

## Correspondence

### Whatever the Reign, Keep Hands Off Spain

To the Editors: Stanley Payne's article in the November issue ("Possible Reigns in Spain") outlines very well the substantial obstacles which will face any effort at liberalization within Spain during the post-Franco era. He is chillingly correct in stating that "any changes that Juan Carlos may wish to promote must be carefully calculated and timed not so much to win the Center and the moderate Left but so as not to alienate the chief forces of the Spanish establishment," and principally of the Army. He does not mention a very important non-Spanish obstacle to the possible democratization of Spain, namely the United States military. Ever since 1953 we have had naval and air installations in Spain, which include at present the largest atomic arsenal outside the borders of the two champion scorpions, the U.S. and the USSR. In recent years U.S. forces have participated in Spanish military maneuvers aimed to defeat a hypothetical internal enemy. Even without that fact it is all too easily predictable that if Spain a few years hence should acquire a government which our military judged to be too leftist or simply too unstable, they would intervene covertly or overtly to overthrow such a government.

I would like to urge two points on the readers of *Worldview*. One is that the U.S. has no business telling the Spaniards in what form and by what principles they should govern themselves. The other is that only strong political pressure from informed civilian opinion can prevent the sort of intervention-on-behalf-of-the-far-Right which the U.S. practiced in pre-Castro Cuba, in Guatemala, and recently in Chile. I hope

that all genuinely democratic Americans will urge Congress and the President to commit themselves in advance to complete nonintervention in the internal affairs of Spain. We have a chance now to prevent a foreseeable catastrophe rather than

shed tears after a new rightist dictatorship may have been established with the aid of American arms.

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