

Catalan Voters Face Police State Violence

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Self-determination is a universal right, affirmed by the UN Charter and other international law – rejected by despotic states like Spain, masquerading as democratic.

On Sunday, Catalans trying to vote in their independence referendum are being assaulted by thuggish police – smashing glass panels of polling stations, bursting in violently, forcibly removing ballot boxes and voters, attacking them with batons and rubber-coated steel bullets, women as violently as men, the elderly treated the same way.

Spain's Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria lied, claiming police "acted with professionalism in an appropriate way." Images show otherwise, including women battered and bloodied by police violence.

Catalonia is a battleground in Barcelona and elsewhere. War in the streets rages against its people, trying to exercise their right to vote.

Hundreds so far were injured, including at least 11 police officers. Catalan President Carles Puigdemont blasted police state war on the Catalan people, saying:

"The unjustified, disproportionate and irresponsible violence of the Spanish state today has not only failed to stop Catalans' desire to vote...but has helped to clarify all the doubts we had to resolve today."

PM Mariano Rajoy bears full responsibility, operating like a tinpot despot, a modern-day Francisco Franco, Spain's military dictator from the 1930s until 1975.

Thousands assembled pre-dawn ahead of polls opening. People occupied some stations overnight to protect them, ballot boxes brought in during the night, voters urged to resist police tactics nonviolently, some told to hand them flowers.

Ahead of Sunday's vote, police closed 1,300 schools – designated polling stations. Thousands in Barcelona streets chanted "Votarem, votarem" – We will vote, many with their arms raised showing they're nonviolent.

Catalan television broadcast footage of crowds across the autonomous region ahead of the vote. Regional government spokesman Jordi Turnull said

“(t)he government today is in a position to affirm that we can celebrate the referendum of self-determination - not as we wanted, but (it will have democratic) guarantees.”

Catalans were told ballots can be cast anywhere, including in hospitals and retirement homes by presenting passports or other ID, voters permitted to use printed ballots downloaded from the Internet.

Days earlier, Catalan Mossos d’Esquadra police warned about disrupting order if voters are prevented from casting ballots.

Rajoy’s brutal tactics may convince most Spaniards he’s unfit to serve. Perhaps his days in office are numbered.

Despite police state violence, voting continues - deterred but determined, a courageous show of nonviolent people power.

Catalan independence from fascist Spain perhaps comes next.

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