

## Franco Picks a King but Still in Name Only



Associated Press  
**FRANCO'S SUCCESSOR:** Prince Juan Carlos addresses the Spanish Parliament after being sworn in last week as future King of Spain and successor to Generalissimo Francisco Franco, in foreground.

**MADRID**—In naming Prince Juan Carlos de Borbon y Borbon last week his successor as Chief of State, Generalissimo Francisco Franco ended one of the oldest political guessing games in Spain: After Franco, what? But, at the same time he launched a new one: After Franco how?

The "how" covers the whole range of unanswered questions about the powers 31-year-old Juan Carlos, now endowed with the newly coined title of Prince of Spain, will hold when he becomes King and Chief of State after 76-year-old General Franco dies or is incapacitated.

General Franco, who after nearly 33 years in power has learned that the best way to rule volatile Spain is through silence, offered no clues whatsoever to the immediate future or to the period after his demise when he addressed the Spanish Parliament on Tuesday to propose Juan Carlos to succeed him.

As Chief of State, head of Government, leader of the National Movement and Generalissimo of the Spanish armed forces, General Franco holds in his hands all the levers of power. In his Tuesday speech he made it amply clear that he does not intend to be a lame duck and that the Prince of Spain, after swearing loyalty to him personally, will simply continue studying Spanish problems "at my side."

### Change Unlikely

In this sense, then, nothing is likely to change politically in Spain as long as the Generalissimo, who appears to be in good health, is alive. Although the 1967 constitutional law provides for the separation of powers between Chief of State and chief of Government, this only becomes mandatory for General Franco's successor. In the meantime, General Franco is free to name a Premier at any time of his choosing or to go on holding both posts as long as he lives.

As matters now stand, it is unclear whether General Franco's successor will be a simple ceremonial figurehead—"the King of all Spaniards" whose function will be to assure national unity—or a royal chief executive. He will have the power to name a Prime Minister, but, unlike the Queen of England, for example, he will not have to act in response to national elections which are not part of the power system General Franco is bequeathing to the nation.

With General Franco's repeated emphasis in the Parliament speech on "continuity," the general assumption is that nothing will change for the time being and little will change under the reinstated monarchy if the generalissimo's surviving friends have their way.

It is likewise unlikely that

immediately after his crowning Juan Carlos will undertake major modifications in the Spanish structure. His crown will repose on the multiple pillars of the conservative-minded army, and the powerful economic and social interests of the Franco "new class" ranging from bankers and industrialists to the entrenched bureaucracy of the trade unions.

In attempting to project what may be some day the Juan Carlos monarchy, two vague guidelines are available. One is the identity of men who will surround the future King and the other is the personality of the Prince of Spain himself.

Some observers believe that the Prince-successor may be influenced by the pragmatic and modern-minded men belonging to Spain's managerial elite who happen to be members of the lay Roman Catholic order of Opus Dei. These men are generally economic liberals but political hardliners.

As to the Prince of Spain, his political views, if any, are unknown, just as this pleasant and well-educated young man is unknown to the vast majority of Spaniards. It seems pertinent, however, that in accepting the status of General Franco's successor he has gone against the will of his father, the pretender Don Juan, and that he has sworn loyalty to General Franco.

As far as the country at large is concerned, the Prince, educated since he was 10 by General Franco, is so thoroughly identified with the generalissimo and the regime that his anointment as successor neither surprised nor impressed the public.

One of the reasons for last week's apathy was the uncertainty how the succession system will really work once General Franco has departed. The aged general undertook, of course, to plug all the possible loopholes so that the transition would operate smoothly.

But Spaniards also realize that unpredictable situations may arise in a power struggle not so much over Juan Carlos's crowning but over the identity and the political inclinations of a Premier. In the absence of clear indications thus far how the Premiership will function, the future King may find himself in the midst of a major crisis in which he may lack sufficient stature to find a generally acceptable solution.

It is likewise unpredictable on which side Juan Carlos may fall in a contest between authoritarians and liberals. His training by General Franco may suggest that he would favor the first band. But his relative youth—and his favorable emphasis in his Wednesday acceptance speech on youth rebellions—may create surprises for the entrenched establishment.

—TAD SZULC