

'Democratic Spain, 1985, signs up to the European option' from the Diário de Notícias (13 June 1985)

Caption: On 13 June 1985, reporting on the official signing of the Treaty concerning the accession of Spain to the European Communities, the Lisbon daily newspaper Diário de Notícias summarises the reactions prompted in Spain.

Source: Diário de Notícias. dir. de publ. Mesquita, Mário. 13.06.1985, n° 42 455. Lisboa. "A Espanha democrática de 1985 consagrou a opção europeia", p. 6.

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Ceremony takes place amid tight security measures

Democratic Spain, 1985, signs up to the European option

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In the place where Franco lay in state nine years ago, the democratic Spain of 1985 became part of Europe.

Felipe González signed the Treaty concerning the accession of the Kingdom of Spain to the Communities in the Royal Palace on behalf of his country, just as he had done in Lisbon eight hours earlier in the presence of the representatives of the ten Member States and his Iberian neighbour.

On a very hot late afternoon, Madrid was suffocating not just from the heat but particularly from the tight security measures which had been planned for some time but considerably heightened because of the morning's attacks in the very heart of the city.

The police presence was especially noticeable near the Palace and on the roads leading to it, making for an oppressive atmosphere, though the Spanish authorities had taken some steps to ease the tension.

As in Lisbon, the ceremony that marked Spain's accession to the Common Market was well-attended, brief and to the point.

Hundreds of people followed the event in the Royal Palace, though not in the Hall of Columns, which was too small for all the guests, but in an adjoining room via television link.

The ceremony held in the Portuguese capital was a clear winner, and Portugal was also much more European (by concentrating on efficiency rather than ostentation) than its neighbour, which will also be a partner in Community Europe as from January. Everything else was a repetition of gestures, words and acts.

The difference here, perhaps more significant than what had gone on in Lisbon a few hours earlier, was the presence of the Spanish Head of State.

As had been arranged for some time, the King attended and took part in the formalities, unlike the Portuguese President, who did not go to the Jerónimos Monastery.

In a short speech, King Juan Carlos greeted the delegations from the Eleven, welcoming the enlargement of Community Europe to include the two Iberian countries, which, he said, would set out together on a road that would revitalise their relations.

He said that it was a great day for Spain and for Portugal, its sister nation on the Iberian Peninsula, as well as a great day for Europe.

King Juan Carlos asserted that the importance of Portugal and Spain's act of accession went beyond the boundaries of Europe and had 'a positive significance' in the wider world.

He said that the very essence of a trans-European Europe involved a willingness to reach out beyond itself, and that an enclosed Europe, scornful of others, would be a lesser Europe.

The Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe González, also pointed to the 'fundamental framework' that EEC enlargement represented in order to 'complete the unity of our old continent'.

Mr González, who brought the series of speeches that marked the ceremony to a close, sent a 'very affectionate and cordial greeting to the Portuguese people' on behalf of the Spanish nation.

He recalled that the Iberian Peninsula — Portugal and Spain — had introduced the old world to new worlds, expanding not only its geographical but also its spiritual borders, and said that, five centuries later, the two ‘neighbouring and sister’ nations were now embarking on a new stage ‘rich in challenges and potential’.

He said that it was an undertaking that completed Europe and reinforced the ties that bound the two peoples and that, within the Community institutions, it would allow them to raise Europe’s profile vis-à-vis the countries of Latin America and Africa, which enjoyed the same cultural heritage.

And in the place where the Spanish people paid their final tributes to Franco nine years ago, the head of a Socialist government, democratically elected by its people, stressed the importance of the step that his country had now taken, because, above all, that step represented the ‘pinnacle of the process of overcoming Spain’s secular isolation’ and ‘the sharing of a common destiny with the other countries of Western Europe’.