

SUMMARIES

The Political Change in Spain

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The purpose of this article is to describe and explain the Spanish political change-over of the last few years, the process from Franco's dictatorship to what should eventually become a full-fledged parliamentary democracy. The strategy of this political change is also considered in the article and the type of the transition is analysed at conceptual level.

The starting point of the political change-over in Spain was that the political system of Francisco Franco did not any more correspond to the political needs of the Spanish people. The political institutions had to change with the changed social forces. In spite of many opposite expectations the Spanish political transition represented the type that theoretical literature calls by name **peaceful change**. Although the Spanish case is not the most typical in this respect, most important precondition is fulfilled: the transition was carried out essentially within the framework of the old institutions.

The basic strategy of the Spanish political change is that all is carried out in the framework of the old institutions and new institutions are created as soon as they have some sort of legitimacy. The transition is associated with the idea of its architects to use so called **secondary priming**-phenomenon: the reforms begun at the political area are expected to spread to the other spheres of life, too.

The precondition for the political change in Spain has largely been the developing of different mediating mechanisms in the Spanish society. The growing international communication and the change of many social values and norms have also been very important. The psychological maturity of the Spanish people has naturally been the most essential precondition for the transition. This was seen most clearly in the referendum of the year 1976 when over 90 % of the Spaniards made known that they wanted political change.

The political change-over of Spain is not carried out to the end yet, the process of democracy is still unfinished. However most important for the future is the becoming of the new political institutions established in use and the working of the new political system. There are no overwhelming contradictions between the government and the political opposition. Most notable is also that on the other hand premier Adolfo Suárez and on the other hand opposition leader Felipe González have established very firmly their positions in the political life of Spain.