Greatest Civil Rights Aggression Since Francisco Franco's Dictatorship: Spokesman

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**Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy is going to fire Catalan regional government and restrict its parliamentary freedoms.**

**Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont will lose all powers and income once the Senate approves Article 155, according to Spanish Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría.**

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The triggering of Article 155 will result in Spain imposing direct central government rule on Catalonia. Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, who enacted the unprecedented move, announced plans to fire the region's government and restrict its parliamentary freedoms.

Following the Senate's approval – which is expected to take place on Friday – Madrid will install a representative to govern the region, de Santamaria said during a radio interview.

Catalonia's regional parliament will meet on Thursday to decide on its response. Puigdemont asked the parliament to vote on a suitable response to the central Spanish government's plan.

Lluis Corominas, the Junts pel Si (Together for Yes) spokesman in the regional parliament, accused Spain of acting "like a dictatorship" before referencing Article 155 as "an act of

institutional violence without precedent."

"In this parliament we won't be able to debate or vote any initiative without Madrid's permission," the lawmaker said. "That is not democracy."

Corominas said Thursday's talk also has the support of far-left allies, Popular Unity Candidacy, CUP, party, which called for "mass civil disobedience" in response to Spain.

The party described Rajoy's move as "the greatest aggression against the civil, individual and collective rights of the Catalan people" since the dictatorship of Gen. Francisco Franco.

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According to a BBC report which cited a senior Catalan official, the regional authorities will ignore any mandate issued by Madrid to reclaim Catalonia. And the Spanish government will reject any possibility of dialogue while Catalonia considers independence.

Catalan foreign affairs spokesman, Raul Romeva, said that the European Union will lose credibility if it allows Madrid to impose direct rule on Catalonia.

"How can the European Union live with that situation if it appears?" Romeva told BBC radio. "How can they be credible if they allow this to happen? Because what I can tell you is that the people and the institutions in Catalonia would not let this ... happen."

He said only the Catalan people have the right to change the regional institutions and that the central government was acting against the will of the people.

The Catalan government reported that of the 43 percent of voters who took part in the Oct. 1 referendum, approximately 90 percent were in favor of independence.