

## Angry Spain ousts ruling party

Level 3 | Advanced

**Aznar is punished for bloodshed and for 'hiding the truth'.**

### 1 Key vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these key words from the text.

aftermath      convinced      custody      pledge  
withdraw      reflection      resentment      swap

1. If you are \_\_\_\_\_ about something, you are absolutely sure it is true.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is another word for 'exchange'.
3. The results and effects of something bad are known as its \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ means thinking carefully about something.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is an angry, unhappy feeling that you have when you feel you have been treated unfairly or without enough respect.
6. If you are in \_\_\_\_\_, you are being kept in prison before your trial.
7. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a serious and public promise to do something.
8. The new Spanish government says it will \_\_\_\_\_ its soldiers from Iraq. In other words, it will bring them home.

### 2 What do you know?

1. How many people were killed by the terrorist bomb in Madrid?
2. Who was the Prime Minister of Spain at the time of the attack?
3. Who carried out the bombing?
4. How many Spanish troops are in Iraq?
5. What percentage of the Spanish people opposed the war in Iraq?
6. Who is the new Prime Minister of Spain?

**Now look in the text and check your answers.**

## Angry Spain ousts ruling party

Level 3 | Advanced

### Angry Spain ousts ruling party

Spanish voters punished Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's People's Party for the bloodshed of last week's terrorist attacks in Madrid, throwing it out of government in an angry reaction to his handling of the aftermath. In one of the most dramatic elections of the post-Franco era, voters turned on the ruling party, convinced that the multiple bomb attack that killed 200 people and injured 1,500 on Madrid's packed commuter trains had been carried out by Al-Qaeda and with a growing sense that the People's Party had tried to hide the truth. The government had blamed the Basque separatist group Eta.

With intelligence agencies around the globe trying to identify a man who, in a videotape found in Madrid, claimed responsibility for the attacks for Al-Qaeda, and

with three Moroccan suspects in police custody, most voters believed the Spanish capital had suffered its equivalent of the September 11 attacks in the United States.

The Socialist leader, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, swept to a surprise victory that was a blow to the Bush administration. He followed his win with a pledge to withdraw Spain's 1,300 troops from Iraq and accusations that Tony Blair and President Bush lied about the war. "Mr Blair and Mr Bush must do some reflection . . . you can't organise a war with lies," he said in his first radio interview.

Mr Zapatero began his victory speech with a minute's silence for the victims of last Thursday's attacks - a series of 10 bomb blasts on commuter trains at Atocha, El Pozo and Santa Eugenia stations in the south of Madrid. "Together we will defeat [terrorism]," he told supporters

outside his party headquarters in the capital.

Angry protests on the streets of large cities overnight - in contrast to the almost silent march by millions of Madrilenos the day after the attacks - set a tone of brooding resentment. Protesters accused the government of trying to hide the fact that Islamists were to blame and demanded explanations for Mr Aznar's backing of the Iraq war against the will of some 90% of Spaniards.

It was the first example of a single terrorist attack having a direct effect on the outcome of an election in a Western country. Mr Zapatero, a 43-year-old lawyer, had pledged during campaigning to swap Mr Aznar's pact with Mr Bush for a return to a European alliance with France and Germany.

*The Guardian Weekly*

## Angry Spain ousts ruling party

Level 3 | Advanced

### 3 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences.

1. Mr Aznar's party lost the Spanish election because ...
  2. Protesters wanted Mr Aznar ...
  3. Instead of blaming Al-Qaeda for the bombing, ...
  4. Mr Zapatero accused Blair and Bush ...
  5. Protesters accused the government ...
  6. Mr Zapatero plans ...
- 
- a. ... of lying about the war in Iraq.
  - b. ... to return to an alliance with France and Germany.
  - c. ... to explain why Spain had supported the war in Iraq.
  - d. ... of trying to hide the fact that Islamists were responsible for the bombing.
  - e. ... the Spanish people believed the government had tried to hide the truth about the bombing.
  - f. ... the government tried to blame Basque separatists.

### 4 Vocabulary

Choose the best meaning

1. Mr Zapatero's victory was a blow to the Bush administration means:
  - a. It was welcomed by the Bush administration.
  - b. It was a shock to the Bush administration.
  - c. It was ignored by the Bush administration.
  
2. A growing sense means:
  - a. An increasing feeling.
  - b. A feeling of disbelief.
  - c. A new idea.
  
3. He swept to victory means:
  - a. He won narrowly.
  - b. He won with difficulty.
  - c. He won very easily.

## Angry Spain ousts ruling party

Level 3 | Advanced

4. Voters turned on the ruling party means:
- They ignored it.
  - They attacked it.
  - They defended it.
5. A commuter train is:
- An express train.
  - A local train that carries people to work in the city.
  - A non-stop train.

### 5 Collocations

Match the verbs in the left-hand column with the nouns in the right-hand column. Check your answers in the text.

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. to claim     | a. an attack      |
| 2. to carry out | b. an effect      |
| 3. to hide      | c. an explanation |
| 4. to demand    | d. terrorism      |
| 5. to have      | e. responsibility |
| 6. to defeat    | f. the truth      |

### 6 Grammar focus

Look at this sentence from the first paragraph:

*'The government had blamed the Basque separatist group Eta.'*

The past perfect tense here is used to refer to an earlier event, before the election in Spain.

Here are some more sentences, some from the text and others related to it. Rewrite them in the correct order.

- had people attack were out convinced carried Al-Qaeda the
- government they to thought hide the tried had the truth
- believed many the had government lied people
- his Aznar the Iraq war support Mr given to had
- had a formed Bush pact he with Mr
- before Socialists the promised Iraq to the withdraw election Spanish troops had from

## Angry Spain ousts ruling party

---

Level 3 | *Advanced*

### 7 Discussion

Do you think the Spanish electorate was influenced by the terrorists bombing?

Do you think it is right to link the bombing with the presence of Spanish troops in Iraq?