CATALONIA AND SPAIN.—Text of the lecture given by Pasqual Maragall i Mira, Mayor of Barcelona, at St Antony's College.

Oxford, March the 7th 1986
Mr. Warden, ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you very much for your kind words of welcome. I would like to thank you also for the opportunity I have to talk in this house.

I am glad to bring for you the warmest regards of a former student of this House, Mrs. Patricia Hutchinson, now HM Consul General in Barcelona.

There is a debt that many Spaniards have and I want to acknowledge here. We owe Professor Carr his contribution to the History of Spain, which filled serious gaps in our education. During the years of Franco's dictatorship we had to rely on foreign books to improve our understanding of our own country. Furthermore, I want to acknowledge the works of other authors, such as the British Gerald Brennan, Stanley Payne and Hugh Thomas or the American Gabriel Jackson and Edward Malefakis, and, obviously, the French Pierre Vilar.

I would not be fair, however, if I did not pay homage to an eminent former guest of this House, Jaume Vicens Vives who, apart from his contribution to Catalan and Spanish history, represented so many people with enough faith in the future of the
country to go on working in spite of lack of freedom.

He was my professor in my first years of university. He was who opened our eyes to Spanish History and explain us how the Spanish Golden Century was also the Century of the "sopa boba".

Among other paradoxes, one of the outcomes of Spain's last forty years is the amount of people who, under different circumstances, would have never gone into politics. In Britain, for instance, politicians are more or less professionals. In Spain, on the other hand, the iniquity of the regime made a great deal of men and women change their vocations and devote themselves to fight injustice. Thus, had Franco's rule not existed, President Gonzalez would be probably now a lawyer in Seville; Defence minister Narcis Serra would be teaching monetary policy, which he learned partly in London School of Economics, President Jordi Pujol perhaps had put into practise his Medicine degree and I myself would be teaching International Trade or Urban Economics thanks to the MA I got at the new School fo Social Research, in New York, after trying Oxford through Jose Antonio Martinez Alier.

I do not regret things as they are. I love my city and I enjoy being mayor, every minute of it. And it is very likely that my achievements on the academic field would have never allowed me to give a lecture at St Antony's College whereas
politics has provided such privilege to me. I didn't go so much beyond Quesnay and Ricardo, at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore.

Nevertheless, this particular upbringing makes us fall very often under the temptation of academic amateurism. So I ask for your benevolence if I surrender to that sin.

However, I am going to indulge myself in a way that seldom do I permit myself at home. I will talk about my grandfather, and I will not hide how proud I am of my name. I cannot do it in Catalonia: I might be blamed, quite reasonably, of using a national glory for my own political benefit.

As you well know, Joan Maragall, my father's father, was not only one of the greatest poets Catalan literature has produced, but also a qualified spokesman of the prevailing feelings that an enlightened Catalan bourgeoisie had in his years—end of last century beginning of this one.

I will try to give you a brief survey on the past, the present and the future of the relationship between Catalonia and Spain. Still, I would not dare to explain what others have done better and with much more authority than I could. But I think it might interest you to know about the point of view of an insider who has both the privilege of being the mayor of Barcelona and the privilege of coming from a family that, in a way, summarizes
Nevertheless, and however passionate this discussion is, I am a little worried about our persistence on this analysis. As Pierre Vilar wrote, "Reflection of a nation on itself is always a sign of unhappiness, of danger, of impending menace over the community. Spain's passion of meditation on itself, after 1600, after 1898, after 1939, reminds of a great history of an unhappy consciousness".

I do not think there is any essential menace on Spain or Catalonia, in our days. I do not think it is good for us to be still brooding over our essence and existence. But perhaps it is a good thing for politicians to stop from time to time and think a little over the object of their activity: their country.

Joan Maragall wrote in 1898 a poem called Oda a Espanya, Ode to Spain that represented the feelings of a catalanism concerned about the idea of Spain. That poem is a plead for a Spain as a mother of many different peoples who ignores them. Maragall said to Spain: "cry, mother, hear your children, who speak to you in another language, come to the sea". The last line of the poem is a goodbye to Spain: "Adeu Espanya!", which is of course terrible. And that is what the catalanist movement did and Spain practised. We ceased to ask for an understanding with Spain except for the begining of the Republic and started to look on a
separate destiny as a solution for Catalonia's troubles.

The development of Barcelona

Now let me talk about Barcelona.

Barcelona saw a fantastic development from the mid XIXth Century. Up to 1859 Barcelona was closed within the walls the perimetre of which had not altered from the Middle Ages. In 1859 was approved the Plan del Ensanche, the "enlargement plan", developed by Ildefonso Cerdà. The walls were pulled down and the city spread over the surrounding plain and reached the nearly villages: Sarrià, St. Gervasi, Gràcia, St. Martí.

My grandfather, by the way, was born in 1860 in the very heart of the medieval city. Later he went out the walls, to the Ensanche and finally to St. Gervasi. In a sense he followed the growth of the city. In just 50 years his generation expanded more than previous generations for 10 or 15 centuries.

I recall Ricardo's "Low Price of Corn", 1815, where he said that increases in population would increase the supply of land so that rents would not rise. I was not exactly so in Barcelona. Land prices went up, and only in downtown, round the City Hall, moderatly down.

In 1888 an Universal Exhibition was held on the grounds of the old citadel, ominous symbol of centralist oppression, built by
Phillip the Vth and demolished shortly after the walls were pulled down. The Universal Exhibition underlined the definitive assertion of the city developed by Cerdà, as well as a demonstration of Catalan bourgeoisie's faith on modernity, progress and industrialization.

Catalonia rejected Spain, but did not retreat herself into the contemplation of its griefs. Quite the contrary, catalanism emerged then as a way to assert our European character as opposite to being Spanish.

Is is relevant to remember that in those years your empire was still going. Ours not. The end of our rule over Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Phillipines, in 1898 give our 98 Generation: Baroja, Machado, Azorín, Juan Ramón Jimenez and clare say, Picasso and Casas, who had an influence on Spain culture in a way similar to Bloomsbury's: Keynes, Virginia Woolf.

Catalonia was open to the cultural trends coming from Europe and was able to give them a personal interpretation. At the same time that Paris, Vienna, Praga, Brussels, Glasgow and London knew the art nouveau the secession or modern style, in Barcelona modernisme flourished with extraordinary strength. Modern style architecture had in Barcelona a field to express itself as no other city of Europe had. You can still admire the results
walking on the streets of my city and looking at the incredible façades that Catalan bourgeoisie had the courage to build.

This creativity was sustained throughout the years before the Civil War, in spite of social unrest and in spite of Primo de Rivera dictatorship.

First World War brought to Catalonia Picasso, who came back, Picabia. But it also brought money. Catalan industriality took advantage of Spain's neutrality to make good business out of selling goods to both Allied and Central Powers. That could explain some of the neutralist feelings that Catalan bourgeoisie still is sheltering.

The 1929 Universal Exhibition, gave Barcelona the most important thrust to modernity since the previous 1888 Exhibition. The 1929 exhibition was bold enough to host and show to the world the Mies Van der Rohe German Pavilion, which we have just rebuilt, by the way.

It was in this time when Arnold Schönberg began Moses and Aron in Barcelona. His daughter is named after the second most popular virgin in Catalonia after Montserrat: Nuria.
Architecture was again the field where Catalan capacity to catch the signs of the times was more evident. Racionalist architects flourished in Catalonia. Josep Lluis Sert and members of GATPAC - architect group made Barcelona the centre of interest of European architects. The Republican Generalitat entrusted Le Corbusier the design of a new development plan of Barcelona metropolitan area.

But there were also other fields where Catalonia showed her dinamism. Catalan Parliament voted a Local Government act that in some aspects was even more advanced than the Spanish Municipal Law of 1985.

The Spanish Pavilion of 1937 Paris Exhibition, where Picasso's Guernica was first showed, was disiped by Josep Lluis Sert.

Later came what it came. And for decades Catalonia was to many Spaniards a symbol of resistance to fascism, a place where one could feel an European atmosphere.

However strong the dictatorship pressure was, Catalan's love of freedom created and environment less oppressive than in the rest of Spain.
Nationalism and catalanism

In spite of the Spanish Constitution, in spite of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy, there is still an unsatisfied, strong nationalist sentiment prevailing in Catalonia. The boundaries of this nationalism are rather fuzzy, as are the political solutions that would satisfy it.

Most of the people would accept the Spanish Constitution and the Catalan Statute of Autonomy as they are provided that Central Government interpreted them open-mindedly without any witch-hunting based on apparent threats to the unity of Spain. Other people would like to reform the Statute, to give more powers to the Generalitat without questioning Catalonia's belonging to Spain. And, finally, a minority asks for an independent Catalonia or rather, independent "Països Catalans" - Catalan countries - that is to say, a Greater Catalonia including the Balearic Islands, Valencia and the Roussillon or French Catalonia.

As I say, separatism or independentism is now a minority trend in Catalonia. But it is a very popular ideology among young people. This phenomenon has not been studied closely. Does it come from the fact of being the only way young people have to contest the political system? That would presume that young people independentism is the way young people take to let out
their natural trend to revolt against the establishment, since it is almost the only ideology that does not fit into the Constitution.

A Catalan who claims to be a Catalanist but does not like nationalism in general, and this is my own position, finds himself in a somewhat difficult position. For in Spain there is also an efervescence of Spanish nationalism.

When the Socialist Party came into the Government after the 1982 general election an American newspaper reported the constitution of a government of "young nationalists". In Spain this expression sounded rather shocking. But it really made a point.

Franco spent forty years identifying himself as Spain and labelling as un-Spanish or bad Spanish those who opposed his regime. Not surprisingly, the idea of Spain as fatherland was not very popular among democrats. Recall the "farewell Spain!" The Socialist Party tried to recover Spain, as the heritage of everyone and not a monopoly of the right. Obviously a certain amount of nationalism is there. There are more reasons now to be proud of being a Spaniard than they were under Franco.

I would like to explain now my position regarding nationalism. I do not feel like a "nationalist", in the classic
meaning of the word. I think nationalism may be a right issue in a precise time, but it may not be justified other times.

In Catalonia strict nationalism could have been justified when Franco's dictatorship was a menace to Catalonia's own being. Nowadays I think extreme nationalism is a mistake. Catalan nationalism now takes the feeling of belonging to an identity for a political code.

I would rather choose the word "catalanism" than "nationalism". "Catalanism" was, by the way, the term our grandparents used. Nationalism calls for a generic position, and I am not interested in generic positions. Nationalism is a mixture of heterogeneous trends which have in common the fact or the feeling of being victimized by an alien force.

Catalanism, on the other hand, refers to a definite, specific fatherland. They are two different formulae, though they have overlapped through history and have been used in an indiscriminate way. Now, in 1986, we can establish the difference, and I think we must.

Catalonia has enough political maturity and the legal framework to be something more than a nation standing on the defensive. I think there are grounds to talk on behalf of an open Catalonia with aims that go beyond the mere survival, the
mere defence.

There is however among nationalists a temptation to go back to the bunker, within the walls so to speak. But I do not think they will manage to prevail.

Catalonia and Spain

I would not like to convey the message that for me Catalonia has no adversary. I do not underrate them. But I do not think they are the paramount problem of Catalan national feeling. There has been always in Catalonia a trend to see others as responsible of our troubles.

Former President Josep Tarradellas broke this line of thought. President Tarradellas helped us to see things from a wiser outlook. President Tarradellas taught us to accept us as we are. He pointed that those who had oppressed Catalonia had a long government experience behind and elements of legitimacy we had to acknowledge. Hence his attitude towards the King and the Army that could have been a surprise, coming as they were from and old Republican.

As I suggested before, now that the idea of a oppressive and totalitarian Spain belongs to the past, Catalonia can and must participate into Spanish politics and help to finish the construction of Spain's unachieved reality out of heart and
reason, not only out of calculation and selfishness. But Spain has first to admit that it is still under construction. Catalonia, however, cannot go to Spain to be paid for its old griefs, and, on the other hand we cannot pretend that nothing has happened. But both Catalan and Spanish people have to make an effort of understanding.

Those attitudes will prevail, according to me, in Catalan political life. That does not exclude the revival of important minorities pleading for independence, especially among young people, as I said before.

In a sense, I would like better independentism than nationalism. It has a frankness which is missing in nationalism. I like "Visca Catalunya lliure!" - "long live Free Catalonia!" - is a positive cry, unlike "som una nacio!" - "we are a nation" - which is now a negative slogan. I do not think, nevertheless, that Catalonia would make a good business out of independentism. Professor Sole Tura explains it brilliantly in his last book, Nacionalidades y nacionalismos en España.

Catalonia and Barcelona

The nationalist party that is ruling now the Catalan Government, has attempted sometimes to confront Catalonia to Barcelona, appealing to an alleged Barcelona centralism which was supposed to menace the pure essences of Catalonia. But, as
Professor J.M. Bricall used to say, Catalonia without Barcelona would be just a national curiosity as the Alto Adige, the Italian Tirol, is.

That does not mean that Barcelona has made Catalonia. In fact the converse proposition is true. And it is also the best proof to show that Catalonia is a nation. Catalonia has been able to build a city which has all the characteristics of a capital of a State. Catalonia created Barcelona because she had national power enough to do it. Thus Barcelona is a result of Catalonia, not a cause. Of course, there has been also a feedback process. Were not Barcelona a dynamic city, Catalonia could not have been a dynamic country either.

The richness of Catalonia's national identity comes from its plurality. This plurality is the reality of Catalonia. A somewhat tortured reality, but a reality. Spain as a concept, on the other hand, has not managed to become a full reality. This is changing now. Spain is beginning to come to terms with its own plurality. And the same goes with Madrid. Madrid was for the rest of Spain only a capital, a bureaucratic centre. Now Madrid has learned to be a city, a human collectivity. And I have to acknowledge here that this was the great success of the late Mayor of Madrid, professor Tierno Galvan.

All this changes are a positive challenge for us Catalans.
We can feel more comfortable within a plural Spain than in a monolithic one. And Barcelona has to strengthen its imagination to compete with Madrid as the prime centre of cultural and economic creativity.

The plurality of Catalonia has always acted as a political stabilizer, as well as a political motor. The history of Catalonia is the history of a set of counter-balanced powers. And one of this powers is, and has been, Barcelona.

The old government of Barcelona, the Consell de Cent or Council of the Hundred, coexisted perfectly with the Generalitat. And sometimes the Consell de Cent stood for the defence of Catalonia with more determination than the Generalitat did.

One of the decisive dates of Catalan history, as you know, is the eleventh of September 1714, when Barcelona surrendered to the troops of Phillip the Vth, the first Spanish Bourbon. That marked the end of Catalan liberties under the Crown of Spain. The hero of that day was Rafael Casanova, who was the prime councillor, the Lord Mayor, if you allow me this anachronism.

If the past saw different powers working together for Catalonia I think the best guarantee for the future of Catalonia is a synthesis of a set of particularities, a set of people which have in common a national identity built on the basis of
their diversity. Putting that into political terms, the best for Catalonia is having besides its first institution, the Generalitat, a net of local governments intending to work as a whole.

As Shakespeare said, "city is the people".

Living with authonomy

There are two outstanding facts that date a process of degradation of political atmosphere in Catalonia. One of them was the anti LOAPA campaign, in 1982. As you remember, 'LOAPA' stands for 'Organic Law for Harmonization of Autonomic Process'. The campaign had a revival later, after the Constitutional Court ruled against that law.

The anti LOAPA campaign had no visible effect on 1982 general election nor on 1983 local polls. But it did had an important part on Convergència attitudes in the 1982 demonstration for the 11th of September. For the first time after Franco's death the Catalan political parties marched separately. And, what was worst, some shouted violently at socialist leaders, accusing them of traitors and collaborationists with Spanish centralism.

That was a symbol of a political schism in Catalonia, a
schism that is not closed, yet.

The Banca Catalana affair was the other element that marked the rarefaction of our political environment.

Another key factor in today's Catalonia is the new regional TV Channel, TV3.

TV3 was a palpable result of the catalan Government policy, a project everyone could identify with. It is the only TV channel that uses Catalan as the only language. That had obviously an influence on the results of 1984 regional polls, which were held shortly after the start of TV3.

Other things which are "odd" happen in Catalan Parliament. The majority ruling Catalan Parliament has been passing a set of laws aimed to extend the control of new Catalan bureaucracy over every single aspect of Catalan life.

These laws have a trend not at all liberal, in spite of the alleged liberal faith of many. In fact, these laws are within the old Spanish tradition of centralism and state interventionism.

Our Statute of Autonomy stands for a descentralized structure of Catalan Government. The Generalitat was to play the
role of giving advice, planning, supervising the lower levels of administration.

The present majority has showed an increasing mistrust on the basic levels of government, that is, local governments. The executive is recovering powers the central government had passed to municipalities during the first years of democratic governments in Spain. From the local government we are seeing, amazingly, how we could end up having less powers under an autonomous Catalonia than we had after 1977 general election and before the Statute.

So, the alleged aim is to strengthen the country. The result is weakening it.

When Central Government handed over the Catalan Government some of its powers our first reaction was a cry: "That's not enough". And soon we have magnify the transferred apparatus, making state interventionism appear again.
Catalans have always felt at home in Europe. And so president Pujol said in Aachen: "Catalonia has come back home". As Luis Racionero has pointed out, back in the Xth century Romanesque monasteries in the Catalan Pirenees were an European cultural enclave acting in a way as a bridge between Greek humanistic heritage, Arabic and Provençal cultures.

What will happen with Catalan culture, with Catalan nationality as Spain joins Europe? One may think Catalan nation and other national minorities will expand as the State-Nation loses power. Others do not agree with this idea. They says that far from that Common Market tends to enforce the State structure of Spain.

In any case, I am convinced that European integration will be positive, both to Catalonia and Barcelona provided we do not become a "curiosity" after leaving NATO. The relevant question, though, is wether European integration will mean plain interchange or increase of dependence.

I think Barcelona has a lot to offer to Europe. We have just closed the London exhibition "Homage to Barcelona". The great surprise of this exhibition was Ramon Casas'paintings. What we wanted to do with the exhibition, and we intend to continue
doing, is to explain to the world that people as Picasso, Gaudí, Miro, Dalí or Pau Casals are not isolated personalities growing spontaneously on a grey landscape. We would like to make understand that we have had a favourable environment that has made such geniuses possible. Europe has something to discover in Catalonia, and conversely.

From the point of view of regional and urban economics, which was my own academic subject before going into politics, Barcelona has also an important role to play in the European system of cities. Barcelona is to become the link that will attach the Iberian Peninsula to the urban European axis that goes from London to Milan.

There is a region defined roughly by the areas of Bordeaux, Toulouse and Milano which holds an enormous economic, scientific and cultural potential. Until Spain's coming into the EEC this region has been a border region, a cul-de-sac. From now on it will have an increasing character of passage.

Barcelona wants to attract the gravity centre of this region towards the Catalan system of cities. And to do so, Barcelona has to compete with Toulouse, which is a formidable centre of high technology industries, and Marseilles, whose port fights with Barcelona and Genoa for the first place in the Mediterranean.
We have called this region the "North of South" of Europe. Within this region the connections between their cities are already natural. We have only to enhance them, to facilitate them. Montpellier is the city that first made a move in this direction. M. Freche, the mayor of Montpellier, was the first French politician to welcome the enlargement of the EEC. Montpellier has understood that it is easier for them going to Barcelona than to Paris. Barcelona is the nearest big market to Montpellier, the nearest big city.

Barcelona can be a capital of the North of the South of Europe. This area has an "art of living", so to speak, that is very attractive to the North: climate, landscape, leisure. At the same time the main cities of the area have an important economic capacity.

Catalonia has to recover the power of invention, the creativity, the spirit of enterprise that made her the most dynamic region of Spain. And she must do it with Spain, not against Spain.

We Catalans have to come to terms with our own history. We have to acknowledge that our future is narrowly linked to the future of Spain. We have a privileged part in this future. Spain does not exist. Catalonia does even if it is a tortured
reality. Spain never cristalyzed. Catalonia has to be the leader of the transformation of Spain. The leader of the process that will make Spain become an European nation, that will make Spain cease to be a kind of reservation of exotism.

We do not want that in the future learned and serious papers as *The Economist* have reasons to talk about our institutions as it did in its last editorial: "a tricorn and blunderbuss army".

The role of Catalonia is crucial. And so is the role of Barcelona. I am sparing no effort to keep Barcelona moving. And the city will answer, is already answering to the challenge.
(1) I am glad to send you these to bring for you the 
warmest regards of a former student of our House, Mrs 
Patrick Hutchinson, now General Senator of H M 
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(2) He was my professor in my first years of university, and he 
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(3) and also knowledge, which I learned partly in 
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(4) I am very touched to me that I got at any 
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(5) I did not go much beyond Queens and reached at 
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The Astonishing Story of Condemnation in Barcelona

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As your Shakespeare said, "city is the people."
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