



1940: General Franco (second to the left) and Hitler (R).

Many people remember the 1959 Franco-Eisenhower embrace in Madrid because it cements the popular image of a friendship between Francoist Spain and the US, based on the common goal of "containing" communism. But this Cold War rapprochement shouldn't lead us to forget what Franco had looked like to US leaders before the Cold War got hot. Consider, for example, what Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), near the end of his life, said and thought about Franco. The following is a letter that Roosevelt sent to the newly appointed US ambassador in Spain in March of 1945...

"My Dear Mr. Armour:

In connection with your new assignment as ambassador to Madrid I want you to have a frank statement of my views with regard to our relations with Spain.

Having been helped to power by Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and having patterned itself along totalitarian lines, the present regime in Spain is naturally the subject of distrust by a great many American citizens who find it difficult to see the justification for this country to continue to maintain relations with such a regime. Most certainly we do not forget Spain's



1959: General Franco (R) with President Eisenhower (L)

Official position with and assistance to our Axis enemies at a time when the fortunes of war were less favorable to us, nor can we disregard the activities, aims, organizations, and public utterances of the Falange, both past and present. These memories cannot be wiped out by actions more favorable to us now that we are about to achieve our goal of complete victory over those enemies of ours with whom the present Spanish regime identified itself in the past spiritually and by its public expressions and acts.

The fact that our government maintains formal diplomatic relations with the present Spanish regime should not be interpreted by anyone to imply approval of that regime and its sole party, the Falange, which has been openly hostile to the United States and which has tried to spread its fascist party ideas in the Western Hemisphere. Our victory over Germany will carry with it the extermination of Nazi and similar ideologies."

FDR