P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

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JUAN CARLOS' CHALLENGE

The death of Generalissimo Francisco Franco and the coronation of King Juan Carlos mark the end of an era in Spain and present an awesome challenge to the 37-year-old monarch to continue the political stability and the growing economic prosperity that have marked the reign of Spain's uncrowned ruler during the last almost-40 years.

The master Communist Lenin was reported to have said that, after Russia, Spain would be the next Soviet. During the 1930s, the Spanish Communists tried to carry out his prediction. They captured control of the Spanish government. They closed the relig ious schools, brought the clergy under state control, stole land from the property-owners, and began a campaign of terror against all who opposed Communism.

Calling themselves the Loyalists, the Communists seized control of the Spanish gold supply in 1936, then the fifth largest in the world. Under direct orders from Stalin, Soviet troops packed 600 tons of gold bars into 7,900 crates, loaded them at night onto four Soviet ships, and sent them to Russia.

The Soviets recognized Spain as a battleground to test both their ideas and their weapons, and they used their resources to bring comrades from all over the world to fight for Communism in Spain. Tito came from Yugoslavia, Togliatti from Italy, many naive young men from the United States, and George Orwell from England.

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Disillusioned by the reality of Communism, Orwell later wrote two of the most effective anti-Communist books ever published, Animal and 1984.

Three bloody years and one million lives later, Franco and the Spanish Nationalists defeated the Communists. It was the only war the Reds have lost in 40 years. The importance to the United States of this victory can hardly be overestimated.

If the Communists had won in Spain, they would have controlled both ends of ihe Mediterranean and converted it into another Red Sea. Instead of our having valuable air and naval bases in Spain for the protection of our Navy and our allies, the Russians would be using those strategic bases gainst us.

During World War II, Sweden permitted German troops to cross Swedish territory to and from occupied Norway. When Hitler made the same request of Spain, Franco turned him down. Had Franco permitted this, it might have resulted in the destruction of the U.S. Army in North Africa. Instead, Franco permitted American soldiers to construct radio beacons in Spain to guide American planes flying from British bases to African bases.

Now the Communists want revenge. They are trying to create the civil disorder in which Communism sprouts. They are demanding that all Communist criminals be released from Spanish jails and that the government be made democratic enough to accommodate Communists and pro-Communists. A good look at the present disaster in Portugal should quickly convince King Juan Carlos of the folly of making any concessions to the Communists. There is no way to appease the Communists short of total surrender.

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