



Oxford against Aznar

The Oxford Union, Frewin Court (Cornmarket Street)

3 December, from 19.00 p.m



Who is Aznar?

The problem Spain has with Al Qaeda did not begin with the Iraq Crisis ... You must go back no less than 1300 years, to the early 8th century when a Spain recently invaded by the Moors refused to become just another piece in the Islamic world and began a long battle to recover its identity.

José María Aznar, Georgetown University, Sep. 21 2004

1996 - 2004: a balance

José María Aznar, former Spanish Prime Minister, is internationally known for standing firm beside Bush and Blair in the Azores conference and in the subsequent decision to move on Iraq.

He started his political career as a member of the Falange (a right-wing movement developed in the early 1930s and sought to reproduce German and Italian fascism in Spain. Opposed to the Republican regime, it supported Franco's Nationalist coup of 1936 and became the ruling party under the dictatorship). He joined the Popular Alliance (precursor of the conservative Popular Party) in 1978. In 1987 became president of the community of Castilla León, and in 1993 was elected candidate for the Spanish Government. He was Prime Minister from 1996 to 2004, with a team that will be remembered in Spain as the government of abuse and misinformation.

José María Aznar finished his political career blatantly lying about the death of 191 people.

- Economy: inflation, labour precariousness, property bubble. Who benefits from the 'economic prosperity' of Spain?

- National (and international) politics: exclusive nationalism, personal ambition, authoritarianism.

- Education: system reform massively opposed by students, teachers and Universities Chancellors.

- Immigration: four legislative reforms unable to regularise the situation of 800.000 immigrants.

- Media: objectivity, veracity, impartiality? TVE (Spanish Public Television) was condemned in 2002 for manipulating the information about a general strike called to protest against new unemployment regulation.



19 November 2002

11 March 2004

Prestige and 11-M



The leaking oil tanker Prestige sinks off Spain's northwestern coast, taking more than 70,000 tonnes of fuel into the Atlantic with it. Four days earlier, the government sent the tanker 'as far as possible' from the Spanish coast. When the first oil reaches the coast, PP leaders are having fun in a hunt.

Madrid suffers an appalling terrorist attack. The suspicion that Al-Qaeda is behind it is soon a generalised conviction. The Government persists in its obsession to point at ETA while Spanish citizens have to seek for the truth in foreign media. It has since been revealed that the police ruled out the ETA hypothesis long before the government made it public.