

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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## Irish, British leaders join mourners at funeral of murdered journalist: Inside

# NO DEAL

● The Spanish general election is the country's most divisive in decades and, with no single party close to winning a parliamentary

majority, its outcome is uncertain. Polls have showed that up to four in 10 voters have yet to decide whom to cast their ballot for.

**T**he main contenders in Spain's parliamentary election traded verbal blows over jobs and national identity on Tuesday night, as Socialist frontrunner Pedro Sanchez said he had no plans to include centre-right Ciudadanos in any governing alliance.

A day after an inconclusive first televised debate, the leaders of the four main parties represented appeared to step up efforts to grab extra votes ahead of Sunday's ballot - and tempers frayed.

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Outgoing Prime Minister Sanchez looks best placed to form a government if his Socialist Party wins the around 30 percent of the vote that surveys have suggested.

But he would need to team up with



Albert Rivera, right, with outgoing Prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez.

one or more other party to form a parliamentary majority, and on Tuesday he distanced himself from one option.

"Entering an alliance with a party that has put cordon sanitaire around the Socialist Party is not part of my plans," he said in reference to Ciudadanos at the start of the debate.

Ciudadanos has previously said it will not join any coalition led by Sanchez,

and its leader Albert Rivera - together with Conservative Partido Popular's (PP) Pablo Casado - renewed the two-pronged attack they had directed at the prime minister on Monday.

The economy made a late appearance as an election topic in a wide-ranging and at times chaotic debate that also took in immigration, housing and gender equality.

But, as on Monday, one of the most emotive issues remained Catalonia and the region's botched 2017 independence bid, which came close to triggering a constitutional crisis.

Casado called Sanchez "the favourite candidate of the enemies of Spain" and Rivera told him: "Many Socialists are disappointed with you because you want to liquidate Spain."

Sanchez, who became prime minister in June, has been more open to dialogue with Catalan separatists than his conservative predecessor Mariano Rajoy.

But he reiterated on Tuesday night that he was ruling out any moves towards independence by the region, and that its pro- and anti-secessionist factions needed to negotiate with each other.

The rightist candidates also attacked Sanchez over unemployment. Casado compared Spain's economy to thrice bailed-out Greece and Rivera called the country "the European joblessness champion".

## UK spy agency says claim it spied on Trump is utterly ridiculous

London.—Britain's main eavesdropping agency yesterday said allegations that it had been asked by the Obama administration to spy on Donald Trump after the 2016 presidential election were utterly ridiculous and should be ignored.

Trump yesterday tweeted that a former CIA analyst, Larry Johnson, had accused Britain of spy-



ing on the Trump campaign. Trump said: "It is now just a question of time before the truth comes out, and when it does, it will be a beauty!" vWhen asked about the tweet, a GCHQ spokesman said: "The allegations that GCHQ was asked to conduct 'wire tapping' against the then President Elect are nonsense. They are utterly ridiculous and should be ignored."