. Thus, the PSOE proposed: “against the dictatorship, unity. In the construction of socialism, unity. BUT UNITY AS A MEANS, NEVER AS AN END.”⁹¹⁰ The united will of the PSOE led to the proposal of an alliance between the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* in October.⁹¹¹

According to the documentation of the historical archive of the PSF, the contacts between the PSOE and its French counterparts diminished during the summer of 1975. The articles on Spain and the PSOE in the newspapers of the French party also decreased. This relative silence coincided with the months when the Portuguese hot summer was the international issue that captured the attention of the French Left. However, the rapprochement between the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* in the autumn was welcomed by the PSF. In October the PSF echoed the common statement of the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* against the Spanish regime,⁹¹² and resumed the articles on Spain in its newspapers.

As we saw in chapter three, in October 1975, *L'unité* brought together the opinions of the leaders of the Communist and Socialist parties of Southern Europe: Felipe González (PSOE), Mario Soares (PS), François Mitterrand (PSF), Francesco de Martino (PSI), Santiago Carrillo (PCE), Enrico Berlinguer (PCI), Alvaro Cunhal (PCP), and Georges Marchais (PCF). All of them had to answer the same questions, “where are the forces of the Left in Spain, Italy, Portugal and France today? What are the relations between Socialist and Communist parties

⁹⁰⁹ “La crisis del comunismo,” *El Socialista*, 48 (second half of September 1975): 5.

⁹¹⁰ “¿Quién quiere la unidad?,” *El Socialista*, 48 (second half of September 1975): 1. The capital letters appeared in the original text.

⁹¹¹ Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática, “Propuesta de organismo unitario,” Madrid 17 October 1975, published in *El Socialista*, 50 (second half of October 1975): 3 and 5.

⁹¹² “Déclaration commune de l'opposition espagnole,” *L'unité*, 174 (10/10/1975): 6.

in these four countries? [...] what are the prospects for Socialism in these four countries of Southern Europe?”⁹¹³

This initiative took place at a moment when the Southern European project of the French Socialists seemed to be unfeasible in Portugal and uncertain in Spain. After the attacks and accusations of trying to break the SI that the French received for trying to implement their model in the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula, the PSF tried to keep pursuing their international project more prudently. In these interviews, *L'unité* felt the necessity to justify their interest and involvement in Southern European affairs. Claude Estier stated that “the questions that we pose to each of our interlocutors essentially concern the situation in their countries. None of the interlocutors pretend to interfere in the affairs of the neighbour parties. But for all those who we interrogate, as for ourselves, it is evident that there is [...] interaction between the events that take place in the four countries, because they are close in terms of geography, history and culture [...]. To favour the confrontation [of information and points of view of these parties] is already a positive act. This is today our ambition.”⁹¹⁴

In the interview with González, the leader of the PSOE showed a degree of ambiguity in his answers. He considered the union of the Left to be necessary, but he did not consider it feasible for the PSOE. He recognised that the situation in the four countries of Southern Europe, where there were strong Communist parties, and where the Socialist parties had experienced a recent renovation, made the unity of the Left “necessary.” However, according to him, the problems started with this point, because “the conceptions of this convergence are different.” González was asked about the conditions for improving the relations between Socialists and Communists in Southern Europe. He believed that it was necessary to overcome old attitudes in order to make the process of rapprochement successful. Regarding the Communist parties, González thought that they “must renounce the idea of being *the* parties of the working class, especially in Spain, [because] when the working class have had the possibility to express themselves freely, they have supported the PSOE. They [the Communists] should not pretend to be the only ‘revolutionaries’ nor to pretend to have the title of party avant-garde.” Regarding the Socialists, he considered that “we should abandon the visceral anti-Communism of the Stalinist period and recognise the need of the Communist presence among the political forces of [our] countries.”

⁹¹³ “Les huit Readers socialistes et communistes de l’Europe du Sud parlent pour la première fois des chemins de l’unité,” *L'unité*, 174 (10 to 16 of October 1975): 2.

⁹¹⁴ Claude Estier, “La grande confrontation,” *L'unité*, 174 (10 to 16 of October 1975): 3.

González believed that an “original phenomenon” had already taken place in the relations between Socialists and Communists in the South of Europe. Until now, “the most conservative Socialist currents” ranged from basic anti-Communism to ideological subordination to the Communists, which denoted an inferiority complex. On the other hand, there was another current of Socialism in these countries, “the most revolutionary current of Socialism,” which was not anti-Communist, but united regarding all of the forces of the Left. This second trend, to which the PSOE belonged, “is in the process of being imposed due to the need of strong Socialist parties, [committed] to the class struggle, that avoid the Social Democratic collaboration [with capitalism] and the bureaucratic solution of the Soviet ‘Socialism’.”

Regarding how this situation applied to Spain, González considered that in his country, the opposition to the regime did not only come from Socialist and Communists, but also from progressive Catholics and personalities that were leaning to the Right. This made it necessary not to exclude “inter-classist alliances”. However, although the PSOE accepted these pacts, it considered that the fundamental agreements should be signed between the forces of the Left. “Contrary to this, the Communists have given priority to an agreement with the Right.” This was the main point that the Spanish Socialists used to criticise and to avoid a pact with the PCE. González placed all of the responsibility for not having achieved a pact with the Communists onto the Communist side. He thought that the Communists had followed the wrong strategy because the Right, eventually, “still is and always will be, without exception, with the regime.” Therefore, the Right would never work towards a democratic rupture if they were not sure of controlling it. This argument, however, denotes the lack of will of the Socialist leaders for making a pact with the Communists. The pact that the PCE had made with other political forces in the *Junta* responded to the need for establishing inter-classist alliances that the PSOE recognised. The real reason behind the problems that the Socialists had in achieving a pact with the Communists was that they wanted a pact only if the PSOE set the guidelines for such an agreement.⁹¹⁵

Claude Estier finally asked González about the prospects for Socialism in the four Southern European countries. The leader of the PSOE answered that the South of Europe, and especially the Iberian Peninsula, was already a base for the progression of the Socialist forces. “We think that only a clear debate and permanent contacts [between Socialists and

⁹¹⁵ Guerra, *Felipe González*, 65.

Communists] can help to [...] lead the Left to the conquer of power and to the construction of a Socialist society.” Concerning Spain, he was convinced that “ineluctably the future is Socialist.” This is why the PSOE worked for the democratic rupture. “We are convinced that the Spanish people [...] will choose Socialism by majority. A Socialism that will be as distant from [...] Social Democracy [...] as from [...] authoritarian and bureaucratic Communism. That is why we [are] in favour of *autogestionnaire* socialism.”⁹¹⁶

In the interview with Santiago Carrillo, the leader of the PCE interpreted the way to Socialism and the necessity of the union of the Left similarly to González. In the particular case of Spain, he considered that in order to overthrow the regime, the union of all of the opposition was essential. Moreover, he considered that even after the overthrowing of the dictatorship, the union with the Socialists and with the progressive Catholics would be necessary for moving towards a democratic Socialism. He also said that “we do not have any pretensions of playing a dominant role in this alliance,” the PCE was willing to make the necessary concessions for the achievement of such an alliance. The Portuguese revolution had taught the PCE that the union between Socialists and Communists was essential in order to move towards democracy and Socialism, and against the forces of the reaction.

Immediately before the death of Franco, when the Spanish opposition was moving closer together, and when the PSOE needed signs of foreign support more than ever, the PSF contributed greatly towards the Leftist image of the Spanish party. The contribution came from Pierre Guidoni, who published an article in the French newspaper *Le Quotidien de Paris* that was translated by *El Socialista*. In that text, he kept advocating the union of the Left in Spain. In doing so, he was doing an important favour for the Leftist image of the PSOE, which again under attack from the PCE’s argument that the Socialists would be willing to make a pact with the regime. According to Guidoni, the kind of agreement reached by the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* abovementioned had been a “key event, which the French public opinion has not fully understood its importance of,” as it included Communists, Socialists and also Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. This pact had been possible thanks to the renaissance of “a Socialist Party that wants unity [...]”

Furthermore, he added:

⁹¹⁶ Claude Estier, “Felipe Gonzalez (Psoe): «L’avenir de l’Espagne est, ineluctablement socialiste»,” *L’Unité*, 174 (10 to 16 of October 1975): 4-6.

In Spain, as in France, the union of the Left is inseparable from the Socialist renewal [...]. The Spanish Socialist Workers Party is today a real force, with a young and combative leadership [...]. It is a workers' party. It is a Marxist party. [...] It is a party that, since its Congress in 1974, wants the union of the opposition, but firstly the union of the Left. What is the reason that in these conditions, there are insinuations according to which [...] the Socialists would be willing to pact with the regime?⁹¹⁷

Then he concluded his text by saying that “the unity is always difficult. History desires that in Spain it is more [difficult] than in other places.”

This article enhanced the position of the PSOE in the Spanish Left, and presented it as a clear advocate for the union of the Left in Spain. It also magnified the significance of the agreement between the *Junta* and the *Plataforma*, which was actually little more than a common declaration. If we take into account the timing of this article, it suggests that the French Socialists were trying to use the case of Spain in order to minimise or counteract the failure of the union of the Left in Portugal.

4.2.3. PSOE-PSF relations from the death of Franco to the elections of 1977

Franco died on 20th November, which put an end to more than thirty-five years of dictatorship in Spain. A new period began that was characterised by uncertainty. Doubts about the future of Spain were shared at home as well as internationally, and the country was object of international attention in a way that had not happened since the Civil War.

On 22nd November, Juan Carlos de Borbón was crowned King. As was mentioned above, his first speech as King included some references to political evolution, and to the European ambitions of Spain, which was generally interpreted as a sign of his willingness to introduce substantial political changes.⁹¹⁸ Important international figures attended Juan Carlos' ceremony of coronation, such as the president of the Federal Republic of Germany Walter Scheel, and the President of the French Republic, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.⁹¹⁹ The high level of the international delegations, which was a contrast to the lower profile of the international representatives present at Franco's funeral, symbolised the Western goodwill toward the new King. As we saw in the previous point of this chapter, he would be granted with the goodwill

⁹¹⁷ Pierre Guidoni, “En Madrid como en Paris, la union es un combate,” *El Socialista*, 52 (second half of November 1975): 5.

⁹¹⁸ Bassols, “Europa en la Transición española,” 461.

⁹¹⁹ Crespo, *España en Europa*, 160.

of the main Western powers for transforming Spain peacefully and quietly towards democracy.

Especially important for the Spanish regime was the statement made by the French President, Giscard d'Estaing, in Barajas airport when he was leaving Madrid, because of the explicit support that it entailed when nothing in fact had changed in Spain. Giscard praised Spanish civilisation, calling Spain one of the founding nations of Europe, and he expressed his wish that the country could soon participate in the process of European integration.⁹²⁰

The statements of the French President in support of Spanish integration into Europe showed the willingness of the French government to become the main advocate of Spain in the EC, even if nothing had changed yet. As I discussed in chapter two, one of the main concerns of the Spanish Socialists was that the Spanish regime could join the EC, and the statements of Giscard made the PSOE fear that this possibility could become true. Thus, the Spanish sent a communiqué to the PSF to be published in *L'unité*, stating that in Spain nothing had changed and that the dictatorship still existed. As a proof of this, they emphasised the fact that González was banned from speaking in public on 26th November, which was useful for reminding the French that in Spain democracy did not exist.⁹²¹

Giscard's attitude in Spain also provoked the indignation and the reaction of the French Socialists, who used this visit to attack him very harshly. The presence of the President at Juan Carlos' coronation gave the PSF ammunition for criticising the French government for patronising this event. They equated Giscard with Augusto Pinochet (also present in Spain), emphasising the conservative nature of the President at precisely the moment when he was presenting himself as the advocate of advanced liberalism.⁹²² On the other hand, the French Socialists criticised Giscard's statements, because of the repercussions that they could have for the democratisation of Spain, and they took the chance to express their support for the PSOE and the union of the Left in Spain.

To do this, they subscribed to the statement that the SI issued following a Bureau meeting in November in Brussels:

⁹²⁰ Bassols, "Europa en la Transición española," 461.

⁹²¹ "Felipe Gonzalez «rien n'a change»,” *L'unité*, 182 (05/12/1975): 18.

⁹²² "M. Estier: une insulte au peuple espagnol,” *Le Monde*, 24/11/1975; Claude Estier, "Les drapeaux de Giscard,” *L'unité*, 181 (28/11/1975): 1-2; Francis Pisani, "Nous apprenions a lutter, maintenant nous apprenons a gagner,” *L'unité*, 181 (28/11/1975): 6.

The Bureau of the Socialist International deplores the fact that certain countries led by Socialists sent representatives to the funeral of Franco and to the coronation of Juan Carlos. [...] We call on all the governments to exert pressure on the Spanish regime to [make it] restore all the democratic rights to the Spanish people. [...] until a true democratic government is established, the international isolation of Spain must be maintained.⁹²³

They also issued a shared statement with the forces that had signed the common programme of the Left in France:

[...] The PCF, the PS[F] and the MRG, reaffirm their solidarity with the Spanish people [...] for the reestablishment of democracy and freedom in Spain. The three parties [...] are happy for the rapprochement of the different forces of the opposition. As they had strongly expressed, the three parties believe that the heir designated by the dictator [...] is not valid for re-establishing the fundamental freedoms, nor to organise the free consultation that [should] decide [...] the future of Spain.⁹²⁴

This was an important sign of support for the Spanish opposition in their fight for democracy. However, after the death of the Spanish dictator, the relevance and value of the different kinds of support that the European Socialists were providing to the PSOE changed. There was one type of support that continued to be absolutely essential, which was promoting the public visibility of the PSOE. Also important was assistance in the formation of the PSOE's militants. However, in the new context of the transition to democracy that opened up in 1976, there were other types of aid that became even more relevant than before. These were political and diplomatic support, now essential for enhancing the status of the PSOE as the privileged interlocutor of the opposition to the regime; financial and technical assistance, important in every sense, and the support for improving and enlarging the organisation of the party in Spain. The PSF lacked the funds and political influence to offer this kind of assistance. This put the French Socialists in a position of disadvantage in terms of influencing the PSOE in the process of transition, in comparison with other European Social Democrat parties in government such as the SPD.

However, the PSF was still the European party ideologically closest to the PSOE, and in these first weeks after the death of Franco they were freer than the Social Democrat parties in government to condemn and press against any approaches between Spain and the EC. An undated (probably dated at the end of 1975 or the beginning of 1976) internal analysis of the French Socialists shows that they interpreted the Spanish situation similarly to how the PSOE

⁹²³ 424RI2, "Secretariat International," Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹²⁴ "La solidarité de la gauche française," *L'unité*, 181 (28/11/1975): 4.

said in its public analyses. Immediately after the death of Franco, the PSOE publicly stated their rejection of any kind of continuity of the regime. It also sent a call to “all the democratic political and trade union organisations, to make a common effort [...] for the construction of a democratic society.”⁹²⁵ The French in turn produced the following text for internal distribution:

[T]he democratic struggle of the Spanish democrats will face, from today on, a new dimension. [...] The heir [Juan Carlos] designated by the dictator [Franco] [...] is completely disqualified to speak on behalf of the Spanish people. Today the responsibility [...] of the Spanish democrats and Socialists is to amplify the actions of the masses in every field [...] for provoking the democratic rupture and the establishment of a provisional government, representative of all the Spanish democratic sectors [...]. The first task of this government will be to re-establish the fundamental freedoms and to organise a free consultation with the Spanish people [...] [on the] institutional future of the State. The French Socialists will do everything for helping the Spanish democratic organisations and notably the PSOE and the UGT [...].⁹²⁶

Some weeks later, at the beginning of December, Juan Carlos formed a new government, in which he kept Arias Navarro as President. Although the composition of the executive was heterogeneous, it included hard-core Francoists as well as reformists. The fact that Juan Carlos kept Arias Navarro as President was interpreted by the opposition and by many international observers as a sign of continuity. Despite some superficial signs of liberalisation at the beginning of this new government, in the first months of 1976, the social and workers' unrest and demands for freedom, democracy, amnesty, as well as regional autonomy in the Basque Country and Catalonia intensified.

The PSF saw their previous analysis of the Spanish political evolution confirmed. The French Socialists considered that “no democratic change is possible within the frame of the institutions of the dictatorship” and they claimed that the solidarity of the European States, the political parties, and trade unions should go to the Spanish opposition. “Any concession given to the king will only encourage the forces that, in SPAIN, fight for preserving the essences of Franco’s heritage.” For their own part, they reaffirmed their solidarity with the PSOE and

⁹²⁵ “Comunicado de la Comisión Ejecutiva del P.S.O.E.,” *El Socialista*, supplement to the n. 51 (21/11/1975). See also: “Posición Política del PSOE,” *El Socialista*, special number (22/11/1975): 2; “Los Socialistas ante el cambio,” *El Socialista*, special number (22/11/1975): 3-4.

⁹²⁶ 424RI2, Document analysing the situation in Spain without title, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

expressed satisfaction “for the progress made in the sense of the union of the opposition thanks to the rapprochement between [the *Junta* and the *Plataforma*].”⁹²⁷

However, although the stance of the PSF was ideologically consistent with that of the PSOE, it was far from the pragmatism and moderation of González at this early stage of the transition. As we have seen in the previous point of this chapter, he was willing to give the government a chance to carry out the political liberalisation, as he was aware of the lack of strength of the opposition. This means that contrary to the PSOE’s public statements, he was against collaborating with the Communists in reaching a democratic rupture that could potentially arouse conflict. The moderate stance of the leader of the PSOE was influenced by German Social Democracy and by the massive support that his party was receiving from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. It made him realise that in a short time, the PSOE could be an alternative for the government, and his main concern became to ensure that the regime would organise democratic elections.⁹²⁸

Publicly, the PSOE called for international, specifically European, solidarity to promote democracy in Spain. In the context of the Spanish regime’s negotiations of the renovation of the preferential trade agreement between Spain and the EEC that had been signed in 1970, the Socialists asked Europe not to use two systems of measuring democracy, one for Spain and another for the rest of Europe. Therefore, they demanded that if Juan Carlos started political liberalisation, the international support should go to the democratic forces of the opposition. The PSOE estimated that the Europeans would have different reactions vis-à-vis Juan Carlos attempts to continue the regime. “Some governments are against it, others give him a truce, and finally others—the most evident example is France with Giscard—would support him unconditionally.”⁹²⁹ In this sense, the pressure that the PSF could exert on the French government against the acceptance of a Spain that was not fully democratic into the EC, was positive for the cause of the PSOE.

Despite the coincidence in the statements of the PSOE and the PSF, and despite the value that the gestures of the PSF’s public support had for the PSOE (it is necessary to remember that at that time the opposition was asking for European solidarity during the process of

⁹²⁷ 424R12, “Committee Directeur des 6 et 7 Decembre 1975. Espagne,” Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹²⁸ The moderate stance of the leader of the PSOE, the implications that this posture had with respect to Socialist-Communist relations and the personalist way of setting the party line caused the resignation of Francisco Bustelo from the executive committee in January 1976. See: Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 217-277.

⁹²⁹ “Europa ante el cambio,” *El Socialista*, 52 (second half of November 1975): 1.

democratisation, as well as in keeping Spain internationally isolated), the bilateral relation between both parties did not work as well as it had worked at the beginning of 1975. Already at the end of that year, there were some ups and downs in their relations.

In November 1975, a new journal linked to the PSF called *Faire*, which was a mouthpiece for the trend of the PSF led by Gilles Martinet and Michel Rocard that arrived at the party after the Congress of Pau,⁹³⁰ but also related to the majority faction of Mitterrand, published several articles on the situation in the Southern European countries. Regarding Spain, the French devoted most of the space to an interview with Santiago Carrillo and an article on the regional Socialist party, *Convergència Socialista de Catalunya* (CSC).

In the interview with Carrillo, Martinet made some questions that allowed the Spaniard to criticise and downplay the importance of the PSOE. Carrillo made statements such as “the Socialist Party is today poorly implanted in the country...”, and also that “in our view, the Socialist Party has lost 30 years of its existence, 30 years in which it failed to make efforts to exist, to play a role, to set up...” Furthermore, the article on the Catalan Socialists also belittled the PSOE. The CSC expressed its goal and willingness and for achieving the union of the Left in Spain, which should be made between the PCE and a new Socialist party that would unify all of the Spanish Socialist family. In this respect, the CSC considered that the PSOE could not play that role, “as it was a limited party whose actions were only occasional.” Moreover, the Catalans compared the PSOE to the old SFIO and stated that a new unified Socialist party would prevent the PSOE from being tempted to be opportunist in achieving electoral results.⁹³¹

The fact that the PSF paid so much attention to the leader of the PCE, and also to another Socialist party, provoked the anger of the PSOE. As a reaction to this interview, the PSOE’s national delegate for foreign relations Manuel Garnacho sent a letter of protest to Martinet (responsible for *Faire*). According to Garnacho, the French had provided these parties with an opportunity to criticise, and even “to denigrate” the PSOE, “with whom the PSF has official relations.” In an upset tone, he lamented the action of the PSF: “we do not think that this is a very evident demonstration of the solidarity among Socialists [...] perhaps we are still a little QUIJOTE...”

⁹³⁰ Emeric Brehier, “Les revues du PS de 1971 à 1981”, Institut François Mitterrand. <http://www.mitterrand.org/Les-revues-du-PS-de-1971-a-1981.html>

⁹³¹ “Interviews. S. Carrillo,” *Faire*, 2 (November 1975): 47-49. Also: “Convergence Socialiste de Catalogne, “La nécessaire unité,” *Faire*, 2 (November 1975): 50.

To this grievance, Garnacho added that the text of José Martínez, a colleague from the PSOE, which was published in the fourth number of *Faire*, had been excessively edited, which distorted its meaning. Furthermore, he complained about an article written by Martinet in *Le nouvelle observateur*, in which he stated that “three years ago, the PSOE—like the PSP—was in a situation of total inorganisation.”⁹³²

These articles damaged the relations between the PSF and the PSOE at a crucial moment when Franco had just died. At this stage, everything was at stake in Spain, and the PSOE needed international support to make itself visible more than ever. Thus, the public visibility that the French Socialists gave the PCE and to the CSC, the suggestion implicit in the text published in *Faire* that the Communists were the main party of the Spanish opposition, and the opportunity given to both parties to criticise and downplay the importance of the PSOE, was considered an affront. The inconsistency of the PSF in their support for the PSOE contrasted with the decisive aid that other European Social Democrat parties in the SI (again the SPD must be highlighted) were giving the PSOE at this time.

The French inconsistent attitude towards the PSOE can be plausibly explained by attending to the complex situation of the French Socialists, who were internally divided and also confronted with the PCF due to the Portuguese events. In this situation, paying special attention to the Spanish Communists could have been instrumental for the PSF. This might have been a way for the French party to minimise the criticism coming from the CERES and the PCF for having overtly supported the Portuguese PS against the PCP in Portugal. Furthermore, this might have been a veiled message to the PCF. To enhance the Eurocommunist, moderate, line advocated by Carrillo, who had openly criticised the behaviour of the PCP in Portugal, had an implicit criticism of the orthodox ideological line of the PCF. The French Communists were about to abandon the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat at their Congress at the beginning of 1976, and enhancing Carrillo was a way to remind the orthodoxy of the PCF, which had publicly supported the ‘Stalinist’ Portuguese Communist Party. This would be a way of rearranging the balance of forces between the partners of the union of the Left, as they would have to soon negotiate the renewal of the common programme that expired in 1977. Be that as it may, the fact is that the PSOE felt aggravated by the PSF, which would have consequences for the relations between both parties, as we will see later below.

⁹³² 424RI1, Letter from Manuel Garnacho to Gilles Martinet, 16/01/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Notwithstanding this quarrel, the Spanish and French Socialists kept collaborating in several ways. In January, both parties set in motion an initiative to establish fraternal linkages between their local federations in Spain and France. This would be useful for the Spanish, because each French federation intended to invite a delegation of PSOE members (4-5 people) to be present at the cantonal electoral campaign that would take place in France in March 1976.⁹³³ This initiative was meant to provide the PSOE militants with experience in electoral campaigns, which would give the Spanish “practical formation that [the years in] a clandestine position have made impossible to acquire and which will be necessary tomorrow, after the democratic rupture.” Moreover, the linkages between federations would strengthen the fraternal links between the Socialist militants of both countries, which could lead to exchanging information, establishing study groups in common, and so on. Finally, shared meetings between the PSOE and the PSF would be useful in making the PSOE appear in France as the only Spanish partner of the PSF, and also to explain to the French public opinion, which included that of hundreds of thousands of Spanish emigrants,⁹³⁴ the situation in Spain and the political and ideological stance of the PSOE.⁹³⁵

The relations between the Spanish and the French federations were very important for the PSOE at the grassroots level. These kinds of contacts were generally friendly and instructive, but implementing the plans made by the leaderships of both parties at the grassroots level was not always easy. Personal contacts between the Spanish Socialist emigrants and their French counterparts had a long history, and changing the dynamics established in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s was a difficult task for the executive committees. As an example of this, the section of the PSOE in Limoges had problems collaborating with the section of the PSF in that region because the French militants had engaged impersonal relations with the former general secretary of the PSOE Llopis, and his people. For this reason, they refused to recognise the legitimacy of the section created by the PSOE renovators. As Garnacho put it to the National Secretary of the Federations of the PSF, Louis Mermaz: “our comrades would

⁹³³ 424RI1, Letter from the Secretaría de Relaciones Internacionales to the Agrupaciones del PSOE, 28/01/1976, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès. At this stage, the linkages that existed between the Federations of both parties were: Madrid – Paris; Alicante – Haut de Seine (Suresnes); Sevilla – Isere (Grenoble); Asturias – Pas de Calais (Lille); Vizcaya – Norte (Arras); Granada – Aude (Carcassone); Cataluña – Bas Rhin (Estrasburgo); Valladolid – Haute Garonne (Toulouse); Navarra – Basses Pyrenees (Pau).

⁹³⁴ The official figures of the Spanish government say that between 1962 and 1974 around 225 000 Spanish migrated to France, but the real figure might have been much higher. See: Sonia Martín Pérez, *La representación social de la emigración española a Europa (1956-1975). El papel de la televisión y otros medios de comunicación* (Madrid: Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social, 2012), 30.

⁹³⁵ 424RI1, Letter from Manuel Garnacho to Federation PS, “Campagnes Communes PS-PSOE”, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

like to carry on the joint campaigns PS[F]-PSOE that we have planned. It goes without saying that the negative attitude of the Section [of] Limoges makes any action impossible.”⁹³⁶

At the leadership level, the PSF tried to relaunch the cooperation between the parties of Southern Europe at the beginning of 1976, and organised the first Conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties in Paris at the end of January. This was the greatest attempt of the French party to create an international ideological trend, and to appear as the leader of the Southern European Socialism, an initiative that was again welcomed by the PSOE. The Spanish were interested in the public repercussions that this meeting would have, and in confirming their attachment to the Southern European Socialist label. When the PSF sent the invitations to the participant parties, the French wondered if the initiative should be broadened to other parties, and the PSOE considered that “only the parties that were present in Latche should participate.”⁹³⁷ Alfonso Guerra was even more straightforward. He said to his French counterparts: “do not invite GALVAN.”⁹³⁸

As both the PSOE and the PS rejected the inclusion of new participant parties in the Conference, the PSF decided to organise it exclusively with the parties that had participated in Latche, and to invite other parties such as the SPD as observers, in order to avoid criticism for being factionalist and hurting sensibilities within the SI. Initially, the French the plan was to hold the Conference at the end of 1975 in Milan or Marseilles. The choice of place depended on financial issues, but also on “the political impact that we expect from this reunion.”⁹³⁹ Eventually the Conference was delayed until the end of January due to several factors. These were the late responses of the PS to the invitation of PSF, and international developments, especially the Portuguese Revolution and the death of Franco in Spain.

Finally, the Conference took place on 24th and 25th January 1976 in Paris, which was a location chosen for technical rather than political reasons—the international airport, venues, security, translators, and so on. The topics under discussion at the Conference included the place of Southern Europe in world politics; European Socialism vis-à-vis the crisis of

⁹³⁶ AE-685-8, Letter from Manuel Garnacho to Louis Mermaz, 07/01/1976, Fundación Francisco Largo Caballero.

⁹³⁷ 41RI2, Letter from Luis Yedro, PSOE’s International Secretary?, to Robert Pontillon, 12/08/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹³⁸ 41RI2, “Manuscrit d’après les notes de R. Pontillon”, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹³⁹ 41RI2, “Note sur le projet de conférence des P.S. de l’Europe du sud”, 09/09/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

Capitalism; the defence and reinforcement of democracy in Europe through Socialism; coordinating the action between the different forces of the Left in Europe.⁹⁴⁰

In the preliminary works for the Conference, Robert Pontillon and Jean-Pierre Cot who were in charge of the organisation, wrote about what the French party expected to achieve with this Conference, and about the relevance of the topics of discussion. What the PSF attempted to achieve was: “a) to enhance the originality of the Socialist strategies in the South of Europe, underlying the points of strength of the French strategy (rupture with the capitalist system; union of the Left; common programme); b) to implement a unitary dynamic in the South of Europe, involving the trade unions that could play a useful role in finding a meeting point that could be ‘European workers and the crisis’; c) to design a foreign policy [...] [that could be named] ‘a socialist policy for the Mediterranean’; d) to consider that on these bases, a dialogue with the social democracy should be opened.”⁹⁴¹

The creation of this international Socialist trend at this precise moment was very interesting for the French, because the future of the EC seemed to be moving towards the greater political, economic and social integration of the member States. At the end of 1975, the Tindemans report, named after the Belgian Prime Minister, was published. Among other things, it proposed strengthening the competences of the European Parliament, which should have democratically elected members before the end of 1978, and would be able to propose legislation. It also projected strengthening the voice of the EC in the foreign policy. This report had to be examined by the European Council in April 1976, when it would encounter great opposition. However, it was useful in focusing the attention of the reformers of the European institutions onto the election of the European Parliament, which the French Socialists had to take into account. For this reason, the Conference of the Southern European Socialists was interesting for the French in terms of initiating a debate from a strong position with the Social Democrats on the ideas of Socialism, union of the Left, and the building of a social Europe.⁹⁴²

Furthermore, the PSF expected that, in the longer term, reaching an agreement with the Southern European Socialist parties would also be useful to set in motion a common

⁹⁴⁰ 41RI2, “Conference des parties socialistes d’Europe du Sud”, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁴¹ 41RI2, Jean-Pierre Cot, document addressed to the Assemblée Nationale, 05/01/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁴² These ideas can be inferred from the following document: 41RI3, Letter from Jean-Pierre Cot to the Assemblée Nationale, 05/01/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

international strategy towards a Mediterranean independent from the superpowers. The French considered that in the South of Europe there were examples (Yugoslavia, Albania, France, and Greece) that proved that an international policy independent from the US and the USSR was possible. This fact, favoured by the process of détente and by the international crisis of capitalism, offered new possibilities for developing an autonomous international policy in the region that should aim to establish a new kind of economic relations based on cooperation between the countries of the north and the south of the Mediterranean, as well as putting an end to the interference of both superpowers.⁹⁴³ This new policy would imply a general redefinition of the international role of the EC, the role of the Atlantic Alliance, and eventually a transformation of East-West relations.

Regarding the coordination of the actions of the Left in Europe, the PSF proposed the union of the Left, as is well known. They wanted to clarify the conditions of this union in the light of the experiences of the participants at this conference. They wanted to clarify “which are the political and programmatic conditions for the success of the Union? Which are the international constraints that the Union has to face? And, is a common programme necessary? Useful?” They thought that “it is important popularise the Union of the left in Europe and in the world and to engage the debate with Northern Europe clearly on this point. The conference, for the consequences and the publicity that it will provide, could be an instrument of international policy pedagogy.”

To summarise, the the PSF’s aim for this Conference was to bring together the Southern European Socialist parties in creating a new ideological trend. This should set the basis for preparing an ideological debate with the Social Democrats of the North of Europe on the future of Western democratic Socialism that would have implications at national, international and transnational levels, which would have as its core issue the union of the Left. The starting point for this debate would be different if it was preceded by the attempt to unify the forces of the Left in Southern Europe, because this would strengthen the position of these parties in the future debate with the Social Democracy. This is why the union of the Left in the South of Europe was an essential first step.⁹⁴⁴

⁹⁴³ 41RI3, La place de l’Europe du Sud dans la politique mondiale, 05/01/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁴⁴ 41RI3, “La coordination de l’action des forces de gauche en Europe”, 05/12/1975, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

However, five days before the beginning of the Conference, there was a Bureau meeting of the SI in Elsinore (Denmark), where all of the Socialist leaders of Western Europe discussed the relations between Socialists and Communists. The discussion was heated, and a schism was formed between the positions of the PSF, defended at the meeting by Mitterrand, and those of the SPD, defended by Helmut Schmidt. The French argued that the only way to build a Socialist society in freedom was a pact with the Communists. Moreover, he considered that only through pacts with the Communists could the Socialists reach government in the south of Europe. Schmidt, in turn, accused the parties of Southern Europe of putting European unity in danger and the politico-military equilibrium in the West by making a pact with the Communists. This argument acquired greater significance on the following day, as Kissinger visited Copenhagen. After meeting with the Danish Social Democrat Prime Minister, Anker Jorgensen, he stated: "I do not like the relations between Socialists and Communists."⁹⁴⁵ This meeting showed that the ideological unity within the SI was in danger, and the conflict that opened up within Western European Socialism would determine the development of the Conference of the Southern European Socialists.

The Conference started on 24th January in Paris. There were more than sixty representatives of the parties involved, and tens of international observers (representatives of the SI, of the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the EC, the PASOK, the ETUC, and representatives of several Socialist parties). The representation from the PSOE was impressive. Almost all of the members of the Executive Committee, in addition to the leaders of the UGT and the youth section of the party were present (21 people in total).

Alfonso Guerra presented the paper of the PSOE. It was on the "Coordination of action between the different forces of the Left in the South of Europe", and it was the presentation that created the highest expectations in the Conference.⁹⁴⁶ The PSOE analysed the possibilities of collaboration between the forces of the Left in all of the Southern European countries

The Spanish Socialists thought that there were basic similarities between the countries of Southern Europe that allowed them to be analysed together. First, there was greater radicalisation of the working class in the South of Europe than in the North of Europe, which was due to the differing development of capitalism in those regions. While in the North,

⁹⁴⁵ "La Internacional va por barrios," *Cambio 16*, 217 (02/02/1976): 52.

⁹⁴⁶ *El Socialista*, 58 (10/03/1976).

capitalism had been developed to a great extent (partly due to the exploitation of the Third World), allowing to make some concessions to the demands of the working class, in the South the economic development had been different. Capitalism in the South of Europe was more “predatory” than in the North; its aim was to gain as much benefit as possible in as little time as possible. This had two implications: the greater exploitation of the working class, and the lack of a mentality of re-investment among the capitalist class. This led to the creation of a bigger gap between social classes in the Southern European societies than in the Northern ones.

Moreover, there were other characteristics that the Southern European countries had in common, such as the renovation of the Socialist parties at the beginning of the 1970s, and the existence of strong Communist parties. The Socialists had renounced the policies of class collaboration and the management of Capitalism, without renouncing democracy and freedom. The Communists they represented an important part of the working class in all of these countries, but they had different strategies and projects for society. These ranged from the pluralist and democratic PCI to the PCP, whose line was closer to that set by the Soviet Union. Finally, there was one more characteristic common to all these countries, which was the strong influence of the Catholic church on society. This made it necessary to take the progressive Catholic organisations into account at the moment of establishing alliances in the Left.

These similarities operated in an international context favourable to the rise of the Left in Southern Europe. This was because of the international crisis of capitalism and because the influence of the US in the world was declining due to the American failure in Indochina and its consequent international loss of prestige.

However, despite these basic similarities, there were important differences between the Southern European countries that made it very difficult to adopt a single model for unifying the Left. In France, the Socialists, the Communists, and the Left Radicals were successfully united in a common programme. In Italy, the union seemed to be more difficult because the PCI defended an alliance with the Christian Democracy more than an alliance with the Socialists. In Portugal, the PS was fighting to build a democratic and Socialist society, and the collaboration with the Communists seemed to be difficult due to the confrontation between the two parties during the Revolution. Finally, in Spain, the forces of the Left had clear

immediate objectives: to overthrow Francoism and to conquer democracy. Being illegal, however, made the relations of the opposition difficult.

And yet, the PSOE thought that, despite the different situations and problems for the union of the Left in the Southern European countries, “the union is necessary, now more than ever.” The reasons for such a statement were that in order to advance to Socialism “it is not [enough] getting only 51% of the vote in an election. It is necessary to have the support of multiple layers of the society to sustain the political project proposed by the Left.”

In order to get this wide social support, the PSOE proposed a *bloque de clases*, different from the *frente de clases* of the 1930s. If the latter concept meant the alliance of the working class and the peasants, the new concept entailed the alliance of the working class with the middle classes who were dependent on a salary and the petit bourgeoisie, all of them exploited by the Capitalist system.

This idea of the PSOE was very similar to how the PSF considered the union of the Left. In order to dominate the union of the Left in France, the French Socialists advocated the concept *front de classe* against the *union populaire* proposed by the PCF. If the Communist concept implied the union of all the population led by an avant-garde (the proletariat and the PCF), the Socialist concept implied a union in which all of the exploited salaried workers would be included, not only the industrial proletariat. Thus, the French extended this concept to the salaried middle classes (teachers, officials, sales people, and so on), who tended to vote for the PSF and not the PCF.⁹⁴⁷ The name of this social and political alliance used by the PSOE was different to the one used by the PSF because of the memory of the Civil War, but the meaning of *bloque de clases* for the Spanish Socialists was basically the same as *font de classe* for the French. It was meant to benefit the Socialists over the Communists in the possible union of the Left.

In order to carry out this unitary project, the PSOE considered the collaboration between the following elements indispensable: “a) the Socialist parties of the different countries; b) between Socialists and Communists; c) with [other] progressive forces (Christians, Radicals, etc.); d) with the trade unions.” The concrete necessary steps to working in that direction were “to renounce to the ‘irrational competition’” between Socialists and Communists, since it only favoured the Right. “To exchange experiences, to confront positions, the discussion of

⁹⁴⁷ Brown, “The Common Programme in France,” 48-53.

strategies” between the parties of the Left in Southern Europe; “the coordination of trade union fights at the international level, [...] and to increase internationalist attitudes in the political planning.” In order to start working in this direction, the PSOE proposed the organisation of regular meetings between the Socialist parties of Southern Europe.⁹⁴⁸

The text presented by the PSOE was congruent with the ideological development of the party since its renovation in 1974. This time, however, the party further developed their understanding of the union of the Left and the ways for achieving it. Nevertheless, to get the full picture of the stance of the PSOE at this Conference, the first secretary of the party González’ speech at the inauguration of the Conference has to be taken into consideration, as he nuanced some of the statements of Guerra’s paper.

First of all, González tried to make it clear that this conference did not imply any attempt to break the relations between the Southern European Socialist parties and the Northern European Social Democrat parties in any way. In fact, he considered that the aim of all of these parties was to build a Socialist and democratic Europe, and this kind of Europe could only be built through “the decisive confluence of the Socialist and Social Democrat parties.” Regarding the union of the Left in Spain, González developed and nuanced Guerra’s statements. He highlighted the specific situation of Spain within the Southern European context. The Spanish uniqueness lay in the fact that the country was still under dictatorship. This unique factor made the relations between the democratic forces unique, determining the behaviour of the PSOE. For his party, an agreement with all of the democratic forces was an overriding necessity, but only until democracy was reached. Thus, González postponed the decision on the need for the union of the Left in Spain until democracy had arrived. “It will be precisely at that time when [we] will have to elaborate a tactic and a strategy for the future.” At that precise moment, he considered that the exclusive union of the Left in Spain would not be possible because “the Right enjoys a very solid support from the army.” This fact conditioned the strategy of the PSOE towards the Left, and led the party to seek bigger alliances.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁸ 41RI4, “Rapport introductif presente par le PSOE. Coordination de l’action entre les différentes forces de gauche de l’Europe du sud,” 24/01/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès. This text was also published in *El Socialista*, n. 58, 10/03/1976, pp. 4-5.

⁹⁴⁹ Felipe González, “La construcción de una Europa socialista y democrática,” *El Socialista*, 58 (10/03/1976): 2-3.

What emerges from the González's statements is that although at a theoretical level the party was in favour of the union of the Left, in practice the leaders considered it to be unfeasible and not desirable. It could only work within the frame of a wider alliance, such as the *Junta* or the *Plataforma*, and the PSOE only considered this alliance desirable until the arrival of democracy. From that moment on everything should be reconsidered, as they expected to emerge as the main force of the Spanish Left.

The results of this Conference in practice were poor, and its wider significance was less than the PSF had expected. All of the presentations at the Conference acknowledged to a greater or to a lesser extent the theoretical need for the union of the Left; however, it only existed in France, and the specific situation of the other Socialist parties in their countries seemed to make it very difficult to achieve this union. If we add to these difficulties the hostility that the creation of a new Socialist brand favourable to the union of the Left had aroused within the SI, this Conference can be considered a failure.

The hostility of the German Social Democracy towards this project was a concern for all of the participant parties. At the conclusion of the Conference, Andre Cools (president of the Belgian Socialist Party) started his final remarks with the following sentences: “before saying what this Conference [is], I will say what this conference [is] not. It [is] not an act of opposition with respect to other sister parties and even less a factional operation.” He continued by saying that “this Conference did not have the aim to arrive to a model patented [...] to a seal of quality to boast some parties.” This Conference was only a way of confronting the different analysis and experiences of the parties involved. This being said, Cools also advocated greater collaboration between the parties involved in order to create an alternative to capitalism in Southern Europe that would preserve and even expand democracy and freedom.⁹⁵⁰

This time, the treatment that the international press gave to the Conference of the Socialist Parties of Southern Europe was quite different to that given to the informal meeting in Latche. All of the media highlighted the division that the issue of the relations with the Communists was creating among the Southern European Socialist parties. Before the Congress, *Le Monde* proclaimed that the parties participating in the conference sought the basis for a *compromis historique*. Immediately after the Conference, the same newspaper stated that the evolution of

⁹⁵⁰ 41RI5, “Conclusions d’Andre Cools president de la seance de cloture”, 25/01/1976, , Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

the Communist Parties divided the Southern European Socialists.⁹⁵¹ Similarly, the British newspaper *The Guardian* published an article named “Agreement to disagree” in which the Conference was considered a failure because no organisation would be formed after it, and because the main focus on unity “turned out to be a point of almost total diversity.” According to this newspaper, in general the Conference had failed “except to the extent that each leader here [...] might have enhanced his electoral image as a statesman with eyes beyond the borders.”⁹⁵²

Even the official newspaper of the PSOE did not treat this event as it had the previous informal meeting of Latche. Although *El Socialista* highlighted the importance of the Conference, and it published the contents of Alfonso Guerra’s presentation and the Felipe González’ speech, the Spanish Socialists did not exploit it as much as could have been expected.

The articles on this Conference show that the message that the PSOE wanted to deliver via their participation was ambiguous. For the Spanish, it was still important and valuable to appear to be one of the main Southern European Socialist parties together with the PSF. However, now they were interested in emphasising the harmony that existed between the Southern European Socialist parties and the Social Democratic parties of the SI. Thus, the PSOE presented this Conference as a continuation of the meeting of the leaders of the SI in Elsinore that had taken place just five days earlier. Moreover, nothing about the confrontation between Socialists and Social Democrats that had occurred in Elsinore was mentioned in *El Socialista*. Regarding the previously spread interpretation that the Conference of the Southern European Socialists established crucial differences between the stances of the Northern European and Southern European parties, the PSOE said: “nothing further from the truth. It should not be seeing in this Conference a sign of divergence, but what it actually is, a study of the common problems of the Socialist parties of Southern Europe.”⁹⁵³

I would argue that these statements show an attempt by the PSOE to keep the label ‘Southern European Socialist’ while at the same time avoiding setting it into opposition with the Social Democracy prevailing in the SI. This was probably a response to the fact that at this point, the

⁹⁵¹ Thierry Pfister, “Les P.S. de l’Europe du Sud vont rechercher les bases d’un ” compromis historique ” à l’échelle de leurs cinq pays”, *Le Monde*, 24/01/1976; Marcel Niedergang, “La première conférence des partis socialistes de l’Europe du Sud L’évolution des P.C. continue de diviser les socialistes européens”, *Le Monde*, 27/01/1976.

⁹⁵² Walter Schwartz, “Agreement to disagree by Socialists”, *The Guardian*, 26/01/1976.

⁹⁵³ “La Conferencia de Partidos Socialistas de Europa del Sur,” *El Socialista*, 57 (first half of February 1976): 3.

European Social Democrats, and especially the Germans as we have already seen, were fully supporting the PSOE. It also had to do with the confrontation that took place in Elsinore between Northern and Southern European Socialist immediately before the meeting of the Southern European Socialists in Paris.

The newspaper of the French Socialists also changed its tone regarding this Conference, compared to how it had covered the previous meeting in Latche. It published a defensive article, since they were the party that had received the most criticism for attempting to break the unity of Socialism in Europe. Their Conference was also criticised in the French media for not being able to put together the views of the participant parties regarding the Socialist-Communist relations. Now, *L'unité* repeated the already-mentioned argument that this meeting “did not have the objective of defining a common strategy for the different PS of Southern Europe, and even less of giving birth to a new organisation [...] outside of the Socialist International.” As the PSOE said in their newspaper, the PSF considered the conference to be “an exchange of points of view and experiences” between the participant parties, which had common characteristics and problems. “Seen in this way—and and it should not be seen in other way—the Conference in Paris has been a great success that all the participants have wanted to prolong with new encounters at different levels.”⁹⁵⁴

After this Conference, the ideas of building a Southern European Socialist trend and the union of the Left did not disappear completely from the discourse of the PSOE, but they became less central. In the case of the union of the Left, it would be practically abandoned at the end of the year (although it would reappear sporadically in particular situations at the end of the 1970s, which will not be discussed in this thesis). Only three weeks after the Conference in Paris, Felipe González and Mario Soares went to Vienna, where they met with Bruno Kreisky. There, González made public statements that the French newspaper *Le Monde* published under an article titled “The secretaries of the Portuguese and Spanish PS reject any possibility to ally with the PCs.” According to *Le Monde*, González had said that the union between Socialists and Communists, such as the one existing in France, was completely impossible in Spain because it would have negative effects within the Spanish situation.⁹⁵⁵

The PSOE felt the need to clarify this statement, and sent a letter the PSF explaining that *Le Monde* had misunderstood González’s words. According to González, when he talked about

⁹⁵⁴ Claude Estier, “Une nouvelle carte pour le socialisme,” *L'Unité*, 190 (30/01/1976): 6-10.

⁹⁵⁵ “Les secrétaires des P.S. portugais et espagnol récusent toute possibilité d’alliance avec les P.C.,” *Le Monde*, 14/02/1976.

the difficult union between Socialists and Communists, he meant Portugal. Regarding Spain, González had expressed his very well-known view that, in order to achieve the democratic rupture, the union of all of the Spanish opposition was necessary, and that an exclusive union of the Left could imply more problems than advantages because of the strength of the extreme Right in Spain. However, the PSOE wanted to clarify that “when we say that an alliance with all the opposition is necessary, it goes without saying that the [alliance] includes the Communist Party.”⁹⁵⁶

This ambiguity, and the double messages about the Socialist intentions towards the Communists, became common in 1976. In this specific case, the PSOE did not want to alienate the PSF, and risk losing its public support. As we are seeing, this support was very important for the PSOE, and the fact that the PSF had sometimes publicly supported other Spanish personalities, such as Carrillo and other Socialist parties, suggests that the PSOE could not take the continuous and unconditional support of the PSF for granted. To avoid a change of attitude among the French Socialists was very important, as it could damage PSOE’s public image.

However, as was already mentioned, the crisis of the government in Spain became heightened in the spring of 1976, and the episodes of brutal repression brought together all the Spanish opposition. At the end of March, the *Junta* and the *Plataforma* joined and created a new platform led by the PSOE and the PCE, the *Coordinación Democrática*. The CD was born without a defined programme beyond fighting for the restoration of democracy. It was not controlled by any party, and the decisions were taken unanimously, which implied that the PCE and the PSOE entered the new organisation as equal partners, and also that the PSOE occupied the place of the main counterweight to the Communists in the coalition at the expense of the PSP. This alliance was not a fusion of political parties or a strategic alliance; it was a tactical agreement aimed only at implanting democracy in Spain.⁹⁵⁷ This meant that, in principle, after the arrival of the democratic freedoms this organisation would not have continuity.

This agreement arrived at a moment when the PSF and the SPD, after the confrontation of January 1976, were increasing their contacts with the aim of improving their relations and

⁹⁵⁶ 424RI7, Garnacho, Manuel, “Mise au point concernant conférence de presse de Felipe Gonzalez, 1 secrétaire du PSOE, a Vienne (Autriche) le 12 février 1976”, 13/02/1976, , Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁵⁷ “La dialectica de la unidad,” *El Socialista*, 61 and 62 (April 1976): 2.

discussing their strategies that previously had seemed to crash in the Iberian Peninsula.⁹⁵⁸ At these meetings Mitterrand, probably explained to the Germans what he was arguing before other Western partners; this is that through the union of the Left, he had found a way of containing Western European Communism.⁹⁵⁹ The fact is that the tension between both European parties started to decrease, and that this relaxation was reflected in their reactions to the creation of the CD. On the one hand, the Germans, who believed the explanations given to them by the PSOE, did not consider the CD to any kind of union of the Left, but simply as a tactical platform of the opposition against the stagnation of the Spanish government.⁹⁶⁰ On the other hand, the PSF, interested in opening this new phase in the relations between the French and the German parties, for reasons that included the French government's exploitation of the isolation of the Socialists in the SI, did not exploit the creation of the CD as they had done previously when the PSOE and the PCE had a rapprochement. The creation of the *Coordinación Democrática* had little echo in the journals of the PSF. Notwithstanding this fact, the French Socialists interpreted the creation of the CD as a kind of union of the Left in Spain, which "would give a position of unity and strength [to the Spanish Left] such as they had never known in the last 40 years."⁹⁶¹

In the following months, the PSOE kept showing a double, ambiguous, face in public. In April, the Socialist trade union UGT was allowed to celebrate its Thirtieth Congress in Spain, the first held inside the country since 1932. The motto of the Congress was "*A la unidad sindical por la libertad*" ("towards trade union unity for freedom"), and there the Socialists confirmed their commitment to Socialist free trade unionism⁹⁶² in line with the ICFTU, and their commitment to the rupture with the Francoist trade union system. The international presence at this Congress⁹⁶³ and the Congress in itself were a great success for the Socialists. Holding the Congress gave great visibility to the Socialists, and implied a hard blow to the intentions of the Communist CCOO to organise a constituent congress that would set the basis for a unique central union in Spain similar to the Portuguese *Intersindical*. At this Congress, Felipe González was invited to deliver a speech, in which he showed a very

⁹⁵⁸ Antoine Violete, "Le SPD est «réaliste»,» *L'unité*, 199 (02/04/1976): 16-17. On this period of rapprochement between the PSF and the SPD see: Flandre, *Socialisme ou social-démocratie*, 160-175.

⁹⁵⁹ Letter from M.E. Pike to ADS Goodall, France: Internal Affairs, 14/09/1976, UKNA, FCO9/3031, Spanish Socialist Parties.

⁹⁶⁰ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 309.

⁹⁶¹ Daniel Taber, "Espagne. La gauche se prepare," *L'unité*, 198 (26/03/1976): 14-16.

⁹⁶² The UGT was in favour of the freedom of affiliation, freedom of constituting trade unions, freedom in the unionist action, and autonomy from the political parties, the patronate and the State. On this basis, the UGT was in favour of the unity of the working class.

⁹⁶³ See: Aroca, *Internacionalismo*.

moderate face. He talked about the political evolution in Spain, and he placed the responsibility for moving towards democracy on the government, implicitly accepting the fact that the opposition could only exert pressure in that direction and wait for the democratisation of the regime to happen. This meant abandoning the idea of democratic rupture. He invited the Socialists and the opposition gathered in the CD to use the capacity for “reflection” and to be “realistic”, and he dismissed the verbal radicalism that dominated the Leftist opposition because it was “demagoguery” with negative consequences.⁹⁶⁴

The existence of the CD, with Communists and Socialists together in the same organisation, was useful for pressing the government to carry out a programme of reforms, but it was also a risk because of the rejection that such an alliance invited among the most conservative sectors of the army. For this reason, the PSOE was careful to combine pressure and negotiation with the government. Thanks to the existing literature,⁹⁶⁵ and to the documentation of the British National Archives analysed above, we know that the leaders of the PSOE would be willing to participate in future elections organised by the Spanish Government, even if the Communists were not legalised, although they stated the contrary in public. The fact that the leaders of the PSOE were willing to accept the initial marginalisation of the PCE from the Spanish democracy made it necessary for them to be especially careful to avoid being accused by the Communists and by the rank and file of their own party of collaboration with the regime and betrayal of their partners in the CD.

Thus, the ideological production and some of the public statements of the leaders of the party in 1976 led to the thought that the Spanish Socialists still considered, at least from a theoretical perspective, the possibilities of a union of the Left. In October 1976, Alfonso Guerra further developed the ideas that he had presented in the Conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties. He published an article in the academic Socialist-oriented journal *Sistema* in which he revived the validity of the Southern European Socialist brand and the theoretical desirability of the union of the Left. This article reflected on the union of the Left as a necessity and an opportunity on the way to Socialism, and not only as a tactical union with the aim of overthrowing the dictatorship in Spain. Guerra’s text was the most important example of the PSOE’s reflections on this issue in all these years.

⁹⁶⁴ Felipe González, “El PSOE y la UGT luchan por un sindicalismo libre,” *El Socialista*, 61 and 62 (April 1976): 15 and 10.

⁹⁶⁵ Muñoz, *El amigo alemán*, 321.

First of all, it has to be highlighted that Guerra built his argument on the hypothesis that a specific branch of Socialism, “southern European Socialism,” existed, and that it was different “from the Socialist models of the centre and north of Europe.” From this point of departure, he argued that the arrival of the Southern European Socialist parties to power would change the ideological paradigm in Europe. Overall, Guerra’s article was basically the same as the one that he presented at the Conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties, except that he added some parts in which he reflected on the prospects that the future triumph of Socialism in Southern Europe would bring.

Thus, as in the paper presented at the Conference in Paris, Guerra stated again that “the union of the left is today more necessary than ever,” and he was not referring to a tactical union, but to a strategic union that would allow the Socialist, Communist, and other progressive parties to gain enough social support to break with Capitalism.

In the new part of the text, he argued that the future victory of the Socialist parties in France and Spain (he did not consider the Socialist victories in Italy and Portugal to be plausible or particularly relevant) would be of extraordinary importance for Socialism in Europe. He considered that France was “the most interesting test” in the South of Europe, and a triumph of the Socialists there could be essential for the progression of the Left in the region. This was because the electoral victory of the Socialists in France would bring true revolutionary Socialists to power in a highly industrialised country that was very significant for the Western bloc. Moreover, it would imply that the Socialist triumph would be shared with the PCF, since both had signed the common programme. Therefore, there would be Communist ministers within the government of an important Western country, which would set a precedent for other countries. In terms of Spain, Guerra considered that “the evolution of the Spanish situation, together with the French one, constituted the two most important facts in the analysis of the Socialist perspective of the region.” After the democratic rupture in Spain, it was plausible that there would be a rapid advance of the Socialists, who could have a predominant political role in the short term. Guerra argued that “the multiplying effect of the Iberian socialism could be determinant in the consolidation of the bloc of Southern Socialism”, and that it could produce a spill-over effect towards the north that could bring about an “ideologically common Europe.”

This scenario would be a challenge for the Socialists, for Europe, and for the bipolar order. According to Guerra, a possible undesirable effect could be that there would be two blocs

within that hypothetical Western Europe: the northern one, an ideological bloc led by the British Labour Party and by the SPD, and the southern one, where the centres of influence would be France and Spain. However, he thought that the effect that the evolution of Southern European Socialism could have on the bipolar equilibrium was the main difficulty in implementing this idea. Although it was difficult to foresee this effect, he argued that after the victory of the Southern European Socialists the main loser would be the Soviet Union, because there would be an ideological shift in Western Europe that would be attractive to the working class of the whole continent, thanks to the implantation of democratic and revolutionary Socialism in this area.⁹⁶⁶

Guerra's text still presents the favourable, desirable, vision of the union of the Left, at least at a theoretical level, and the contraposition between the Socialism of the South of Europe and the Social Democracy of the North that had characterised PSOE's discourse since its renovation in 1972. However, according to this text, the union of the Left in Southern Europe could potentially make disappear this North-South confrontation as its success could be attractive for the Nordic Social Democrats. In this sense, this strategy would be beneficial for the interests of the West, as it would create an attractive model of Socialism in freedom in the South of Europe that would make the Eastern European model of Socialism undesirable and unattractive. This work is the culmination of the ideological development on this issue that the PSOE had been carrying out in the last years and, paradoxically, it arrived when the relations between the Spanish party and the PSF, the main ideological inspiration for the Spanish Socialists, were losing relevance for the PSOE.

To return to the bilateral relations between the PSOE and the PSF, the contacts between the leaderships of both parties decreased in the second half of 1976.⁹⁶⁷ The mutual references in their respective newspapers also diminished. The PSOE had become the privileged interlocutor of the government among the opposition. This was partly due to the foreign intervention in favour of the Socialists, and also due to the pragmatic stance of the PSOE and his leader Felipe González.

⁹⁶⁶ Alfonso Guerra, "Los partidos socialistas del sur de Europa y las relaciones socialistas-comunistas," *Sistema. Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 15 (October 1976): 53-70.

⁹⁶⁷ This is what the documentation of the historical archive of the PSF and the press of both parties show. However, at the level of the regional federations of both parties there were frequent contacts during the summer and early autumn of 1976. The documents on the PSOE placed in the historical archive of the UGT, Fundación Francisco Largo Caballero, show that these contacts happened at the grassroots level, especially in the feasts that the regional federations of the PSF organised in summer. As these contacts are not too relevant for my general argument I have decided not to include them in the text.

The Socialists were willing to negotiate with the government a way of facilitating the transition to democracy, and, although still important, the relations with the PSF were not an overriding necessity for the Spanish Socialists anymore. In an undated document that was produced after May 1976 written by Antoine Blanca, the French Socialists analysed their relations with their Spanish counterparts since the death of Franco. The French seemed to see this event as the beginning of a process of moderation within the PSOE that was somehow disappointing.

According to Blanca, “the direction of PSOE is like its leader: young, dynamic and... moderate.” There was a feeling within the French party that perhaps they had chosen to support the wrong party in Spain. “Many comrades wonder if, in keeping privileged relations with the PSOE we are not doing wrong. [If] the [Socialist] International has imposed a lame horse. These doubts are understandable [if we take into account] that the prestige of the PS[F] and its first secretary [Mitterrand] is such in Spain that we [...] receive pressing solicitations from every kind of emissaries of Socialist groups that would want to obtain from us a kind of legitimacy.”

He considered that even though it was not possible to measure the real strength of the PSOE until there were democratic elections, everything seemed to suggest that they were the strongest and geographically better-established Socialist force in Spain. However, the French wanted to be “completely reassured” that by providing “theoretical and sometimes practical” support to the PSOE, they were supporting the strongest Socialist party in Spain.

Regarding the relations between both parties, Blanca noticed that:

there is evidence: the PSOE needs moral and material support. This is a fact. The PS[F] does not provide any material support and its moral support is very conditional. [...] But the material aspect of the solidarity acquires a greater importance today than yesterday. [...] In the PSOE they know very well our financial limits. Should we [then] stay with the arms crossed? I consider this attitude dangerous.

The PSOE receives effective and efficient support from many parties of the SI (Belgians, Italians, Dutch, Norwegians and Swedish) but the most consequent and regular [support] is that of the SPD. This aid is not only material: the interventions of the German ambassador have already facilitated, for example, the restitution of the passport to Felipe [González]. On the other hand, [...] the aid received by the UGT at the trade union level benefits also the PSOE [...].

In order to counteract the French inaction in terms of the other European parties, Blanca proposed some initiatives for the PSF to follow:

to create a permanent committee of liaison in charge of coordinating and facilitating the links of federations, many of which have been already realised. The organisation without delay of high level [visit] to Spain. We are practically the only party of the SI that have not done so. The edition of a seal of solidarity to be sold in our federations: 10000 seals [at the price of] 10 F[rancs] for example to make our support also material. The use by the press of our party of the information regularly provided by the PSOE.

Blanca believed that implementing these initiatives was essential for the PSF. The French had to take the opportunity and make their relations with the PSOE a priority, as the Spanish could be a valuable ally in the SI, and because it was probable that very soon the PSOE would represent a force comparable to the PSF in France. Furthermore, to react quickly was important for the French because:

the PSOE, at the level of the direction as well as at the base, desires to have the PSF as their privileged interlocutor. Their analyses are very close to ours. At the level of the directive, however, the reticence [to fully support them] that they have believed that they see from us has been felt with bitterness. They do not understand that sometimes there is incomprehension from our part, when parties with whom they had less in common, such as the SPD, have engaged with them decisively. They are irritated by the preference that we give to Santiago Carrillo, in spite of our explanations based on the French situation.

According to Blanca, “all of this reveals a failed love affair [*un dépit amoureux*].”⁹⁶⁸

This document shows perfectly clearly how the French Socialists perceived the shift that the PSOE was making from ideological positions very close to the PSF towards a different direction that at this time could not be called Social Democratic, but was a more moderate stance regarding key issues such as democratic rupture, and the union of the Left. As has been argued throughout this thesis, the PSOE was ideologically very close to the PSF and it wanted to get privileged relations and support from them. However, the combination of several factors, such as the decisive involvement of the SPD and other Social Democratic parties in Spanish affairs, the comparatively weaker and more inconsistent support of the PSF, and the dynamic of (asymmetrical) negotiation established between the Spanish government and the opposition in the transition to democracy, moved the PSOE away from the PSF.

By mid-1976, the French Socialists were no longer sure about what kind of party the PSOE was, and whether the Spanish were as ideologically close to them as they had thought earlier. In May, Pierre Guidoni published an article on the PSOE titled “North or South”, which implied a question about the ideological position of the Spanish party within the SI. The

⁹⁶⁸ 424RI3, Blanca, Antoine, “A propos des socialistes espagnols et de leurs rapports avec le PS Français”, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

article was based on a book that Guidoni had written that included interviews with Felipe González, *Entretiens sur le socialisme*. The article was focused on defining the ideological position of the PSOE and the differences between the Socialists of the north and south of Europe.

The answers provided by González show the pragmatism of the leader of the PSOE and his superficial conception of the ideology of the party. Regarding the division between the Socialists of Northern and Southern Europe, he said that “the problem is excessively complex”, because the SI had deep internal divisions. In the words of the PSOE’s first secretary:

The Socialist International, we that are part of it know, has problems of sclerosis; there is not a Socialist international dynamic that responds to coherent or common criteria among all the parties, although there is a base of moral solidarity among all of them [...], there is no international strategy of Socialism, or an analysis of the conflicts between Socialism and capitalism at the international level.

For González, it was evident that there were divergences between Northern and Southern European Socialists. These were historic, socio-economic, political, and religious. But he thought that the main differences were practical, and only later justified ideologically. Thus, the main difference between these parties was that those in the south needed to join together as many popular forces as possible in order to bring Socialists to power. “In many cases we superimpose the ideological reasoning to this precondition [...]. The ideological reasoning would not have existed [...] if the Socialists had gained 52% of the votes. 52% [of the votes] for the Socialists of the South, that would put end to all the discussions on the union of the Left.”⁹⁶⁹

This reflection clearly shows González’s tactical interpretation of the union of the Left. As it appears, for him it was only a means for the Left in the South of Europe to reach power, and not a strategy to advance together with the Communists, in a dialectical relation, towards a new kind of Socialism. In this sense, González was closer to Mitterrand’s understanding of the union between Socialists and Communists than the interpretation of the CERES. In this light, it is easier to understand his intention to go to the elections in Spain without coalitions, which was discussed in the previous section of this chapter, and his reluctance to establish an alliance with other forces of the Left. The elections would show the real strength of each party, and the Socialists were convinced they would be stronger than the PCE, and new ways

⁹⁶⁹ “Nord ou Sud,” *L’unité*, 207 (28/05/1976), 23-24.

of relating with the Communists should be studied from the position of strength that the electoral results would grant the PSOE.

4.2.4. The PSOE and the PSF from the summer of 1976 until the democratic elections of 1977

On 1st July 1976, Arias Navarro resigned. As we have already seen, he was replaced by Adolfo Suárez, who started to quickly and effectively implement a programme of reforms that would bring democracy to Spain. The failure of Arias Navarro's government attempt to reform the regime in order to guarantee its continuation opened up a new period during which the government started the transition from dictatorship into a Western kind of democracy. From the summer of 1976 until the end of the year, the government tried to neutralise the obstacles that the project of reform could encounter within the regime, and they also started to make tentative contacts with the opposition. It was at the beginning of 1977 that the government engaged in negotiations with the opposition in order to bring democracy to Spain, which changed the attitude of the PSOE and most of the opposition from advocating democratic rupture towards advocating an negotiated rupture.⁹⁷⁰

Although in this context the relations with the French Socialists were less important to the PSOE, the positive image that the French Socialists could provide the Spanish was still very important, as I have been arguing in this chapter. Now that the way to democracy was becoming more clear, and the PSOE would have to compete electorally with the PCE (which would be legalised in April 1977), the PSP, and the FPS, this was even more relevant. In this sense, it might have been a blow for the PSOE that in October, the FPS organised a cycle of lectures in Madrid where Michel Rocard, a noted member of the PSF, delivered a speech. Other internationally prominent Socialist theorists, such as the Italian Lelio Basso, also participated. However, it was the presence of Rocard that "received a fair amount of publicity."

After the lectures there was a press conference for Rocard. Among other things, he was asked how he "justif[ied] his presence at an occasion organised by the FPS", as supposedly the PSF was committed to supporting the PSOE. Rocard's answer was that "the French Socialist Party

⁹⁷⁰ Santos Juliá, "Né reforma, né rottura: solo una transizione Della dictadura alla democrazia," *Ventunesimo Secolo. Rivista di Studi sulle Transitioni*, 23 (October 2010): 53-81.

has relations with the PSOE as fellow members of the Socialist International, but [the PSF] knew perfectly well that no single party represented the whole of Spanish socialism.”⁹⁷¹

I have not found any reaction of the PSOE to this statement in the documentation consulted. However, Rocard’s presentation in Spain shows again the inconsistency of the French Socialists in their support for the PSOE. The fact that the PSF was composed of ideologically and organisationally different factions is one of the reasons behind the lack of unity and consistency regarding their relations with the PSOE. The relations with the Spanish Socialists and Communists were used tactically in the internal quarrels of the French party, and in their struggle with the PCF in the union of the Left, which damaged their capacity for influencing the PSOE. In this case, Rocard who was a member of the faction of the PSF composed of the PSU latecomers to the party, also known as the current of the *Assises*, showed his support for the Spanish *autogestionnaires* of the FPS. If we take into account that at the same time the CERES was criticising the FPS for their “violent” and “unclear” campaign against the PSOE, and considering this federation of parties to be insignificant,⁹⁷² it is plausible to interpret the presence of Rocard at that Conference as a tactical move in a French internal struggle. From this perspective, this would mean a transfer of the struggle that the faction of the *Assises* was fighting against the CERES within the PSF for the hegemony in the Left of the party since the beginning of 1975 to Spain .⁹⁷³

The PSF had realised as early as in January 1976 that they would not be able to exercise the ideological and political influence that they would have liked over the PSOE. It was also evident that their project of building a Southern European Socialism found strong opposition from many fronts, among which the most important one was the German Social Democracy and other like-minded parties in the SI. Thus, the French changed their approach towards the PSOE and towards the Southern European Socialist parties, and although they did not renounce organising other Conferences with them, these would acquire a completely different

⁹⁷¹ Letter from RD Wilkinson to RP Flower, Lectures on Socialism, 21/10/1976, UKNA, Spanish Socialist Parties, FCO9/2421.

⁹⁷² “Autour du congreso du PSOE,” *Reperes. Les cahiers du CERES*, 38 (December 1976): 70-71.

⁹⁷³ On this intestine struggle within the PSF see: Alain Bergounioux and Gérard Grunberg, *Les long remords du pouvoir. Le Parti socialiste français 1905–1992* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 285-303.

significance in the following years. The Conferences started to be organised within the frame of the SI, and the main objective in the future would be propagandistic and electoral.⁹⁷⁴

In October 1976, the PSF sought to reorient its strategy within the SI. The party initiated a round of interviews among the main leaders of the Western European Left (Socialists, Social Democrats and Communists) establishing a new focus on aggregation for a common debate. If until now, the debate had been on the union of the Left, now the French proposed to discuss a new challenge that all the progressive forces had to face, namely “the relations between the Left and power.” This initiative was meant to establish a conciliatory dialogue between the Western European Left that could lead them towards the better knowledge and understanding of their respective positions.⁹⁷⁵

The interview with the PSOE’s secretary of information Alfonso Guerra, was published in December 1976, some days before the PSOE’s Congress. Guerra described the situation of the opposition in Spain, which included numerous political groups, but the main currents were Socialism (with PSOE as the main force), Communism (with PCE as the strongest organisation), and Christian Democracy, where the most important groups were still weak. He explained that the democratic opposition had a common strategy within the frame of *Coordinación Democrática*, but he clarified how this union had to be understood: “It is neither the French union of the Left nor the Italian historic compromise.” The union of the opposition in Spain was different because it was determined by the lack of fundamental rights and freedoms. Therefore, the coordination of the opposition had as its main and only objective to bring democracy to Spain. Beyond that common objective, each party had its own project.⁹⁷⁶ Thus Guerra used the French newspaper to put an end to the project of the union of the Left as a strategy for the working class to advance together towards Socialism in Spain.

4.2.5. The 27th Congress of PSOE in Madrid, December 1976: “Socialismo es Libertad”

As was discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the Congress of the PSOE was the official presentation of the party in Spain, which had an enormous repercussion. During its

⁹⁷⁴ Alan Granadino, “Redefining Socialism? The Portuguese Socialist Party and the meetings of the Southern European Socialist Parties (1980-1982),” paper presented in the Conference *Southern European Socialists in the 1980s* (EUI/seesox/LSE Ideas, 5-6 December 2014).

⁹⁷⁵ Claude Estier, “La gauche et le pouvoir en Europe,” *L’unité*, 221 (15 to 21 October 1976): 10-15.

⁹⁷⁶ “Une éventail politique complexe,” *L’unité*, 230 (17 to 23 December 1976): 18.

preparations, the Spanish wanted as much international support as they could get, and the presence of the French Socialists was especially important to the PSOE. Felipe González had sent a personal invitation to Mitterrand in July, making sure that he would have enough time to plan his visit to Madrid. The presence of the leader of the French Socialists was “fundamental for us [the PSOE] and for our struggle to get freedom, democracy and socialism in Spain.”⁹⁷⁷ The invitation was accepted, and Mitterrand was one of the main international personalities present at the Congress, but not the only one. As we saw, Olof Palme, Pierto Nenni, Willy Brandt and Michael Foot also attended.

I will not go over the contents of the resolutions approved in the Congress again, as they were discussed in the previous section. Instead, I will now focus on the relevance that the Congress of the Spanish party had for the public reconciliation between Southern and Northern European Socialists, and for the overall ideological line of the PSOE. My argument is that the Congress of the PSOE symbolises the beginning of the end in the struggle between two conceptions of democratic Socialism in Western Europe and in Spain. Although this struggle did not bring about a clear, immediate, result for the PSOE nor for the SI in an ideological sense, there was a rapprochement between the two stances. The main issue that set apart these two conceptions of democratic Socialism was the union of the Left, and the fact that the PSOE left it aside at the Congress brought these two European factions closer, as the internationalist ambitions of the PSF were halted.

Regarding the ideological line approved by the PSOE, there was continuity with the previous Congresses of the party held in 1972 and 1974, but also discontinuity (the policy of alliances was more vague and less central than at the previous Congress of Suresnes). This shows the relative independence of the Spanish party, which did not fully translate the ideas and proposals of the other parties to its own reality (in fact the consolidation of the PSOE’s shift to the Left was legitimised by its own history, as the PSOE emphasised with its attachment to the *Programa Maximo* of the party, which had the aim of the destruction of Capitalism and its replacement with Socialism). Notwithstanding this fact, it also shows that the European Socialist parties influenced the PSOE. In the ideological line and in the political resolutions approved at the Congress, it can be perceived that in some senses, the PSOE was still close to

⁹⁷⁷ 424RI9, Letter from Felipe González to François Mitterrand, 14/07/1976, Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

French Socialism, as it advocated *autogestionario* Socialism.⁹⁷⁸ However, it is also possible to perceive the influence of the European Social Democracy in the line adopted by the PSOE. If we compare the resolutions of the party with the debates and discourses that had taken place in the PSOE between 1975 and 1976 and have been noted throughout this chapter, it can be perceived that, despite the radical rhetoric, the PSOE had abandoned the most controversial idea for its Northern European partners in the SI. Now, the party did not want to establish alliances in the Left, but to pursue an independent line in which alliances with other forces could or could not happen, depending on the circumstances. This is a concession to the European Social Democracy that would have future consequences. As the historian Juan Antonio Andrade has pointed out, the independent “Nordic” line adopted by the PSOE in the context of a division of the Left, such as the Spanish one, showed the implicit disposition of the PSOE to look for votes in the political Centre, which would make it compulsory for it to moderate its ideology in the future.⁹⁷⁹

The texts and pictures published on the Congress in *El Socialista* have a symbolic power that is highly relevant for my argument. On the front page of the first Special number published on the Congress,⁹⁸⁰ there was a picture in which Felipe González, Willy Brandt and François Mitterrand appeared together, and a picture of Olof Palme. This had a strong symbolic meaning. The PSOE’s leader appeared backed by prominent international personalities that represented two branches of Socialism linked to the PSOE; the successful social democracy of Northern Europe and the Leftist Socialism of Southern Europe. The image that this international backing gave to the party connected perfectly with the historical identity of the PSOE, based on the assumption that it has two spirits—the reformist and the revolutionary.

Mitterrand, Brandt, Palme, Nenni and others delivered speeches at the Congress. When it was Mitterrand’s turn, Willy Brandt was called to the podium of the speaker to give him a hug, publicly symbolising the reconciliation of German and French Socialists and the union and solidarity of international Socialism. The speech delivered by Mitterrand was very different to the one that he had given at the PSOE’s previous Congress of Suresnes. If previously he had emphasised the importance of class struggle in history, this time he delivered a speech that was ideologically light, focusing on the close relationship between Socialism and freedom,

⁹⁷⁸ However, the official ideological turn to the Left sanctioned in the Congress was also justified historically, as the PSOE emphasized the *Programa Maximo* of the party, whose aim was the destruction of Capitalism and its substitution with Socialism.

⁹⁷⁹ Andrade, *El PCE y el PSOE en (la) transición*, 123.

⁹⁸⁰ During the 27th Congress, *El Socialista* was published on daily basis.

and congratulating the Spanish Socialists for being able to celebrate their Congress in Madrid after more than forty years. Sentences such as “there is no Socialism without freedom” or “Socialism is the supreme stage of freedom” were constantly present in his discourse. This was a discourse aimed at enhancing the PSOE at this moment of transition from authoritarianism to democracy. By linking Socialism with freedom, a powerful word for the Spanish who had lived for forty years under a dictatorship, Mitterrand presented the PSOE as the champion of freedom and equality. He did not mention anything about the relations between the forces of the Left.

Olof Palme also took the opportunity to deliver a speech. He praised and congratulated the PSOE on celebrating their Congress in Madrid after many years of exile. After the formalities, he focused almost exclusively on emphasizing that the European Socialist family was unified. He stated that “there is no Socialism of the north and the south, it is the same.” In his view, “regarding the issue of the so-called ‘socialism of the north’ and ‘socialism of the south’ that would be represented [on the one hand] by the line of Olof Palme and Willy Brandt, by the Nordic parties, and [on the other hand] by François Mitterrand and the southern parties, [...] that exact difference does not exist. [...] What actually happens is that each Socialism adapts itself to the country where it is framed [...]. The fundamental ideas of Socialism are the same, the methods of social change are also the same... There are distinctive features, it is true, [...] but there are no essential differences between the Nordic Socialist parties and the French or Spanish Socialist parties.”⁹⁸¹

Willy Brandt also delivered a speech as president of the SI. He discussed the responsibility of the Socialists in building democracy and the European future of a democratic Spain. “Europe is waiting for you with open arms”, he said. Brand also compared the future task of the PSOE to the task carried out by the SPD after 1945. Through this comparison he was sending a message of moderation to the PSOE. The PSOE should present itself as an alternative of government from the beginning and avoid the mistakes that the SPD had made in the 1940s that had allowed the Christian Democrats to shape the new German democratic regime in its first decades. Meaningfully, Brandt said that “our way is not an article of ideological exportation, it is not a recipe that we describe to sister parties. [...] The solidarity that we feel in a special way towards you is not an instrument of manipulation, nor of the supremacy of one party over its sister party. [...] In any case, in the difficult way towards democracy, you

⁹⁸¹ Olof Palme, “No hay socialismo del norte y del sur. Es el mismo,” *El Socialista*, especial XXVII congreso, 3, 6.

can count on our solidarity.”⁹⁸² The explicit denial of trying to influence the PSOE ideologically has the ring of *excusatio non petita, accusatio manifesta*.

Felipe González’ discourse was opportunistically radical. This Congress was the presentation of the PSOE in Spain, and they had to take the opportunity of emphasising the Leftist image that they had tried to project since the renovation of the party. Now the PSOE had to compete with other parties in the Left, but also with the government. Suarez was adopting reforms as well as concepts previously defended by the opposition, and the PSOE had to propose something different and more incisive than the government. As we saw above, the political resolution approved by the Congress declared the party to be a mass-class, Marxist and democratic party. The PSOE emphasised that their aim was to overcome Capitalism and to implant Socialism in Spain. However, they left some room for different interpretations of what this meant, as they defined Socialism as “an end, as well as the process that leads to that end.” They also defined the Socialist society which they envisaged as *autogestionaria*. The PSOE stated as follows: “nationalisations and planning do not necessarily entail Socialism. We want to build a model of society typical for us, in which Socialism and freedom will be complementary and not contradictory concepts.” The method of reaching Socialism approved by the PSOE entailed the combination of parliamentary methods and popular mobilisation, creating grassroots democratic organisations at every social level. Thus, the stage of transition to Socialism would be characterised by the real application of democracy, not by its abolition.

4.2.6. *Second Conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties, Madrid, May 1977*

In January 1977, the PSOE openly rejected any possible alliance with the Communists. However, it remained interested in the benefits that relations with the PSF could provide. Now that the idea of the union of the Left was not shared by the parties, the closeness between PSOE and PSF had to be rebuilt on a new basis.

The rejection of any kind of alliance with the PCE became clear at the beginning of January. The president of the PSOE Ramón Rubial categorically rejected the possibility of an agreement between Socialists and Communists some weeks after the Congress of the party. He considered that such an alliance before the elections would be a mistake “if we want for Spain peace, concord and economic resurgence.” Arguing that the repetition of a popular front in Spain would be a mistake, because it would unify all the forces of the Right, he

⁹⁸² Willy Brandt, “Están todos,” *El Socialista*, especial XXVII congreso, 2, 5.

considered that the PSOE had to become the party of the Spanish working class, as it had been in its origins.⁹⁸³

However, in the context of political reform in Spain that seemed to ensure the celebration of democratic elections before the end of June, the PSOE sought to resume relations with the PSF, as they could be electorally useful. Just some days after the Congress of Madrid, the international secretary of the PSOE Luis Yañez wrote a letter to his colleague Robert Pontillon. Yañez thanked the PSF for having attended PSOE's Congress and expressed the desire of the PSOE,

to have a closer collaboration with the PSF, with which we have a lot of things in common, could [be fruitful] taking into account your experiences on electoral, municipal, parliamentary questions, etc... It is in this sense that my department would like to know your initiative, especially concerning the second Conference of Southern European Socialist Parties. We think that it would be desirable that it takes place in Spain, next spring, before the beginning of the electoral campaign in our country [...].⁹⁸⁴

Pontillon considered the initiative of the PSOE a good idea and discussed the possibility to organise the next conference in Spain with Mitterrand, who also was positive about it. So, Pontillon PSF answered to Yañez expressing “the total support of our party for this initiative that we consider excellent and important.”⁹⁸⁵

The international secretaries of PSOE, PSF,⁹⁸⁶ PS, PSB and PSI met in February in Madrid, some months before the Conference, with the aim of organising the event. It is highly signifying of the defeat that the international line promoted by the PSF suffered in 1976 that the organisers excluded from the topics of debate the issue of the relations between Communists and Socialists. The international secretaries of the Southern European parties decided that the Conference would take place within the frame of the regional cooperation of the SI, although it would be presented as a continuation of the previous Conference held in Paris in January 1976. Moreover, they decided that all participants should make it clear to the Social Democratic parties of the north of Europe and to the international media that this was

⁹⁸³ “No hay condiciones para un frente popular,” *El Socialista*, 91 (15/01/1977): 6-7.

⁹⁸⁴ 41RI8, Letter from Luis Yañez to Robert Pontillon, 24/12/1976, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁸⁵ 41RI8, Letter from Robert Pontillon to Luis Yañez, 07/01/1977, Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

⁹⁸⁶ In the case of the PSF it was Michel Tahuvin, a member of the International secretariat, and not Robert Pontillon, who attended the meeting.

only a meeting for exchanging information, experiences, and opinions and that there was no intention to create confrontational blocs in Europe (north vs south).⁹⁸⁷

On 7th and 8th May 1977 in Madrid, the French, Belgian, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish Socialist parties held the Second Conference of the Southern European Socialist Parties. The event took place only a month before the elections in Spain. François Mitterrand, Bettino Craxi, and Mário Soares appeared together with the PSOE's leadership immediately before the beginning of the electoral campaign (which started officially on 24th May), a crucial moment that gave the Socialists invaluable pre-electoral propaganda. The value of this conference for the PSOE was that it would capture the attention of the media for appearing with prestigious international Socialists in Madrid before the elections, but it was also valuable for keeping alive the brand of Southern European Socialism.

The main message sent through this Conference was different from the previous ones. If the relations between Socialists and Communists had been the reason to organise the first of these Conferences, in this new Conference, the union of the Left was not mentioned at all. Now, the main idea of the conference was linking democracy and Socialism, which was done through emphasising of the concept *autogestion*. The topics of discussion in the Conference were as follows: Democracy and Socialism in the south of Europe (by the PSOE); the PS of southern Europe and the Mediterranean (by the PSI); cooperation, peace and security in Europe after Helsinki and before Belgrade (by the PSB); prospects for the integration of Portugal, Greece and Spain in the EEC; cooperation between Europe and the Third World from a Socialist perspective (by the PSF).

The presentation of the PSOE was prepared, once again, by Alfonso Guerra. Basing his analysis on dialectic Marxism, he focused on the value of Socialism in guaranteeing democracy during a period of economic crisis such as the mid-1970s. Guerra argued that Capitalism was a system that used democracy when this was useful for its own development. However, when democracy stopped being useful, capitalism got rid of it. The value of Socialism as an alternative stemmed from the fact that it was the negation of capitalism. It negated capitalism and surpassed it. Thus, Socialism implied a democratic rupture and rupture with capitalism that would bring about a real, more complete, democracy, that would be based on *autogestion* and on the extension of the individual freedoms.

⁹⁸⁷ 41R18, "Proyecto de organización de la II Conferencia de los Partidos Socialistas de Europa del Sur," Centre d'Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

According to him, the fact that the Southern European Socialist parties adopted a strategy “clearly aiming at the radical transformation of society” did not imply a break between the Socialism of the north and south of Europe. On the contrary, the construction of Socialism in Europe would happen through the progressive adoption of this kind of Socialism by all of the Socialist and Social Democrat parties of the continent. The evolution of Southern European Socialists would have a spill-over effect over the rest of Europe.

Guerra was re-elaborating the same ideas that he had defended at the previous Conference in Paris, but this time he did not explain how the Socialists would get power and implement the way to Socialism. He did not mention the role of the Communist parties on this way to Socialism. This was not an impediment for him to state that the first step on this way towards *autogestionario* Socialism was to democratically achieve the political power for the Socialist parties.

He finished his presentation with the following statement:

The Socialist parties of the South of Europe, faithful to their democratic tradition and to the consideration that Socialism implies the implantation of democracy at all the levels of society, [will] fight for conquering political power through democracy. Only Socialism guarantees democracy and only democracy can guarantee the implantation of Socialism.⁹⁸⁸

The presentation of Guerra is an attempt to fit political action that was already taking place within an ideological framework in order to give it legitimacy. He wanted to hold on to the project of Southern European Socialism without taking the Communists into account in the context of pre-electoral campaigning in Spain. This meant that he left out the previous core of this project, the union of the Left, and instead concentrated on emphasising the importance of democracy as a means to achieve as well as the essence of Socialism. The idea was that in this way the PSOE could keep the valuable brand of Southern European Socialism without having to enter into pacts with other Leftist groups.

This chapter ends with a quotation from Felipe González one year after the elections of 1977. In an interview by the political scientist Richard Gunther to the leader of the PSOE, the latter

⁹⁸⁸ 41RI9, Alfonso Guerra, “Democracia y Socialismo en el Sur de Europa,” Centre d’Archives Socialistes (CAS), Fondation Jean-Jaurès.

was asked if there was “any political party that you like very much?” his answer was: “Ideologically we are closest to the French socialist party.”⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸⁹ Interview 74, An interview with Felipe Gonzalez, 20 July 1978, Archivo Gunther de la transición española, Fundación Juan March.

Conclusions

In this thesis I have analysed the political and ideological development of the main Iberian Socialist parties during the transitions to democracy in the Iberian Peninsula; I have examined the Spanish PSOE and the Portuguese PS through their relations with the BLP and the PSF. The main innovation of this thesis emerges from the perspective used in this analysis: it is transnational and comparative, it is attentive to cultural transfers, and it makes use of a flexible concept of ideology. This concept has been discussed in terms of the symbolic expression of the interests and conflicts that the Iberian Socialists had to face during this period.

The original contribution that this work makes to historiography is the nuancing and refining of previous assumptions about the influence of the European Social Democracy on the PSOE and the PS. This thesis has confirmed with empirical evidence that as the main works in this field argue, both the PS and the PSOE's rapid political and ideological evolutions were closely linked to the involvement of the main Social Democrat member parties of the SI in Spain and Portugal between 1974 and 1977. However, this thesis has demonstrated that the connection between the ideological development of the Iberian Socialist parties and their international relations is more complex and less straightforward than the literature assumes. This thesis has also shown that the political and ideological interests of the European parties in the Iberian Peninsula were different and sometimes contradictory. While the European Social Democrats tried to promote ideological moderation, and the independence of the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula from the Communists, the French Socialist party promoted the union of the Left in the PS and the PSOE. This is an aspect that the literature on both Iberian parties has previously tended to overlook.

Using unexplored archival sources and analysing published sources in the new light provided by my innovative approach, I have shown that the PS and the PSOE received, adapted, adopted, and rejected different ideas and proposals from the European Socialism in a rather unexpected way. If until now, historians and social scientists have highlighted the influence of the European Social Democracy—especially the SPD, but also the SAP and the BLP—on the PSOE and the PS, which has led to the unanimous acceptance of the idea that the Iberian parties went from radicalism to Social Democracy during the transitions to democracy, this thesis tells a different story. Engaging with this previous assumption, this thesis argues that

the most influential party for the PS and the PSOE from an ideological perspective was the French Socialist Party, and that during the transitions to democracy both Iberian parties oscillated between the ideological models represented by the European Social Democracy on the one hand, and the French Socialism, on the other hand.

The renewed ideological line of the French Socialists, consisting of the commitment to the rupture with Capitalism, the advocacy of *autogestion*, and the union of the Left as a way of advancing towards democratic Socialism as much as a way of containing the electoral strength of the Communist party, seduced both the Spanish and the Portuguese Socialists at different moments during the transitions and to different degrees. By attending to their ideological production, the public statements, and the political activities of the Iberian parties during these years, we find that they both made unique use of several European political and ideological contributions, which helped them to maximise their opportunities to democratise their countries but also to become the main parties within the Left. This thesis has therefore shown that the European support for the Iberian Socialist parties was important not only for bringing democracy to Spain and Portugal, as the previous literature has emphasised, but also for helping the Socialists to win an ideological battle for the hegemony within the Left, fought between various conceptions of Socialism and Communism.

Additionally, this thesis sheds new light on the nature of the bilateral relations between the Iberian and the European parties studied here. With a few exceptions, there has been almost no knowledge about the relations between the PSOE and the PSF during this period. We know equally little about the relations between the PS and the PSF. Although the relations between the BLP and both the PS and the PSOE were more well-known, this thesis also adds new information to this body of knowledge. Throughout the previous pages, I have shown how the British Labour and the French Socialists viewed and interpreted the events that occurred in the Iberian Peninsula between 1974 and 1977. Against the determinant backdrop of Cold War *détente*, the European parties had different, sometimes contradictory, interpretations and interests regarding the Iberian Peninsula. Both the leaderships of the PSF and the BLP were interested in the peaceful democratisation of Spain and Portugal, in which the Socialist parties should become the strongest forces in the Left, avoiding the possible Communist influence in the Iberian Peninsula. However, the methods followed by the French and the British in achieving this objective were very different.

Finally, this work provides an interesting contribution to the study of the process of ideological transformation of the democratic Western European Left in the 1970s and 1980s. Although this contribution is minor compared to the above-mentioned innovations, the case studies developed here suggest that this transformation was not exempt from internal conflict disagreement within the parties involved and within the SI. Moreover, it suggests that international cooperation and discussion was very important to understanding the ideological evolution experienced by European Social Democracy. This could have an interesting implication, which is that the ideological transformation of these parties was not predetermined. Thus, despite the constraints that the Cold War dynamics and the social and economic international evolution imposed on the Western European Left, there were alternative projects and ideas that could have prevailed, and these ideological alternatives were resolved internally (within the frame of the SI) rather than externally.

In terms of how the PSF reacted to the events in the Iberian Peninsula, at first it was interested in validating and promoting their strategy of the union of the Left internationally, and it promoted the same strategy in Portugal and Spain. By advancing this strategy, the French Socialists wanted to validate their own alliance with the PCF, and at the same time they wanted to initiate a new ideological trend by proposing a third way between Social Democracy and Communism. This trend of Southern European Socialism led by the PSF was meant to allow France and the countries of Southern Europe to march towards Socialism while respecting freedom and democracy in a Cold War context. The French attempt to spread this idea encountered opposition from the rest of the European Social Democracy, especially in Germany. This fact, together with the development of the events in Portugal when the PCP tried to control the Revolution following a Leninist scheme, led the French to doubt their own strategy and finally abandon it, not without internal resistance.

On the other hand, the British followed a different line that sometimes clashed with the French strategy. They promoted a Western kind of Liberal democracy in Portugal in which the PS would play a key role in becoming the main force in the Left, thus containing the Communists. In the revolutionary context, the support for the PS provided by the British adopted several different shapes. In agreement with the main Western powers at a governmental level, Labour helped the PS by exerting diplomatic support over the Portuguese provisional authorities; it also exerted diplomatic support over the Soviet Union in order to avoid their involvement in Portugal. Their support also consisted of providing technical,

material and economic support to the PS (plus financial aid to Portugal, conditional to the democratisation of the country in a Western sense), and developing a campaign of public support for Mário Soares and the PS. These different kinds of support were offered at the supranational (through the EEC) level, the party level, and the transnational level (through the SI).

In the case of Spain, the BLP played a low-key role, especially compared to the role that it played in Portugal. This was because the Spanish transition to democracy did not follow a period of upheaval as the Portuguese had done, and because the British were wary of interfering excessively in Spanish affairs because of the consequences that their involvement could have. A Spanish reprisal on Gibraltar was always feared. Notwithstanding this fact, Labour provided economic, moral, and political support for the PSOE, and they tried to help with unifying the Spanish Socialist family and moving them away from the Communists.

The different approaches of the European Socialists to the PSOE and the PS tended to converge around mid-1975. In the case of Portugal, a Social Democrat initiative launched in Stockholm in August to support the PS, as well as a Western kind of democracy in Portugal, changed the priorities of the leadership of the PSF, and they stopped promoting the union of the Left (although this shift provoked internal disagreement between the leadership of the party and the CERES). In Spain, the French Socialists also advocated the union of the Left. It was at the beginning of 1976 that the accumulated tension between the French Socialists and the European Social Democrats reached its peak, which led to the PSF's progressive loss of influence over the PSOE until 1977, and to the Spanish party's abandonment of the idea of a union between Socialists and Communists.

Regarding the importance that the European involvement had for the Iberian Socialists, in the specific case of the PS, this thesis has shown that the PS was greatly influenced by the European Socialist parties during the Carnation Revolution, but also before it. Building on the existing literature that has considered German Social Democracy to be the main influence on the PS since its creation because of the fact that the party was constituted at the headquarters of the Ebert foundation in the German town of Bad *Münstereifel*, this thesis has shown that on an ideological level, the main influence of the PS at the time of its creation was in fact French Socialism. This was to the extent that the foundational program of the PS was profoundly inspired by the 1972 programme of the PSF, *Changer la vie*. The Portuguese context before the overthrowing of the *Estado Novo*, characterised by the existence of a poorly organised

political opposition in which the strongest party was the PCP, together with the fact that two of the leaders of the PS, Mário Soares and Francisco Ramos da Costa, were exiled in Paris, contributed to making the renovation of the PSF and the French union of the Left into inspiring models for the PS. At the moment of the creation of the Portuguese party, the Socialists were interested in the union of all the opposition in order to overthrow the dictatorship. Furthermore, they were eager to ally with the PCP in a competitive way, as the PSF had done with the PCF with positive results. All of this made the PSF into the main international point of reference for the Portuguese Socialists, who before the beginning of the Revolution unsuccessfully, advocated and attempted the union of the Left.

Once the Revolution began, Soares' real intentions regarding the Communist Party became clear, as the documentation of the British National Archives shows; he intended to compete with them by using every means at his disposal for establishing the hegemony of the PS in the Portuguese Left. However, the PS did not abandon the ideas that they had borrowed from the PSF, including the union of the Left and the understanding of Socialism as a mixture of economic nationalisations and *autogestão*. Instead, the PS emphasised its anti-Capitalist character until mid-1975, which at that moment in Western Europe was only defended by the Socialist parties of France, Spain, and Portugal. Furthermore, the PS used its affinity with the PSF to enhance its own Leftist character, thus avoiding the denigrated label Social Democrat. As I have argued in chapter three, the use of the ideas that the PS borrowed from the PSF, although apparently contradictory to the support of the European Social Democracy for the Socialists, were actually complementary. The PS was responding to the need to enhance its Leftist image, and to avoid criticism for being a Social Democrat, moderate, anti-Communist party. This was essential in order to compete with other Leftist projects in the context of the Revolution.

Until the end of 1974, the PS argued in favour of the union of the Left, which meant going beyond the existing governmental coalition that included ministers from both parties in order to establish a real alliance with a common programme for developing Socialism in freedom in Portugal. At the beginning of 1975, the Revolutionary context changed. The attempt of the PCP to implement a monolithic trade union compulsory for all the workers, and the Leftist shift in the government and in the MFA after the failed coup attempt by Spínola on 11th March, initiated a period of open confrontation between the PS and the PCP. In this new context, the Socialists considered more openly than before that their main rival in the

Revolution was the PCP, and they did all they could in order to impose their own democratic understanding of the Revolution against the allegedly authoritarian, “Stalinist” model of the PCP. In this attempt to win hegemony in the Left, the PS continued to use the tools that they had borrowed from the French Socialists to fight against the PCP. In addition, they combined these ideological tools with the support provided by the European Social Democrats. The Socialists kept arguing in favour of the union of the Left but under certain conditions related to the respect for freedom and pluralism. As the PCP did not respect these values, the Socialists argued that the failure of the union of the Left was the Communists’ fault, and that the Revolution and democracy in Portugal were put at risk because of the sectarian behaviour of the PCP. This allowed the PS to keep revolutionary legitimacy while at the same time they were working towards the implantation of a liberal democracy in Portugal.

After the victory of the PS in the elections of April 1975, and the PCP and the MFA’s dismissal of the results, the discourse and the behaviour of the PS changed. In the chaotic period known as the hot summer (*verão quente*), the Socialists and Communists attacked each other verbally and physically, and the French instruments used to fight against the Communists temporarily lost their value. Moreover, the PSF, who had been advocating the union of the Left in Portugal since the beginning of the Revolution, and who had supported the PS in public all the time, had doubts about how to support the PS. The French party was divided between the faction of Mitterrand, who unconditionally supported the PS in its struggle against the PCP and the Leftist groups that became protagonists in the last stage of the Revolution, and the CERES, who did not stop advocating the union between Socialists and Communists as the only way to save the Revolution. There was an essential difference between these two groups that explains their diverging stances towards the PS. For Mitterrand’s faction, which understood the union of the Left in a competitive way, the PS was fighting for democracy, while the behaviour of the PCP put it at risk. For the CERES, which understood the union between Socialists and Communists in a dialectical way, the PS was fighting for Socialism, and the disunity between the main parties of the Left only favoured the forces of the reaction.

The development of the Revolution, the doubts of the PSF, and the involvement of the leader of the French party in an initiative led by European Social Democracy to support the PS and the democratisation of Portugal in a Western European sense, had the effect of aligning the PS

more clearly with European Social Democracy than with the PSF towards the end of the Revolution.

The case of the relations between the BLP and the PS shows the other side of this story. It complements our knowledge about the relevance of the international relations in the behaviour of the PS. It also shows how the Portuguese party used international support to impose its own understanding of revolution, or at least its hegemony within the Portuguese Left. The PS and the BLP established relations before 1974. In June 1973, only two months after the creation of the PS, the Portuguese sought to establish relations with the BLP with the aim of receiving moral and political support from their British comrades. This implied public statements from the BLP criticising the Portuguese colonial wars, and campaigning against a closer relation between the Portuguese regime and the EEC. This was important because when the Revolution started, the BLP already knew Mário Soares (the key person in this story) personally and trusted him. This made it easier for the BLP to choose which party to support after 25th April 1974.

Once the Revolution started, the British Labour became one of the main international supporters of the PS. They gave invaluable public support to the Socialists from the very beginning when they made Soares appear as a statesman with enough authority to decide whether the regime established after the coup d'état by the MFA was legitimate or not. Initially, the interests of the British government in Portugal were twofold: to prevent the Communist hegemony in the Revolution, and to promote a peaceful and controlled decolonisation of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau. British Labour did not want trouble in the southern cone of Africa that could open up a new international battlefield between the East and the West, and at the same time they wanted to take advantage of the decolonisation and put pressure on their former colony of Rhodesia. With these two objectives in mind, the British supported the PS economically, technically, and politically during the Revolution, and also supported the Portuguese government—specifically its Foreign Minister and leader of the PS Mário Soares—in the Portuguese decolonisation. This support contributed towards granting Soares and the Socialists prestige and visibility.

Once the Revolution became radicalised in 1975, the British cooperated with the US and the FRG, and also with other European Social Democrat member parties of the SI, in order to prevent the Communist takeover of Portugal. They developed a strategy that combined diplomatic pressure on the Portuguese Government (and also on the Soviet Union), and

economic incentives if democracy was implanted in Portugal (a carrot and stick strategy) with political, economic, technical, and public support for the PS (which in the final phase of the Revolution was complemented with support for the moderate members of the MFA). British Labour carried out this strategy using a double level of action: the governmental level, which also implied multilateral collaboration; and the party level, which was framed within the coordination and activities of the SI. These activities contributed to moderating the discourse and ideology of the PS, which in practice abandoned any attempt at unifying the Portuguese Left in order to advance towards Socialism in freedom.

In the case of the PSOE, this thesis has shown that from its renovation in 1972 until mid-1975, the French Socialists also influenced the party ideologically, and that until mid-1975 it was very receptive to a possible greater French influence. This idea is backed by the analysis of the opinionated articles, the ideological production, and the official political resolutions of the PSOE. As we have seen, there were three core ideas in the ideological renovation of the PSOE that coincided with the core ideas of the French Socialists at that time, which were rupture with Capitalism (which in the case of the PSOE also implied democratic rupture), *autogestion*, a concept scarcely developed by the Spanish, and the willingness to find a way of collaborating with the Communists without being subordinate to them. Moreover, in the spring of 1975, the PSOE was the most eager party, apart from the PSF, to try building the new ideological trend of Southern European Socialism.

However, from mid-1975 onwards, this tendency to align the PSOE with the PSF was abruptly reverted due to several factors, with two in particular being very important. The first was the beginning of the decisive support of the SPD for the PSOE, which was aimed at counteracting the French influence over the PSOE regarding the union of the Left. The second important factor was the comparatively weaker and slightly undecided support that the French offered the PSOE when the Spanish were more open to receiving the French assistance. Thus, from May 1975 onwards, the Spanish Socialist party pursued a different policy in Spain, and were less willing to establish Leftist alliances. The intentions of the leaders of the PSOE were to make it into the main party in the Spanish Left, and initially the French example of strengthening the Socialists at the expense of the Communists through the union of the Left had seemed very attractive. However, once they started to receive the German support, this allowed them to reject a closer union with the Communists because they were politically,

technically, and economically backed by the European Social Democrats. This means that they could fight the PCE for the hegemony in the Left without allying with them.

Notwithstanding this fact, this change of priorities within the PSOE did not entail a complete abandonment of the French ideas by the Spanish party. On the contrary, once the German support started, the Spanish Socialists kept their links with François Mitterrand, their Southern European identity, and their attachment to the idea of *autogestion* publicly and tactically. Moreover, they made tactical use of the cooperation with the PCE in order to press the Spanish government to move faster in the process of political liberalisation. It is also evident that from the death of Franco onwards, the PSOE was more ambiguous than before in its public statements regarding their ideas of democratic rupture, Socialism, and union of the Left, and that its political behaviour was more moderate than its rhetoric.

The PSOE were interested in the positive propaganda that the international support provided them, and publicly exploited their contacts with the PSF, but also with the European Social Democrats. By showing the public support of the European Social Democrats, the PSOE gained public visibility. Moreover, this support was useful for projecting the image of a successful, moderate, respectable party that was able to bring Spain closer to Europe. This was a positive, acceptable image in a context where the regime kept control over the process of democratisation, and it was also an image that could seduce the Spanish middle classes. Notwithstanding this fact, the PSOE publicly emphasised its closeness to the PSF and the support it offered. This was for closely connected several reasons related to the construction of a new identity. The first was that the evident support that the European Social Democrats were giving to the PSOE provoked criticism from other Leftist Spanish parties (the PCE, the FPS, and the PSP, especially), who questioned the PSOE's attachment to Socialism. Due to this fact, the PSOE exploited its links with the PSF with special interest, because the French party granted them some kind of hallmark of quality, or Leftist legitimacy. The second reason was that the PSOE needed to compete in the Left against the initially stronger PCE, and one of the benefits of enhancing its links with the PSF and adopting some of the French ideas was to appear as a revolutionary party in favour of implanting Socialism and capable of establishing pacts with the PCE on equal terms. Finally, the image of the PSF was useful for the PSOE in competing with and attracting the other Spanish Socialist parties, especially the *autogestionario* FPS. Thus, the PSOE's use of all their international contacts for enhancing their image helped the Spanish Socialists to appear before the Spanish people simultaneously

as a revolutionary party that opposed Capitalism, and as a reliable party that proposed fundamental change without adventures.

In terms of the ideas transferred from the PSF to the PSOE, my argument in this thesis is that the Spanish were influenced by the French strategy of the union of the Left, and they adapted and eventually transformed it to fit their own reality. At the beginning of the 1970s, the PSOE had to compete with a better-organised and stronger PCE. The PSF had shown that by allying with the PCF, they could deal with an initially stronger Communist party, placating it and growing at its expense. This experience, together with the fact that the PSOE needed to collaborate with the PCE in the fight against the dictatorship, and as well as the idea that it would be essential to take the Communists into account on the way to Socialism in Spain, led the PSOE to open the possibility to pact with the PCE in 1972. It is not possible to argue that this idea was adopted directly from the French party. However, it is clear that the realisation of this strategy by the PSF in 1972 was very influential for the Spanish Socialist party.

The PSOE adopted the concept of *autogestion* in 1972, when other Spanish Socialist parties were already using it. Although I do not argue that the Spanish party borrowed this concept directly from the French, it is undeniable that it played the same role in the ideological frame of both parties. Both the PSOE and the PSF considered it an essential tool for ensuring that once Socialism was reached, freedom would be kept. Furthermore, it provided a distinctive character to the Socialism envisaged by both parties in terms of Social Democracy and to Communism. However, this is a concept on which the PSOE reflected very little. It only acquired a greater relevance in 1977, when the core idea that brought the Southern European Socialist Parties together, namely the union of the Left, was discarded. *Autogestion* was the concept used to keep these parties ideologically together after the relations with the Communists seemed to be out of the question.

When it comes to the relations between the PSOE and the BLP, this thesis has also nuanced previous assumptions. On this issue, this thesis has fewer innovations to offer in terms of already-existing knowledge. However, in light of new documentation from the British National Archives and from the historical archive of the BLP, and through comparing the involvement of British Labour in Portugal and in Spain, I am able to make the original argument that the British Labour were less influential in the political behaviour and the ideological transformation of the PSOE than the literature has tended to assume. This thesis confirms what Pilar Ortuño Anaya has pointed out about the important solidarity of the

British Labour Movement with the Spanish Socialists. Labour supported the PSOE morally and economically through the SDDC, and this support was based on international Socialist solidarity. Moreover, Labour played an important role in campaigning nationally and internationally against the entry of Spain into the EEC while the country was a dictatorship. However, although this support was important in many senses (morally and materially), it was not especially influential in the PSOE at the political or ideological level during the transition to democracy. Furthermore, this thesis shows that the PSOE felt somehow unhappy with the limited support provided by the British.

The low key involvement of British Labour in Spain through the PSOE is rather surprising because they were in Government at that time. Although the historiography has shown that the Labour government between 1964 and 1970 had followed a moderate stance towards Spain, it could have been expected that once Franco died they would have engaged more deeply in the transition to democracy. However, several factors account for the relatively low key role played by the British in Spain and with regards to the PSOE. Firstly, in their relations with Spain, the British had always the issue of Gibraltar present. They did not want to upset the Spanish Government, and in consequence, they tried to interfere as little as necessary in Spain. Secondly, the fact that the transition to democracy in Spain developed in relative peace, without important turnarounds, made it unnecessary for the British to get more deeply involved in the Spanish issue. Thirdly, the British tended to be gentle and not too invasive in their relations with third parties, and their attempts to push the events in their preferred direction were very subtle. This was the case in the attempt of the British government to bring together all the Spanish Socialist parties, or in their attempt to persuade the Socialists not to link their future to the Communists. Finally, although an alliance between Socialists and Communists was inconceivable for the British, they were very flexible and understanding with regards to the tactics chosen by the PSOE.

And yet, the role played by the BLP within the SI, the moral and economic support provided by the rank and file of the party, the public visibility granted to the PSOE through public statements and inviting the Socialist leader González to deliver a speech at the BLP annual Conference in Blackpool in 1976 (as well as Michael Foot's attendance at the Congress of PSOE in Madrid), were important gestures of support for the PSOE. This support, together with that the support that other parties in the SI provided the Spanish Socialists, contributed making the PSOE the biggest party in the Spanish Left in very short time.

Beyond the specific cases of the PS and the PSOE, my thesis also provides an interesting insight into the relations between Socialists and Communists at the crucial moment of the mid- 1970s, when the international economic crisis and the process of Cold War détente opened possibilities for greater collaboration, but also competition, within the Western European Left. The relations between Socialists and Communists in the South of Europe oscillated between open confrontation and competitive collaboration. However, what this statement actually reveals, is that more research on the relations between Western European Socialists and Communists is needed. This was a central issue in the ideological development of the Socialist parties of Southern Europe, but we know almost nothing about the relations between the PSOE and the PCE or between the PS and the PCP in the 1970s. A deeper knowledge of this issue will help us to more accurately assess the ideological development of these parties, their real intentions towards each other, their tactics and strategies in their struggle for being the hegemonic force in the Left as well as for advancing towards Socialism in countries that belonged geo-strategically to the West, and the different stances on this collaboration held by each party.

Furthermore, this thesis argues that the Socialist parties of the Iberian Peninsula became a battlefield for two different conceptions of democratic Socialism that existed among the parties of the SI. The first was Social Democracy, which had a gradualist approach to socio-economic change and did not attempt to overthrow Capitalism. This model was against collaboration with the Communist parties, and committed to liberal democracy and Atlanticism. The second was Southern European Socialism, in theory committed to overthrowing Capitalism. It was in favour of the union of all the forces of the Left as a way of advancing towards Socialism, and it conceived Socialism in freedom (a combination that would be facilitated by the implementation of self-management). They did not renounce democracy; furthermore, they conceived it in a wider sense than the Social Democrats, which means that they advocated a combination of representative democracy and grassroots democracy. They were ambiguous regarding foreign policy, but in general they were critical of NATO and the international role of the US, and they sought to transform the EC in a Socialist sense.

Considering the fundamental ideological disagreements between these two tendencies, it is possible to argue that the Social Democratic trend was imposed over the Southern European Socialist one in the Iberian Peninsula. This argument is further strengthened if we take into

account that the PSOE would abandon Marxism in 1979, and that the PS would carry out a moderate policy in government after 1976. However, some rhetorical elements of the latter trend persisted and reappeared in several occasions in Spain and Portugal.

Taking this argument into account, this thesis opens new perspectives for future research. If the Iberian Socialists were influenced by the PSF, and only later were they pushed in a more moderate direction by the European Social Democrats, and if some elements of their radical rhetoric persisted once democracy arrived to the Iberian Peninsula, how did the PSOE and the PS justify their ideological change, and what kind of rhetorical strategies did they use after democracy was established in their countries? We already know that there was internal resistance to the so-called Social Democratisation of the PSOE and the PS in the late 1970s, and that after 1977 the internal dynamics of the newborn democracies in Spain and Portugal are perhaps more important for understanding the ideological change of these parties than the international ones. However, a question emerges from this thesis: to what extent did the ideas defended by the French Socialists, and to a great degree adopted by the PSOE and the PS in early 1970s, persist or become modified or adapted to the new reality by the Iberian parties? Did the idea of the union of the Left completely disappear from the Socialist discourse, or was it occasionally used with tactical purposes? In which terms the discussion on the relations between Socialists and Communists evolved in the Iberian Peninsula?⁹⁹⁰

Finally, at the international level, this thesis opens a new perspective for further research on some crucial issues for the European Socialists in the late 1970s, such as the new economic crisis of 1979 and the rise of neoliberalism, the shift of the Socialist governments from the North to the South of Europe, the revival of the Cold War, and the greater role of the elected European Parliament in the EC. Did these events in any way reopen the conflict between the two ideological trends of Western European Socialism underlined in this thesis?

⁹⁹⁰ This is a relevant question as when the last pages of this thesis were written there was a governmental coalition in Portugal between the PS, the PCP and a Leftist party called *Bloco de Esquerda*, for the first time since the Revolution. Also in Spain the PSOE was negotiating a possible Leftist governmental coalition with *Izquierda Unida* and *Podemos*.

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