Forgetting Mister Marshall: The Re-Emergence of Spanish-American Relations in the Post-War Era

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Chapter 1
On the Eve of the Pact: The Situation in 1953

On June 5th, 1947, speaking at Harvard University’s Commencement, Secretary of State George C. Marshall announced a European Recovery Program that became known as the Marshall Plan. Although the countries of Central Europe and the Soviet Union were originally invited to participate, Spain, the last remaining country whose government had supported the fascists, was excluded. The ERP or Marshall Plan seemed to offer a new beginning to European countries devastated by the Second World War, but not those, like Spain, devastated by civil war and complicity with Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini.

While rumors about who would participate widely circulated in Spain, the 1953 film, “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” [“Welcome, Mr. Marshall!”] theaters, attempting to reveal the nature of the confusion. The film opens in Villar del Río, a small village in Castile, which exudes the qualities of a typical rural pueblo. People go their usual ways when a government official announces that a delegation of Americans is about to arrive. They instruct the villagers to welcome the American visitors by dressing up as Andalusians, with the men in tight breaches, round cordobes hats, and flat shoes and the women in Flamenco dresses and high heels. Scrambling to meet these ridiculous expectations with little time and less money, the villagers transform sleepy Villar del Río into a faux Andalusian pueblo with fake movie set-like storefronts, expansive banners, and expensive clothing. They even devise a list of gifts that each villager would request from the Americans. On the eve of their arrival, the villagers dream of their American visitors. The local priest, Don Cosme, who earlier warns of the decadence and sinful nature of the Americans, faces opposition from the House Committee of Un-American Activities and penitents doubling as the Ku Klux Klan. Don Luis, the town's penniless aristocrat, relives the adventures of his ancestor, an alleged Conquistador, who then begins to be cooked alive by the natives.
The town's bumbling mayor, Don Pablo, dreams of the Wild West, envisioning himself as a sheriff who incites a duel to get the girl. Finally, León, a tenant farmer, dreams of a tractor for his family that American pilots dressed as the Three Kings would bring them. With the long anticipated arrival of the Americans, all the villagers enthusiastically sing and cheer, welcoming them as the motorcade of black sedans quickly departs. At this moment, dejection permeates the crowd. Normal life resumes as the promise of an American miracle subsides and Villar del Río returns to its sleepy routine.

Directed by esteemed Spanish filmmaker Luis García Berlanga, “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” projects the charm and humor of satire, while shrewdly criticizing both the Spanish and American governments of the post-war period.¹ The film began production as a vehicle for the flamenco singer, Lolita Sevilla, who appropriately plays a famous flamenco singer in the movie. The fledgling production company the Industrial Cinematic Union (Uninci) outlined these parameters for the movie. Formed in 1949, the company produced a single film before “¡Bienvenido!,” Cuentos de la Alhambra.² Those participating in the company included various members of the underground Spanish Communist Party (PCE) like Ricardo Sanchez Mayas, who invited Berlanga to join the company, and Juan Antonio Bardem, Berlanga's fellow classmate in the Institute of Cinematic Investigation and Experience (IIEC) and collaborator on the screenplay.³ Plagued by financial problems, Berlanga and Bardem worked for stock in the company and a little cash. Though Bardem intended on directing “¡Bienvenido!,” Uninci ousted him when he attempted to sell off his company stocks to use the money he earned while working on the film.⁴

Despite numerous difficulties during production, Berlanga took over the film's direction and

² Alicia Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana: Historia de Uninci, una productora cinematográfica española bajo el franquismo [From “Welcome Mr. Marshall!” to Viridiana: History of Uninci, a Spanish cinematic producer under the Franco regime] (Madrid: Egeda, 2006), 120.
³ Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana, 155-156.
⁴ Peter Besas, Behind the Spanish Lens: Spanish Cinema under Fascism and Democracy (Denver: Arden Press, 1985), 36.
crafted an immensely popular film among Spanish audiences, garnering enough praise to gain entry to the 1953 Cannes Film Festival. However, despite the movie's success in Spain, the Americans present at the festival heavily criticized “¡Bienvenido!” to the extent that one jury member, Edward G. Robinson, who was under threat from Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee, actively worked toward barring the movie's screening.\(^5\) Despite this, Berlanga’s entry received a Special Mention and both Berlanga and Bardem found themselves catapulted to fame.

“¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” arrived at a pivotal time in Spanish-American relations.

On September 26\(^{th}\), 1953, Spain and the United States signed the Pact of Madrid, the first series of agreements between the two countries after Generalissimo Francisco Franco y Bahamonde and the Nationalists won the Spanish Civil War in 1939. The two countries signed the treaty five months after the Cannes Festival and demonstrated how little the two countries knew about one another. While many in the Francoist regime wanted American aid, many did not. Rumors about American largesse circulated widely, but few knew what it might entail.

“¡Bienvenido!” highlighted Spain’s poverty and the hopes for rescue from the European Recovery Program, commonly known as the Marshall Plan. Berlanga used comedy to show how isolated from Europe and the U.S. most of the Spanish population remained and how many people hoped to be rescued. One aspect of Berlanga’s film revealed Spain’s sense of humiliation at its ostracism from Europe and the United States. After Franco defeated the Republican forces, Spain, which sent a single so-called Blue Division to fight along with the Nazis on the Eastern Front, cautiously aligned itself with the Axis. But fascist aid from Hitler and Mussolini diminished considerably as Spain scrambled to re-align with the future victors of World War II.

At the Potsdam Conference from July 16\(^{th}\) to August 2\(^{nd}\), 1945, the General Secretary of the Communist Party Joseph Stalin, U.S. President Harry S. Truman, and British Prime Ministers Winston

\(^5\) Besas, Spanish Lens, 38.
Churchill and Clement Attlee condemned the Francoist regime, the last repressive government in Europe connected to the Axis. The various meetings in San Francisco and Dumbarton Oaks that shaped the United Nations Charter and established the United Nations excluded Spain. In 1946, the United Nations even decreed sanctions against the Spanish state. With its refusal to acknowledge Spain as part of Western Europe, the Marshall Plan subsequently became only the latest action against Franco. “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” perfectly captures the popular sentiments that these incidents provoked amidst a highly repressive regime.

How could a film with such subversive content circumvent the notoriously strict censors of the Spanish film industry and actually elicit praise from officials? Kathleen M. Vernon, an Associate Professor of Hispanic Languages and Literature at Stony Brook University, suggests that the film was among many that implemented transcultural characteristics, harnessing “the escapist value of Hollywood genre pictures into a form of strategic leverage that served to liberate both films and filmmakers from the constraints of Spanish commercial cinema's industrial and cultural apparatus.”

But this cannot be the case since this is calling Spanish censors naive. They were actually quite perceptive since until 1951, films like “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” seldom passed censorship.

A glance at Berlanga's filmography reflects how Spanish censorship developed during the 1950s. Berlanga's first collaborative project with Bardem, Esa pareja feliz, [That Happy Couple] was released after “¡Bienvenido!”s success despite being filmed in 1951. The film featured a couple crushed by their harsh lives under the Franco regime, but still able to find solace in popular entertainment. Due to the censors' refusal to screen a bleak outlook on the realities of unemployment in Spain, only “¡Bienvenido!”s popularity ensured its later release two years later. Filmed a decade later, El Verdugo [The Executioner], starred José Isbert, the mayor of “¡Bienvenido!” as the title character and became a black comedy due to the main character's constant proximity to death. Both films, shot

respectively before and after “¡Bienvenido!” emerged in different periods of Spanish censorship which greatly affected whether they could actually reach an audience.

1951 marked a pivotal time for Spanish film. Peter Besas, a Madrid correspondent for Variety, clarified this as he wrote the first prominent American account of both the film itself and Spanish cinema under Franco. On July 9th, 1951, the Francoist state issued a decree-law that combined the offices of the Subsecretary of Popular Education and the Director General of Tourism to form the Ministry of Information and Tourism, responsible for not only propaganda, but also for the careful monitoring and censorship of all media. The first Director General of Cinema, José María García Escudero, controlled cinema censorship within this body. Besas explains that he held his position only for a short time due to his promotion of Surcos [Furrows], a film with a very realistic tone that sharply criticized Catholic and Nationalist propaganda-filled movies that were the norm in Francoist Spain.

The movie, whose plot depicted a rural family’s arrival in Madrid and later, their rejection of the pressures and corrupting influences of that city, actually exposed the social realities of an isolated, impoverished Spain. The film’s director, Falangist Jose Antonio Nieves Conde, drew inspiration from Italian Neo-Realist films, as Bardem and Berlanga would later do in crafting the impoverished realities found in “¡Bienvenido!”

Surcos's creation attested to the emergence of “liberal” Falangists with whom Uninci acquainted themselves who were distancing themselves from the party's traditional right-wing practices of the 1940s. This demonstrated a rejection of earlier films that exaggerated Spain’s past and promoted the ideological infallibility of the regime and Spain, especially considering the director’s identity as a Falangist. But, Nieves Conde represented a small minority since many including Franco and Admiral

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10. Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana, 122.
11. Besas, Spanish Lens, 32.
Luis Carrero Blanco opposed García Escudero's endorsement of the film.

Despite opposition against his efforts to promote *Surcos*, the Director General found a legal loophole to circumvent their criticism. In 1944, with the Spanish film industry languishing along with the rest of the economy, the Falange Española Tradicionalista de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista's Vice-Secretary of Popular Education and future Minister of Information and Tourism, Gabriel Arias-Salgado established the “national interest” category for nationalist films that promoted the Franco regime. The category entitled them to the state recompensating 50% of their production costs, while simultaneously providing full rights to highly coveted import licenses. García Escudero manipulated this to the movie's advantage, granting “Surcos” the “national interest” category. However, this caused a major scandal since he passed over the most prominent production company in Spain, Cifesa's “Alba de América,” a far more traditional film which held both Carrero Blanco and Franco's blessing. Cifesa filed a lawsuit petitioning for the film's “national interest” category, forcing García Escudero's resignation several months later. But, the ousted Director General undoubtedly left his mark, helping to facilitate a new movement that inspired Spanish filmmakers like Berlanga and Bardem to embrace Spanish realities, rather than bury them under layers of Catholic fervor and Nationalist propaganda.

“¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” wore the mantle of Spanish propaganda in order to successfully dodge the censors. Uninci made the film for the purpose of promoting Lolita Sevilla, but also of promoting a distinctly Spanish work which, like *Surcos*, could gain the “national interest” category. In her interviews with founding members of Uninci and Berlanga, Cinema History doctorate Alicia Salvador Marañón details a long fight to obtain the “national interest” category for “¡Bienvenido!” Uninci member Joaquin Reig was denied in these attempts since it “would be able to

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12 B.O.E. Order from June 15, 1944, n. 175, June 23, 1944.
13 B.O.E., Order from June 15, 1944.
14 Besas, *Spanish Film*, 33.
15 Besas, *Spanish Film*, 33.
touch on international political aspects” due to Berlanga's use of American culture.\textsuperscript{16} But, when “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” became a major contender in Cannes, thus increasing the film's value for Spain, they reconsidered their position, granting the movie “national interest” status to authorize its representation at the film festival.\textsuperscript{17} Despite the partial censorship of the script submitted for the state's approval in May 1952, the July of that year witnessed another overhaul of Spanish cinema's regulations.\textsuperscript{18} Besides redefining film categories with the “national interest” category and its benefits still intact, the ministerial order actually gave some concessions to production companies that received funding from foreign businesses.\textsuperscript{19} This reflected on the shift away from “national autarchy,” which dominated Spain's economic situation in the latter half of the 1940s.

The Franco regime's policy of self-sufficiency dissolved as Spain began to rejoin the international community. At the end of 1950, the United Nations allowed diplomatic relations between member states and Spain to resume. By 1952, Spain began negotiating base agreements for aid from the United States. National autarchy began losing its appeal to the Francoist officials, even in Spanish cinema. Thus, the recognition of international interest in “¡Bienvenido!” elicited far less scrutiny than it would prior to the renewal of Spain's international relations. By using popular Spanish perspective to convey Spain's sentiments toward the rest of the world, “¡Bienvenido!” passed censors focusing on morally offensive, overtly subversive content. They approved the film since they could not recognize the filmmaker's true intent behind its seeming glorification of Franco's image of a conservative, Catholic, imperialist Spain.

Throughout the movie, Berlanga carefully creates a facade of conservatism, while actually crafting a very self-reflexive film. The director focuses the audience's attention on the contradictions of

\textsuperscript{16} Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana, 177. Trans. “podría rozar aspectos políticos internacionales.”

\textsuperscript{17} Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana, 180-181.

\textsuperscript{18} Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana, 168.

\textsuperscript{19} B.O.E., Order from July 16, 1952, n. 205, July 23, 1952.
poverty and moral authority they experienced in their daily lives, creating very subtle irony as he undermines these values.\textsuperscript{20} His use of an omnipotent narrator who stops the film to give himself additional time to single out and describe characters helped present the film as a fable rather than an account of current events. Steven Marsh, Professor of Film and Spanish Cultural Studies at the University of South Carolina, explores this, arguing that the narrator’s jokes provoked scathing accusations from post-Franco critics that the film promoted a right-wing position. But, Marsh counters that, to the contrary, the narrator’s use of irony about all the authority figures, including the priest and the bus driver, Jenaro, undermines Francoist values.\textsuperscript{21} Through cinema, Berlanga erodes the power of authority figures throughout “¡Bienvenido!” The film ridicules the regime’s bureaucratic middlemen who relay orders from above announcing the arrival of the Americans. They know nothing about Villar del Río or the poverty of its inhabitants when they tell them to present the village's non-existent industrial achievements to the visitors. With the absence of industry in the village, they are told to instead perform flamenco songs and dances, playing on stereotypes. The scene also ridicules American ignorance about Spain. Berlanga depicts a screening of “Newsreels and Documentaries” (No-Do), the propagandistic state-controlled newsreel, mandatorily screened before all movies at the cinema. This further establishes how the Franco regime remained out-of-touch. The reel bombards the collective imagination of Villar del Río with panoramic shots of an idyllic Italy, vastly improved by Marshall Plan aid. This starkly contrasts with the newsreel's triumphant Francoist slogan, “The entire world is within the grasp of all Spaniards!”\textsuperscript{22} “No-Do” plainly presents a Spain capable of obtaining dominance and greatness under Franco. But, this view is narrow and arrogant, only serving to further encourage Spain’s isolation from the world. Berlanga recognized the failures of this line of argument and thus

\textsuperscript{20} Paul Newell Campbell's analysis of Ingmar Berman's \textit{Persona} provides further insight into the concept of self-reflexive films and how they create satire by including the observer and playing on their prior knowledge.


\textsuperscript{22} Marsh, \textit{Popular Spanish Film}, 115. Trans. “¡El mundo entero el alcance de todos los españoles!”
used this scene to expose this problematic situation.

The transformation of Villar del Río into an Andalusian pueblo occurs because the Francoist authorities think that the Americans do not understand Spain. They hope that the Americans will be enlightened humanitarians, but they think that they must entertain them with folkloric rituals in order to get their aid. Manolo, the flamenco singer Carmen Vargas's manager, views himself as a credible authority on America since he briefly lived in Boston. Furthermore, during the dress rehearsal for the ceremony to greet the Americans, he impersonates Secretary of State George C. Marshall. The villagers' endorsement of Manolo as an expert on American affairs testifies to how isolated they really are. Don Cosme, the village priest, represents the traditional Catholic values the Francoist regime upheld. Cosme promotes simplicity and morality, continually denouncing the Americans as sinful and decadent with exclamations that any aid they offer will defile and debase Spanish morals. When the schoolteacher, Eloisa, lists the great economic achievements of the United States, the priest interrupts her and argues that even if the U.S. is economically wealthy, it is culturally deprived. He thinks that its cultural diversity, especially the numerous American Protestants, Chinese, blacks, and atheists (or those who believe in “nada”), deprive the U.S. of greatness. Don Luis, who represents Spain’s continued imperial ambitions, claims that Indians devoured his Conquistador ancestor, and therefore that all Americans north or south are savages. The intolerance and narrow-mindedness both protagonists exhibit make them into comically backward figures, undermining their authority.

The dream sequences derive much inspiration from different film genres and use this to explore and subsequently deconstruct the worship and fear of America and the Franco regime. Don Cosme’s nightmare includes a parade of hooded penitents who become Ku Klux Klan members holding the priest captive. Next, men in a darkly lit room interrogate him as a torturer might in film noir. At Don Cosme’s ensuing trial, the Committee of Un-American Activities condemns him for his criticism of the
United States. The priest imagines the committee as being akin to the Spanish Inquisition with the appropriate garments of the judge and the penitents. Berlanga subtly uses an arrow as the Committee's emblem, mimicking the bundle of arrows that symbolized the fascist FET-JONS, the sole legal party in Spain. Don Luis, hearkening back to his earlier words on the matter, dreams of the prestigious life of his ancestor. By also including his ancestor's end, being boiled and eaten by Indians, Berlanga unabashedly pokes fun at Spain's failed aspirations for a global empire, as well as Franco and the military's desire to revive imperial ambitions in Gibraltar and French Morocco. Meanwhile, Don Pablo indulges himself in a Wild West fantasy, fulfilling the role of the town's sheriff.

The all Spanish cast wears Western clothing and reveals stereotypical American habits of gambling, drinking, spitting randomly, and generally acting macho. Pablo's duel against the outsider Manolo, now depicted as an outlaw, demonstrates that local concerns dominate the consciousness of the villagers. Thus, the isolation of Villar del Rio becomes comparable to that of a barren town of the Old West. The Caudillo may cry for national unity, but Juan, the farmer, like other rural people in Spain, dreams of tractors. Portraying American pilots as the Three Kings, one of whom is dressed like Santa Claus, demonstrates how early symbols of acquisitiveness began to be meshed.

Berlanga suggests that exposure to American and Spanish cinema influenced the dreams of these characters. Don Cosme’s dream combines aspects of Hollywood film noir and religious films common before the 1950s. Don Luis dreams up a parody of a Spanish historical epic that exaggerated past events of Spanish glory. Don Pablo dreams of a Wild West scenario that could occur in any American film.

León’s dream is different in the sense that it seems to be directly influenced by socialist realist film depicting a bright future rather than focusing on a grim reality in the present. This genre predominated within the Soviet Union, which indicates that Leon could never have dreamed about this

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unless he saw one such film in Spain. This was impossible. Due to censorship restraints and the antagonisms between the two countries, Spaniards could never have seen a movie by filmmakers like Ivan A. Py'rov, a director who specialized in rural Stalinist comedies, or Alexander Medvedkin, a satirist, in a Spanish theater. But the existence of this dream sequence suggests that Berlanga or at least Bardem, the main scriptwriter, did see such films and drew inspiration from them. Since the censors missed this connection to Soviet cinema, this suggests the censors were not film savvy, though such knowledge would be invaluable in spotting subversive material. This situation implies that a form of transcultural exchange, different from what Kathleen Vernon suggests, ensured the film’s “liberation” from the constraints of censorship. The censors could not identify León’s dream as a reference to Soviet cinema, thus demonstrating that they focused their attention on specifically Spanish conditions and knew very little about film style. “¡Bienvenido!”'s ability to reference outside film and other film styles epitomizes actor Paul Allen Campbell's exploration of a reflexive cinema which involves the audience and draws on what they know. Berlanga's use of the Western and film noir, which many in Spain witnessed regularly in theaters, undeniably succeeds in this regard.

“¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” defined the Spanish situation in 1953. Caught between possible economic dependency on the U.S. that accepting financial aid might entail and the possibility of total economic collapse, Spain tried to court the U.S. By centering his film's plot on Spain's humiliating ostracism six years earlier, Berlanga demonstrated that the trauma still existed. In the midst of the McCarthy Period in the U.S. and the continued repression in Spain, Berlanga unleashed ridicule of both Franco and the United States, referencing this dark time for Spaniards. “¡Bienvenido, Mister

Marshall!” broke through their facades and exposed the poverty of Spain, the self-deception of its people, and the repressiveness and self-interest of the United States. Indeed, the preceding decade laid the foundations for both “¡Bienvenido!” and the Spanish-American Pact of Madrid of 1953 as Spain and America used propaganda to bolster their respective reputations to an international audience.
Spain's connections to the Third Reich and Mussolini's Italy represented the most damning legacy of Francisco Franco’s connection to European fascism. To hide evidence of their involvement posed an impossible task, especially in the case of the widely publicized Luftwaffe bombing of Guernica, located in the Basque Country. Many of Spain's policies immediately after the Nationalists seized power only upset the situation further as World War II broke out. At this time, Nazi Germany heavily influenced Spain in several aspects, including cinema. Franco's brother-in-law, Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ramón Serrano Súñer, firmly supported the Nazis and wanted Spain to ally themselves with the Axis Powers. In *Behind the Spanish Lens*, Variety's Madrid correspondent Peter Besas explained that Heinrich Himmler, head of the Gestapo, visited Madrid that same month to initiate cooperation between the Spanish police and the German Gestapo. Germany greatly influenced Spanish cinema as well, discouraging the production of British films. Spanish cinema historian Román Gubern claimed that German interests soon extended into Spanish companies including the newspaper “Informaciones, Radio Valladolid, the Alianza Cinematográfica Española film distribution company, and the Muñoz Seca movie house.” This was only a single facet of German interests infused into a full spectrum of Spanish businesses.

Policy makers of the Falange, especially Minister of Foreign Affairs Serrano Súñer cultivated this connection between the Nazis and the Franco government. As he shaped Spanish foreign policy in the early war years of the Francoist regime, the Minister favored an alliance with the Nazis. The Franco

29 Gubern, *Un cine para el cadalso*, 43.
government emphasized their debt of gratitude to fascists since their aid ultimately won the day for the
Nationalists during the Civil War. Though Spain initially declared neutrality when Hitler invaded
Poland, this quickly shifted to a policy of “non-belligerence” with the invasion of France in 1940.30
Hitler's early successes, especially in 1940, made supporting the Nazis extremely tempting for Franco.
However, outright hostility would be a significant gamble if Hitler's plans collapsed. In his biography
of Franco, Falangist Luis de Galinsoga, like many supporters of the regime, looked back at the Caudillo
as someone who firmly stood his ground against German pressure.31 In fact, as future chapters will
explore, future propaganda efforts to re-establish Spain's prestige persistently insisted on Franco and
Spain's innocence during the war.

Allying with the Germans could potentially aid Franco and the Falange in achieving the
regime's imperial aims. The American Consul General in Madrid in 1943 Willard L. Beaulac insisted
that if Germany invaded Gibraltar and took the Spanish route to North Africa, the Nazis could secure
Morocco for Franco. Hence, he reasoned that Spain’s policies centered on taking minimal risks due to
the fragile nature of the country’s political and economic infrastructure following the Spanish Civil
War.32 This course of action seems most plausible, especially considering the extent of Franco's dreams
of restoring Spain's empire. His aspirations entailed wanting to regain control of Gibraltar, which Great
Britain controlled since the 1704 War of Spanish Succession. Re-conquering this territory meant
erasing Spain's past humiliations in earlier wars. Besides Great Britain, Spain also contended with
France over matters of empire. Spain's 1940 declaration of Tangier, formerly an international zone, as a
Spanish protectorate and Franco's desire to take the French portion of Morocco incensed France.
Indeed, this unstable intersection of territorial desires coupled with Spain's sympathies toward
Germany incited the Western Allies' outrage with Franco's regime.

31 Luis de Galinsoga, *Centinela del occidente* [Sentinel of the West] (Barcelona: Editorial AHR, 1956), 355-359.
The negative view of Spain only worsened as “non-belligerence” gave way to actual aggression against the Soviet Union. Franco's strongly anti-communist stance pitted Spain against the Soviets since the Spanish Civil War. But, when World War II began, Franco's relationship with the Fuhrer was actually an obstacle to Spanish aspirations to destroy the communists. Between August 1939 and June 1941, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact maintained peaceful relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. When the Nazis invaded Russia, breaking the Pact, Spain now had an opportunity to finish what they started in the civil war and strike at the heart of communism. When Hitler attempted to get Franco to supply troops to fight on the Eastern Front, Franco and Serrano Súñer were eager to send support. That same year, he deployed a volunteer Blue Division [División Azul] and the Salvador Blue Squadron (an air squadron). International Affairs advisor Gerald R. Kleinfeld and former diplomat Lewis A. Tambs consulted diary accounts and interviewed various ex-combatants and even Serrano Súñer to devise the Spanish perspective at home and on the Eastern Front.

The authors found that the domestic reaction in Spain was ecstatic. At the headquarters of the Falange, Serrano Súñer blamed Russia for the Civil War and demanded communism's annihilation before a varied crowd of university students and elderly Spaniards.\(^{33}\) The crowd was exuberant. Serrano Súñer even saw off the volunteer soldiers, calling for both the destruction of communism in Russia and reparation for the Axis Powers for their aid in the Civil War.\(^{34}\) The Wehrmacht assigned the Blue Division as the 250 Infantry Division and trained the volunteers.\(^{35}\) Their leader, General Agustín Muñoz Grandes, personified an enthusiastic desire to prove Spain's worth and defend its honor by defeating the Reds. In the defense of the Russian city Khutny, his conversation with Lieutenant Victor Jimenez demonstrated this determination as he declared in the face of a Russian artillery barrage, “Don't forget

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\(^{34}\) Informaciones, July 14, 1941, 1. Quoted in Gerald R. Kleinfeld and Lewis A. Tambs, Hitler's Spanish Legion: The Blue Division in Russia (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), 24.

\(^{35}\) Gerald R. Kleinfeld and Lewis A. Tambs, Hitler's Spanish Legion: The Blue Division in Russia (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), 33 and 35.
for a moment that we are Spaniards, and that we have come here to demonstrate to Europe the worth of
the Spanish people." Though they sought to prove themselves, the volunteers saw little action until
their biggest contribution participating in the siege of Leningrad.

As the Third Reich's chances faded, so did Franco's willingness to maintain the Division. This
culminated in Serrano Súñer's dismissal from his post in September 1942. By the summer of 1943, the
American Ambassador Carlton J. Hayes and the British Ambassador Sir Samuel Hoare began
pressuring Franco for the Blue Division's withdrawal. Franco eventually complied, resulting in an
outright declaration of neutrality that October. This demonstrated a clear departure from alignment with
the Axis Powers. The Blue Division was now the Spanish Legion of Volunteers (LEV) and those who
chose to return were ignored due to a decision to keep the withdrawal quiet. Despite Spain's
aggression, Kleinfeld and Tambs assert that the division maintained far less demonizing conduct than
the Nazis in their war of annihilation. Furthermore, not all of them were mindless nationals and
Falangists. Uninci producer Ricardo Sanchez Mayas recalled that "¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!"
director Luis García Berlanga fought in the Blue Division, claiming to do so to prevent his father, a
former Republican politician, from being executed. But this did not matter to the public in the Allied
nations. While the Caudillo sent the Blue Division to prove Spain's mettle during the Reich's pinnacle,
it only further fed anti-fascist sentiment against Franco's regime. In the next chapter, I will consider
how Spain's offensive against the Soviet Union ultimately haunted Spain in the post-war years.

Amidst the anti-fascist fervor of World War II, Time magazine released a film in 1943 called
“Inside Fascist Spain, 1943,” as part of their March of Time documentary series. As the title suggests,
director M. Jean Pages sought to denounce Spain as fascist. As unlikely as it may seem, Serrano Súñer permitted the filming of the documentary. Of course, Spain's censors scrutinized the film, removing any footage deemed unfavorable to the regime. But, even with such censorship, the documentary's narration spins the available footage into a scathing critique of Spain, denouncing Franco and drawing correlations between Spain and the fascist states the Francoists supported. Despite the film's propagandistic role of spreading an anti-fascist message in support of the Allied war effort, the viewer perceives how the Allies attempted to destroy economic relations between Spain and Germany. The announcer promotes U.S. efforts to re-align Spanish interests with the Allies, namely through imports of food, oil, and fertilizer from the Allies and the exports of cork, minerals, and wine to the Allies. In addition, in November 1940, Great Britain secretly established bilateral trade with Spain, primarily as a means to wean it off Axis influence. The British government maintained such policies through the end of the war.43 But, as the Allies began to go on the offensive, they far more urgently needed Spain's cooperation. They needed a new method to appeal to the proud Caudillo.

In November 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent a direct letter to Franco ensuring the United States's friendship with Spain, but also informing the dictator of Allied intentions to invade North Africa. He concluded, “I believe that the Spanish Government and the Spanish people wish to maintain neutrality and to remain outside the war. Spain has nothing to fear from the United States.”44 I interpret this as Roosevelt pressuring Franco to stay aligned with the Allies, playing on the Caudillo's desire to be on the winning side of the war. Hence, views of Spain as a wayward child in need of guidance had already begun to arise. But, with the war turning away from the Nazis, Spain did not need

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many incentives to back away from its previous benefactors. The risks of joining the Axis far outweighed any benefits that the regime could obtain.

Spain's separation from the Axis was reflected in cinema at the time. Moving away from projecting the Alianza Cinematográfica Española's screenings of German UFA newsreels, the Franco regime favored the newsreels of the newly formed News and Documentaries (No-Do).\(^45\) Featured in “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!,” “No-Do” emphasized a Spanish nationalist, rather than pro-German, perspective on events carefully manipulated under the supervision of the state. During this time, Peter Besas cites a pronounced drop in German films screened in Madrid and a rapid increase in American films shown instead between 1940 and 1945, thus emphasizing Franco's shift in favor of the Allies.\(^46\) The Motion Picture Association of America blacklisted a major film production company, Cifesa, effectively banning its films from American markets since the company collaborated with Franco and dealt with the Nazis.\(^47\) As Spanish nationalism filled this gap left by pro-Nazi film, Suevia Films later replaced Cifesa as the dominant figure in Spanish cinema. Suevia launched several prominent actors and actresses into fame, including Carmen Sevilla, “¡Bienvenido!” actress Lolita Sevilla's mother.\(^48\) Without her mother's fame, promoting Lolita Sevilla would not have been a priority for Uninci when creating “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” The Spanish government supported this new movement as F.E.T.-J.O.N.S.'s Vice-Secretary of Popular Education Gabriel Arias-Salgado established the “national interest” category for nationalist films that promoted the Franco regime in 1944.\(^49\) While this provided massive benefits for producers, it encouraged the propagation of Franco's fantasy of a great Spain. Without Spain distancing itself from German influence, these developments would not have occurred.

After 1943, victory for the Axis Powers began to move far out of reach. Already prior to this,

\(^{45}\) Besas, *Spanish Lens*, 24-25.
\(^{46}\) Besas, *Spanish Lens*, 25.
\(^{48}\) Besas, *Spanish Lens*, 27.
\(^{49}\) B.O.E., Order from June 15, 1944, n. 175, June 23, 1944.
the Nazis began to move economic assets out of Germany. Ironically, due to their ambiguous status during the war, neutral countries like Switzerland and Spain gladly accepted this wave of German investments in various businesses. Of course, the Allies realized their efforts at crushing fascism could be completely undermined by the flight of Axis capital and personnel. The President under Executive Order 8389 could freeze any transactions between the U.S. and “blocked” countries, which included those that the Nazis influenced or occupied.\(^\text{50}\) The U.S.S.R., Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland maintained licenses that could bypass this as long as they blocked those who appeared on the Proclaimed List of Certain Blocked Nationals.\(^\text{51}\) Additionally, the Foreign Economic Administration handled operations to block Nazi assets, but largely failed due to other departments' lack of participation. The Allies soon recognized the need for neutrals to comply with these efforts.

In July 1944, U.N. member states held the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire to confront various financial difficulties plaguing the world, including the trafficking of fascist assets out of Europe. The Conference's Final Act summarized their agreements. Resolution VI outlined a plan for “uncovering, segregating, controlling, and making appropriate disposition of enemy assets” and “preventing the liquidation of property looted by the enemy, locating and tracing ownership and control of such looted property, and taking appropriate measures with a view to restoration to its lawful owners.”\(^\text{52}\) The conference called for “the Governments of neutral countries to take immediate measures” to prevent, expose, and halt the trafficking of these assets through their territories.\(^\text{53}\) This laid the groundwork for the Safehaven program. Following the conference, Secretary of State Cordell Hull communicated the resolution to all


\(^{51}\) U.S. Dept. of State, FRUS, 1943, 450.

\(^{52}\) United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference (Bretton Woods Conference), *Final Act* (London: 1944), Resolution VI.

\(^{53}\) U.N. Monetary and Financial Conference (Bretton Woods Conference), *Final Act*, VI.
American diplomatic missions abroad. Ambassadors began urging neutral countries, particularly Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey to comply with this endeavor. As the first neutral country to adhere to the Bretton Woods agreements, Switzerland reacted quickly, immediately freezing accounts with the Nazis.\(^54\) However, while many did collaborate with the Allies to confiscate fascist assets, a large percentage dragged their feet on officially accepting the act.

An analysis of Safehaven documents suggests that the Franco regime also resisted Allied attempts to confiscate Axis capital. After all, such efforts threatened Spanish autonomy with the powerful presence of the Allies in Spain. Besides Spain's near alliance with Germany at the start of war, perhaps the Allies found themselves biased against Spain due to Spanish proclivities toward the Germanic in Spain.\(^55\) While Italy served as a model for fascism, Nazi Germany represented a modern scientifically advanced society that the still highly agriculturally dependent society of Spain aspired to. In addition, Franco's resistance had provoked a harsh response with the FBI's investigation of the Spanish Embassy in Washington.\(^56\) But, Spain did comply in several cases. S.S. General Johann Bernhardt maintained considerable influence in Spain through the Industrial Finance Company (SOFINDUS). The organization maintained major mining operations in Spain and funneled non-military goods such as tungsten (known at the time as wolfram) into Germany for the war effort.\(^57\) The Allies knew that the company was Germany's official trading company in Spain since 1938 and

\(^{54}\) U.S Department of State.,“The Minister in Switzerland (Harrison) to the Secretary of State,” March 6, 1945, Concern of the United States over enemy attempts to secrete funds or other assets in neutral countries; implementation of the Safehaven program, FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, General: Political and Economic Matters, Volume II, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945, 860-861, http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1945v02 (accessed on March 17, 2012).


\(^{57}\) Frank G. Siscoe, Legal Attaché, Madrid to J. Edgar Hoover, Director, FBI, January 11, 1945, *The Safehaven Program*, ed. Robert E. Lester (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 2002-), microfilm, Reel 4, 0092-0094. Wolfram was an invaluable resource for refining metal and hence perfect for accelerating production for heavy industry, thus heavily prioritizing the need for the substance.
maintained its great influence through its subsidiaries. Only direct intervention from the Franco government could disrupt Sofindus's operations.

Spain required considerable pressure before actually cooperating with Safehaven policies, allowing several companies including Sofindus to empty their offices and go into hiding, but by 1945, Spain eventually complied. Spanish police helped crack down on companies linked to the German Embassy, among them Transportes Marión Motor Vehicles, which transported equipment for many of these firms. Furthermore, the Director of the Political Economy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emilio de Navasquez, coordinated with Safehaven operatives to freeze large quantities of German funds being deposited from suspect companies such as Sofindus into the Bank of Spain and the German embassy.

When the Allies left Spain open to attack after the war's end, it seemed that they overlooked this embodiment of Spanish cooperation that effectively countered Francoist proclivities during the earlier stages of combat. But, these documents suggest that Franco's resistance to Allied protocols caused delays which allowed Nazi assets to be leaked, thus further implicating Franco as he tried to move away from affiliation with the fascists. While several other neutrals including Salazar's dictatorship in Portugal resisted Safehaven and the calls for extraditing high-ranking Nazis, Franco's repatriation of several Germans including Bernhardt in 1946 did not help Spain's relationship with the Allies at all.

Spain's connections to Germany, while once a possible gateway toward achieving imperial ambitions in North Africa, now weighed down the country's international relations at the end of the World War. The Soviet Union not only survived Axis aggression, but actively turned the war against

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62 Payne, *Franco and Hitler*, 263.
Germany, eventually reaching Berlin. The communists effectively ensured their status as a superpower for the next four and a half decades. Of course, they never forgot the Blue Division and Spain's anti-communist forces. As international anti-communism increased, Spain's one salvation was that Franco's administration had consistently been anti-communist. This did not prevent outside perspectives from labeling the Franco regime as fascist. “Inside of Fascist Spain” perfectly encapsulates this viewpoint, with scenes depicting Falangism, inspired heavily by Italian Fascism. The documentary clearly correlates the Auxilio Social, an example of youth movements and socioeconomic machinations, with the Hitler Youth and other Nazi Party functionaries. However, the director, Pages, greatly exaggerates Franco's success in building a state all Spaniards blindly submitted to. While Franco attempted to build a type of Spanish fascism, he never achieved the type of mass mobilization of Germany and Italy. Though the Falangists desperately desired the Germanic model, the Franco regime amounted to a coalition government under authoritarian rule where the Catholic church and leading monarchists still maintained significant influence that the Caudillo needed to maintain his legitimacy.

Spain's problems in the ensuing years derived themselves from the complex and contradictory nature of the Francoist state. Movies like “Inside Fascist Spain, 1943” produced a simplified image of Spain that many found far easier to accept than one that reflected on the trauma of a civil war that Spain still could not recover from. Indeed, the Spanish economy suffered as the war's greatest casualty and often limited the government's action. While one may think imagery such as this documentary's footage of Republican prisons depicting their brutal “rehabilitation” confirms Spain's monstrous appearance, really Spain posed no significant threat to the international community. Franco's forces indeed committed acts of mass genocide during the civil war and persecuted Republicans years after the conflict's conclusion. But, despite this, the ease with which an individual can divide conflicts into
stories of good and evil, while extremely simple, creates problems. Spain became victimized due to this
since the country represented an ideological “bad guy” grouped in with Germany and Italy despite the
country's neutrality during the war. Hence, the world solely focused on the villain, Franco. As long as
the Caudillo maintained control, the so-called Spanish “fascist” state constituted the last threat of the
war. But this view utterly forsakes all of Spain for purely ideological reasons.

At the end of the Second World War, the stigma of even being associated with the Axis Powers
combined with the Spanish authoritarian government of Franco turned the international community
against Spain as Germany eventually surrendered. Spain faced massive hostility from the former Allies
who regarded Spain as one of Europe’s few remaining Fascist countries. Roosevelt's March 1945 letter
to U.S. Ambassador to Spain Norman Armour summarized this distrust, emphasizing that “we earnestly
hope that the time may soon come when Spain may assume the role and the responsibility which we
feel it should assume in the field of international cooperation and understanding.”

Due to Franco's unwillingness to come to terms with the political and economic realities of Spain, the country would
not fulfill this role until nearly a decade later. Although sociologists such as Juan Linz have argued
persuasively that Francisco Franco never succumbed to the Falange, the Spanish Fascist Party, but was
really a nationalist who manipulated monarchists, nationalists, fascists, and conservatives, the Western
Powers wanted nothing to do with him.

Luis García Berlanga realized this problem in “¡Bienvenidos, Mister Marshall!,” subtly
crediting this for the reason why the Americans passed over Villar del Río. The ensuing chapter will
focus on Spanish attempts to refurbish Spain's reputation amidst the huge decline in international
support, culminating in Spain's exclusion from the Marshall Plan.

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Chapter 3
The Spanish Question, the Marshall Plan, and the Road to National Autarchy

The victorious Allies became the architects of Europe's future. The conferences in Tehran in 1943 and Yalta in February 1945 initiated the designs for post-war Europe and Asia. Among these talks of recovery, “The Spanish Question” crept in. To the Allies, there were two Spains: The Spanish people and Francisco Franco's regime. The post-war conferences signified a desire to protect the former by denouncing and isolating the latter. The 1945 San Francisco Conference, while resulting in the formation of the UN Charter and the later establishment of the United Nations, also raised the complicated question of Spain’s status. Operating from Mexico, the Spanish Republican government-in-exile under acting President Álvaro de Albornoz opposed Spain's entry into the U.N. Prior to the conference on April 2nd of that year, the exiled Spanish Committee of Liberation, led by Álbornoz and prominent Republican Indalecio Prieto, submitted a memorandum emphasizing Spain's support for the Axis during World War II, its belligerence towards the initial proposal to create the United Nations, and the persistence of fascism under Franco. Spain was ultimately excluded from membership in the U.N. But, this did not end the question of what was to be done about the Franco regime.

When Joseph Stalin, Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill, and Clement Atlee met at Potsdam from July 16 to August 2nd, 1945, they criticized Franco's alignment with the Axis. On July 19th, Stalin's ministers submitted a proposal to the Allied foreign ministers attending the conference. They called for the U.N. “to break off all relations with the government of Franco” and “to render support to the democratic forces in Spain and to enable the Spanish people to establish such a regime as will respond to their will.” Later that day, Truman, Churchill, and Stalin discussed this proposal with “The Spanish

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Question.” Churchill opposed any action against the regime beyond exclusion from membership in the U.N. He quickly noted that though “His Majesty's government and past government have strong distaste for General Franco and the government of Spain,” Spain maintained valuable trade relations with the Allies and never attacked Great Britain or the United States. Though Truman also voiced his dislike of Franco, he similarly opposed intervention since such actions could cause another Spanish Civil War. Stalin contended with these views, declaring “Franco is gaining strength. He is encouraging Fascism elsewhere... We should not pass by this cancer.” Despite some difference in opinion, the Big Three unanimously favored the Spanish people over Franco. But, despite misgivings against the Franco regime, the Allies would not intervene in Spanish affairs. By the conference's end, they defended the decision to keep Spain out of the U.N., concluding that since Franco won the Civil War “with the support of the Axis Powers,” “it lacks the standing necessary to justify membership [in the United Nations].” The Allies barring Spain from U.N. membership caused alarm within Franco's administration.

Both the San Francisco and Potsdam Conferences incited some of the first cosmetic changes in the Franco regime. For the monarchists, the Falange became a liability. The link between the Falangists, especially those high up in Franco's administration, and the Axis made Spain highly visible as the last remaining fascist government. With the end of the conflict in sight, the Carlists, seeking the return to monarchy with the initial royal line, began to denounce the Falange. During the San Francisco Conference, the Carlists refused to make the fascist salute as the Falange did, advocating a

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70 The Carlists supported the original Austrian lineage started by Charles I in 1516, while the Alfonsists supported the French Bourbon lineage of Alfonso XIII, Spain's last king before the Spanish Second Republic.
traditional Catholic Spain without fascism. The Carlists deflected guilt for Spain's relations with the Axis onto the Falange. After VE-Day, May 8th, 1945, several weeks before the Potsdam Conference took place in July, José Luis de Arrese, Secretary General of the Falange, defended the success of the movement before the Falange Youth Front. During his speech, he told Falangist officials that acted out of self-interest to step down. Arrese believed that only those who believed in the Falangist ideology could rule Spain. He firmly upheld that adherence to core Falangist ideals would salvage both the party's and Spain's reputation. This willingness to at least feign reform extended beyond the Falange to Franco's administration.

Slightly more than a week after Arrese's announcement, as the Potsdam Conference began, the Caudillo withdrew some support from the Falange in favor of the monarchists. He promised the restoration of a “traditional” Spanish monarchy. To soften the blow, Franco pronounced that the monarch would remain under the supervision of the Falange with the dictator as regent. He followed up on this action almost immediately by having his Cabinet resign, including Arrese as the head of the Falange, and installed new members, including Alberto Martín Artajo as Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, Franco did not side with the monarchists; he appointed a staunch Falangist, Raimundo Fernández-Cuesta, as Minister of Justice, and fervent Catholics like Martín Artajo to fill the new cabinet. However, these alterations did little to change opinions regarding his regime's ties with fascism.

Some perceived this as Franco desperately clinging to power by turning to the monarchists, but the dictator simply wanted to apply a fresh new face for his regime to sever ties with the past and thus

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make Spain more appealing during the conference. Because France tried to portray Spain as free of fascism, he demonstrated that his regime was out of touch with reality. Berlanga mocked Spain's outlandish goals and schemes throughout “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” The officials who tell the villagers of the Americans' arrival lack any knowledge of Spain's true position in the international community. They believed that simply making the town and its people Andalusian would entrance the visitors into aiding Spain. But as with Franco's efforts, this did not work. In fact, Spain's situation only worsened in the ensuing months.

In October 1945, the Allies took control of Tangier from Spain. The Spanish government still tried to persuade the Allies that it was undergoing reform. Early that month, Franco's forces arrested Lieutenant General Alfredo Kindelán, a Senior War College Director and leader of the generals who bestowed the title of Generalissimo on Franco during the civil war. Rumors had circulated that he now planned a coup against Franco. Garfield and Lambs argued that among the generals rallying support for the Blue Division, Kindelán, who commanded the soldiers in Barcelona, was also pro-German. Within several weeks, Franco released the monarchist due to this pressure. But to the Allies, this was insignificant. Franco refused to back down from any challenges to his power. The Caudillo's hostile attitude further discouraged any sympathy towards Spain, especially from the U.N.

The United Nations opposed any accommodations with Franco. While the Caudillo maintained control, he threatened the lives of the Spanish people. At the end of 1945, Spanish exiles submitted a memorandum to the U.N. demanding that Spain be shunned until it removed Franco from power and permitted the exiles to return. As 1946 began and the United Nations met for its first General

79 Dana Adams Schmidt. “Blueprint to Oust Franco is Offered,” New York Times (1923-Current file), December 25, 1945,
Assembly, it tried to sort out who should be considered for future membership. The Soviet Union scrutinized Switzerland, Eire [Ireland], Sweden, Portugal, and Spain for doing business with both capitalists and fascists during the war. While other neutral nations, like Sweden and Ireland, delayed on complying with anti-Nazi initiatives like the Safehaven Program, they successfully petitioned for U.N membership.

Prior to the U.N. meetings, Portugal's long-reigning dictator, Professor António de Oliveira Salazar, attempted to shed his fascist skin by claiming to hold free elections. Though this was not very convincing, the British and American forces wanted to maintain air bases in the Azores and thus they were willing to make deals with Salazar.

The Soviet Union viewed Spain as a bigger threat than Portugal. Stalin himself stated at Potsdam that “Portugal's government arose from internal forces; Spain from foreign forces” emphasizing Spain's more concrete connection to the fascists. The country could not be included with other neutral countries without any significant leverage to counteract its fascist leanings.

By December 1946, the Soviet Union and the Republican government-in-exile successfully sealed Spain's fate for the next four years. The U.N. General Assembly declared that the Franco regime was fascist and that the government “gave very substantial aid to the enemy Powers,” citing Spain's aggression against Russia using “the Blue Infantry Division, the Spanish Legion of Volunteers, and the Salvador Air Squadron.” Beyond denying membership to Spain, the General Assembly recommended that “all Members of the United Nations immediately recall from Madrid their ambassadors and

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81 For more on Safehaven, see Chapter 2.
Ministers plenipotentiary accredited there."85 A United Nations vote of 34 nations in favor and 6 opposed officially broke diplomatic relations between the U.N.'s members and Spain.86 The results of this vote demonstrated the complete failure of Franco's regime to regain membership in the Western community. This presented a huge impediment when the U.S. might have included Spain in its pan to rebuild Europe.

By 1947, Europe urgently needed to recover. The United States realized the urgency for funding this endeavor. Thus, the State Department devised the European Recovery Program, commonly known as the Marshall Plan, to prevent Europe's economic and political collapse. But, right-wing politicians including Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, opposed the Plan.87 Allen Dulles, future CIA Director and brother of future Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, provided a contemporary perspective on opposition to the ERP. Conservatives focusing on domestic issues within the United States refused to accept the Plan. The same applied to Europe with individual countries squandering aid from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Dulles recognized that international cooperation was necessary for any significant progress.88

With Europe's infrastructure largely destroyed, the dire economic situation forced the nations to collaborate. Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs William L. Clayton and State Department Policy Planning Group leader George F. Kennan recognized the need to re-organize the division of labor, remove trade barriers, and facilitate trade as part of a global economic and political system.89 Furthermore, Undersecretary of State Dean G. Acheson advocated raising public awareness of

85 U.N. General Assembly, “Resolution 39 (1),” 64.
America's role in the burgeoning international community. On January 8th, 1948, the U.S. Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations discussed the future of the Marshall Plan. Secretary of State Marshall elaborated on the parameters of the Plan and how aid would contribute to their goals for rebuilding Europe. These hearings led to Congress's bipartisan support for the Marshall Plan.

But, the proceedings demonstrated that the United States excluded Spain from the ERP. When the floor was opened for questions, one senator, future Vice President Alben W. Barkley, commented, “I have in mind at least three [countries] which I am sure would have accepted [invitations for Marshall Plan aid]” to which Marshall replied, “You spoke of all the nations ‘without exceptions.’ Spain was not invited.” Indeed, up to this point, the committee members largely avoided the topic of Spain. Even Senator Barkley mentioned the subject very indirectly, cautiously avoiding the mention of any actual names. When Congress established the Marshall Plan's American agency, the Economic Cooperation Administration, Spain continued to be ignored. Spain's estrangement from the rest of Europe was incompatible with a long-term recovery plan that discouraged national self-interest and promoted international cooperation. The Francoists refused to accept that Franco and his relations with the fascists caused this breakdown. Their accusations of conspiracies against the Caudillo only further incriminated Spain.

Director Luis García Berlanga chose the Marshall Plan as the driving issue of the events in “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” Secretary Marshall's Plan might have enabled Spain to rebuild. Perhaps because of his membership in the Blue Division, Berlanga understood how despised Spain's association with Hitler might still be. Franco believed he could woo the Allies with an image of Spain as an Andalusian pueblo full of cordobés hats and flamenco song and dance. The failure of these efforts...

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completely undermined the dictator's reality of Spain as a peaceful, democratic nation threatened by communism.

“¡Bienvenido!” resembles a neo-realist film in its underlying sorrow. The Franco regime initiated an economic program of “national autarchy” or self-sufficiency since their major neighbors refused to maintain diplomatic relations with them. The state attempted to make a virtue of a necessity; they would try to go it alone. Thus, Spain's political and economic interests turned inward, focusing on maintaining bilateral agreements with individual nations and keeping tariffs high to support the national economy. The regime established trade agreements with Portugal, Switzerland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, Germany, France, and Great Britain between 1945 and 1947. The Franco administration’s success in establishing bilateral trade with individual nations gathered barely enough capital for Spain’s survival. However, bilateral trade isolated Spain from the budding global economy that the United States developed with Western Europe.

The adoption of national autarchy caused the regime to tighten its grip as the government repressed the Spanish people further. Spanish censorship only increased during this time. With national autarchy, the Francoists attempted to promote nationalistic pride blinded to the realities of Spain. Spanish cinema of the time reflected this pattern. Peter Besas argues that several productions, especially those by Cifesa, were historical epics that glorified the Conquistadors and exalted Spain's Golden Age, virtually ignoring the events prior to Franco's reign. Besas believes that this period was a time of stagnation for Spanish cinema. Indeed, this reflected the dire condition of Spain suffered in the later forties. But, Franco soon discovered allies that shared in his anti-communist fervor.

92 Neo-realism arose in Italy after the devastation of World War II. It reflected on Italy's extreme poverty and destitution in the war's aftermath.
95 Besas, Spanish Lens, 30.
On January 24th 1948, at the second session of congressional hearings about the Marshall Plan, Merwin K. Hart actively defended Spain and requested its inclusion in the Plan. As the President of the National Economic Council, Inc., Hart represented a prominent group of lobbyists who had strongly despised the policies of the New Deal and also opposed cooperation with the Soviets. Their paranoia and hatred towards communism made them into proponents of aid to Franco for his consistent anti-communism. Certainly Hart joined a growing number of American politicians and businessmen who promoted the goal of ending Spain's isolation as pro-Spanish lobbyists.
Chapter 4
Tourism and the Spanish Lobby

In 1948, Francisco Franco and Minister of Foreign Affairs Alberto Martín Artajo proposed a propaganda organization named the International Bureau of Information (IBI) to improve Spain's public image.\textsuperscript{96} They put José Félix de Lequerica, Inspector of Spanish Embassies and Consulates and a former member of the pro-Alfonsist Acción Española, in charge of the lobbying efforts to woo American conservatives. During the war, Lequerica had participated in the 1940 peace negotiations that led to the creation of the Vichy state, and received France's Legion of Honor and Germany's Order of the German Eagle for his work as Spain's ambassador to Vichy France.\textsuperscript{97} During the Potsdam Conference, Franco replaced Lequerica with Martín Artajo, president of the Acción Católica, which battled anti-clericalism in Spain. With Spain's now deplorable reputation, Lequerica set out to reverse the public outcry against Franco.

The Spanish embassy launched an ineffective campaign to promote the idea that Spain's inclusion in the Marshall Plan could help American taxpayers. The pamphlet writers claimed that since Spain had always repaid its loans, it could provide secure investment possibilities for American investors.\textsuperscript{98} They distributed a flier called “Facts about Spain: A Time to Remember” that denied Spain's support of Nazi Germany and insisted that Franco actually had stood up to Hitler.\textsuperscript{99} In May 1949, the campaign clearly failed when the FBI requested that members of the Spanish Embassy register under the Alien Registration Act, sparking a massive scandal.\textsuperscript{100} But, this did not end Spain's


\textsuperscript{97} MAE, Telegram no. 56 to José Félix de Lequerica, “De cuenta de la concesión de dos condecoraciones,” January 29, 1943. AMAE, File R2097, Folder 83.


attempts to restore relations with America.

In a stroke of genius, Spain turned to tourism. I believe that it is not a coincidence that Spain's sole advocate at the Marshall Plan hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and founder of the National Economic Council, Merwin K. Hart, befriended the Spanish Director General of Tourism, Luis Antonio Bolín, while he traveled in Spain.\textsuperscript{101} Sasha D. Pack, a History Professor of the University of Buffalo, argues that Bolín was the architect of Franco's tourism efforts. Following World War II, the regime tried regulating the industry by creating a monopoly on tourism under Bolín, effectively barring foreign companies from getting involved.\textsuperscript{102} This created substantial barriers for tourists, but the system functioned. Pack emphasizes that this arrangement was inconvenient for individual travelers trying to operate outside Bolín's companies.\textsuperscript{103}

Franco's regime provided a far higher level of hospitality to American diplomats and other VIPs visiting the country. On September 27\textsuperscript{th}, 1949, several American politicians including anti-communist Senators Patrick McCarran and Owen Brewster visited Spain.\textsuperscript{104} The Spanish Lobby's allies included Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg, Senator Robert Taft, and Senator Joseph McCarthy, the chief agitator of the communist witch-hunts sweeping the United States. With conservatives seeking out any new allies to fend off communist threats both within and outside the country, they readily accepted Spain. The dictator knew how to use Spanish hospitality to his advantage, creating an idyllic, benign image that Berlanga would later mock.

Luis García Berlanga heavily parodied the emphasis on Spanish tourism and its initial

\textsuperscript{101} MAE, Nota para SE, July 21, 1947, AMAE, File R1933, Folder 8.
\textsuperscript{102} Sasha D. Pack, “Tourism, modernization, and difference: a twentieth-century Spanish paradigm” in “Sport, mass consumerism, and the body in modern Spain,” special issue, Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics, 11, no. 6 (2008), 661-662.
\textsuperscript{104} MAE, “Viaje de distinguidas personalidades – Norte-Americanas a España,” September 27, 1949, AMAE, File R2989, Folder 76.
ineffectiveness, primarily in the case of gaining American aid through the Marshall Plan. As an image from a tourist brochure encouraging tourists to visit Spain, Villar del Río appears as a happy village of happy people full of stereotypical Spaniards, dressed as bullfighters and flamenco dancers and surrounded by charming little buildings. The villagers even sing a song to welcome them with the chorus of:

“Americans, come to Spain fat and well,
Long live extravagance and long live the powerful people,
olé Virginia and Michigan
and long live Texas which is not bad... Is not bad
We receive all of you Americans with happiness
olé my mother, olé my mother-in-law y olé my aunt
Americans, come to Spain fat and well,
olé my mother, olé my mother-in-law y olé my aunt.”

Essentially, they develop this song from their vague knowledge of the United States, presumably gained from watching American films in the local theater. The villagers seem wholesome and friendly as they throw in some names of U.S. states to demonstrate some affection for and familiarity with the United States. This method of appealing to American fantasies, while ultimately helping Lequerica succeed in creating a Spanish lobby, made Spain appear as a worthy place for investment.

Spain began to gain U.S. recognition as a result of lobbying efforts from right-wing groups in the United States and abroad. In March 1948, Senator McCarran, Spain's most prominent supporter, proposed including Spain in the Marshall Plan. Another Congressman, Alvin O'Konski, suggested an amendment for the Plan to include Spain. While these efforts ultimately failed with Truman's veto,
certain members of the U.N. increasingly supported membership for Spain, calling for an end to Spain's exclusion. On November 4th, 1950, diplomatic relations resumed between Spain and UN member states. The diplomatic success of this event led to Lequerica's appointment as Spanish Ambassador to the United States.

Luis García Berlanga explores the similarity between the right-wing of both the United States and Spain in "¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!" The priest, Don Cosme, especially, calls for persecuting godless communists, reflecting the Spanish Catholic Church's emphasis on extirpating nonbelievers. Don Cosme's dream perfectly juxtaposes images of American and Spanish conservatism. The conversion of the religious procession of Catholic supplicants escorting Cosme to the interrogation to Ku Klux Klan members makes a direct comparison between the two groups. Berlanga called this "Spanish morality" into question. At the trial, the judge's podium combines both the Un-American Activities Committee with an arrow of the Falange. Essentially, he saw that through their recognition of Franco's regime, the Spanish Lobby were pro-fascists. Berlanga tried to use film to bring awareness about the similarity of these two parties. Considering that Franco and other officials watched the movie, the parody was obviously lost on them.

The Spanish Lobby continued to see much success despite these troubling connections. In 1951, the United States government agreed to have the American Export-Import Bank loan money to Spanish banks, granting $62.5 million in credit. Though not significant enough to facilitate a major overhaul of the Spanish economy, the EximBank effectively used this money to promote private businesses. Private American businesses also expanded into Spain. By 1951, General Motors, Coca-


107 National Archives and Records Administration, From Daniel M. Braddock, Councilor of Embassy, to Department of State, “Export Import Bank Credit,” April 27, 1951, Foreign Service of the United States of America, Spain Decimal File 1.01, Record Group 469: Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1942 – 1963, National Archives, College Park, MD.
Cola, and Columbia Pictures established franchises in Spain.\textsuperscript{108} While this particular move helped the Spain's economy, Spanish businesses faced marginalization in the face of American services. This problem continued as Spain began to grow more reliant on American firms.

Luis García Berlanga wished to comment on the influence of American companies in Spain when he began writing "¡Bienvenido!" In interviews, he recounted how Juan Antonio Bardem and he wanted to write the screenplay about a town's enthusiasm over a Coca-Cola factory.\textsuperscript{109} This was quite appropriate considering that James Farley, a prominent Spanish Lobby member, was an executive for Coca-Cola. But, as American businesses began thriving in Spain, this indicated that America was getting friendly with a state that the Soviet bloc regarded as fascist.

As relations began to resume between Spain and the United States, tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union continued to increase. Thus, Spain's strategic value gained priority. The Franco regime did all it could to promote Spain during the various diplomatic missions arriving there. Admiral Forrest B. Sherman's mission led initial efforts to fully realize Spain's strategic location at the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea. In 1951, encouraged by Sherman's reports before his early death, Syracuse University professor Sydney Sufrin and Air Force General James Spry traveled to Spain, as part of economic and military missions respectively, to determine Spain's value in those fields. Sufrin wrote a lengthy report on Spain to voice his concerns regarding the 1952-1953 negotiations over building American bases there. Beginning with a comment on Spain's tourist appeal, he recognized Spain's economic potential.\textsuperscript{110} He also included electricity, agriculture, and railroads as potentially fruitful areas for investment. However, Sufrin called for liberalization, thus offending right-wing forces in


\textsuperscript{109} Alicia Salvador Morañón, De “¡Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall!” a Viridiana: Historia de Uninc, una productora cinematográfica española bajo el franquismo (Madrid: Egeda, 2006), 163-164.

Spain. A writer for Arriba, Higinio Paris Eguilaz, expressed outrage at the report's criticism of Spain; Sufrin had offended Spanish pride.\textsuperscript{111}

Negotiations for American military installations in Spain were always controversial. The escalating Cold War and fear of a Soviet invasion, came to Spain's rescue. Eisenhower's election helped Spain. The new President desired the base agreements much more than his predecessor, ensuring their passage under his administration.\textsuperscript{112} Anti-communists who largely controlled Congress and the more idealistic anti-fascists in the State Department who maintained an ideological stance against the Franco dictatorship almost came to blows. With Truman out of office, this conflict quickly resolved itself. On September 26\textsuperscript{th}, 1953, with Eisenhower in office, the U.S. and Spain signed the Pact of Madrid, enabling Spain to receive the aid it so desperately needed.

The Pact itself was one of three bilateral accords signed between Spain and the United States. During the next fiscal year, 1954, Spain would receive $226 million in aid from the Mutual Security Agency (MSA), the successor of the Economic Cooperation Administration.\textsuperscript{113} This aid was multi-faceted, funneled into technical, economic, and military sectors of Spain's infrastructure. The defense accord called for the construction of jointly held Spanish air force bases. Article III of the agreement outlines how the these bases would “remain under Spanish flag and command,” but “the United States may, in all cases, exercise the necessary supervision of United States personnel, facilities, and equipment.”\textsuperscript{114} While Spain was responsible for the maintenance of these bases, exercising a degree of control, the U.S. could take command in any situation. The economic aid agreement was a standard bilateral economic treaty that ensured Spain's access to American exports and aid and called for stabilizing Spanish currency.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{111} Higinio Paris Eguilaz, “Writing on the Sufrin Report,” Arriba, March 5, 1953.
\textsuperscript{113} U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXIX, No. 745, (October 5, 1953), 435.
\textsuperscript{114} U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, 436.
\textsuperscript{115} U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, 437-438.
support, the mutual defense accord became Franco's greatest asset. The treaty called for mutual defense and support, recognizing Spain on equal footing. American Secretary of State James Clement Dunn and Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs Martín Artajo signed all three accords.

While the agreements provided insufficient funds for Spain's full recovery, bilateral trade with the United States bolstered Franco's reputation. The Spanish press was saturated with proclamations of the Spanish “truth” of Spain and Franco's innocence and the defeat of the international communist conspiracy against Spain. Franco was now a hero who stood against the “lies” of the communists. The new-found alliance with the United States validated Franco's position, ensuring his rule for the next two decades.
CONCLUSION

The long-term implications of the 1953 Spanish-American agreements enabled Spain's full economic recovery during the 1960s. But, Spain established bilateral treaties with the United States fourteen years after the end of the Civil War. Spain had languished for an extremely long period of time as the rest of Europe rebuilt itself. But, the reason Spain suffered for so long was due to Franco himself. The Caudillo's connections with fascism made Spain a liability. The international community widely perceived the Franco regime as a fascist body, and thus wanted nothing to do with it. The potent anti-communism in an increasingly right-wing United States became the dictator's salvation.

“¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” was a contemporary reaction to the re-construction of relations between Spain and the United States. Since the pact negotiations began in April 1952, details reached the Spanish public. Since Berlanga's collaborating screenwriter, Juan Antonio Bardem, as well as several Uninci producers were secretly Communist Party members, they may have been especially aware of the significance behind the increasing support the U.S. was ready to give to Spain. Berlanga conveys a story that mocks this newfound desire to establish relations with the United States. He connects the strongly right-wing elements of both countries, mocks Francoist goals of imperial power, and ultimately argues against the effectiveness of Franco's attempts to portray Spain in an entirely new light. And yet the film was hailed as a Spanish folk comedy. Even Franco and his cohorts viewed the film favorably.

Berlanga brought attention to the trauma that Spain's exclusion inflicted on the Spanish people. He used film to come to terms with it. This is why the movie was such a hit among Spanish audiences. Using comedy, Berlanga conveyed Spanish realities that people recognized. They remembered the devastation of the Civil War, Spain's exclusion from the Marshall Plan, and the harrowing repression of “national autarchy.” At its core, “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” was made for the common Spaniard.
In a scene banned from the 1953 Cannes Festival, after the Americans leave and the villagers gather the few things they have left to pay for their costumes, the camera focuses on an irrigation canal where an American flag floats downstream. With this scene, the film cautions the Spanish people against trusting the Americans, while also celebrating their determination and ability to withstand the Franco dictatorship.

Luis García Berlanga's “¡Bienvenido, Mister Marshall!” was a film far more than a simple comedy. Like the Pact of Madrid, the movie was a product of a repressive dictatorship's interactions with the rest of the world. But while the Pact swept away memories of humiliation linked to exclusion from the Marshall Plan, Berlanga embraced them. While forgetting Mr. Marshall's Plan would allow Spain to re-establish trade with the United States, many, including Berlanga, still remembered.
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