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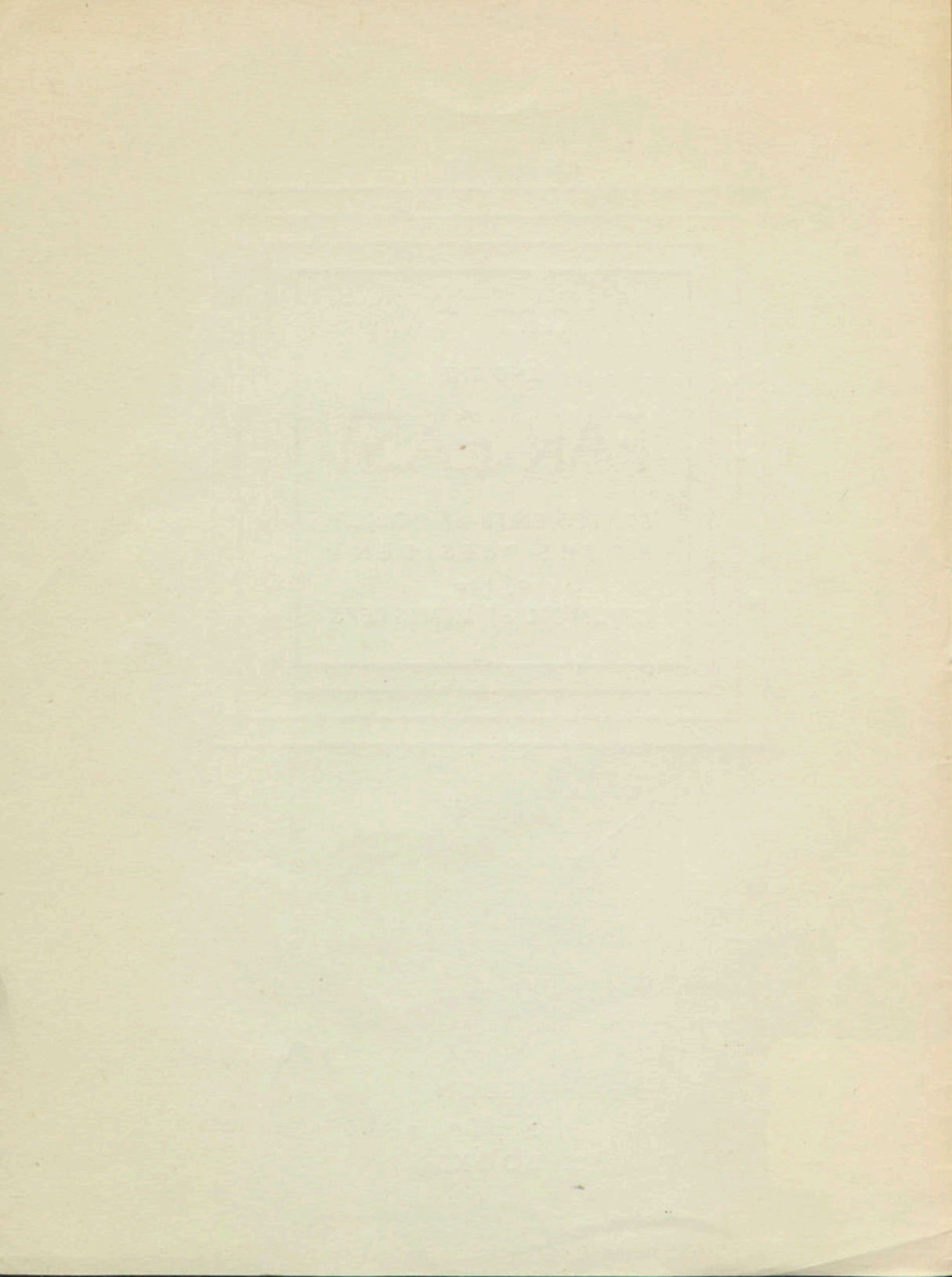
PORTUGAL
AND THE
FAR EAST

STATEMENTS of POLICY
BY THE PRESIDENT
of the
COUNCIL of MINISTERS

N.I. 45

LISBON
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BOOKS

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PORTUGAL

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STATEMENTS OF POLICY
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of the
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

LISBON
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I thank the Minister for the Colonies for having taken the initiative in promoting this meeting with the greatest and most complete representation of the peoples of the Empire that we have ever been able to gather here : just as this visit, on the eve of departure, affords to all the opportunity for leave taking, so does it enable me to wish them Godspeed and to express my hope for their individual prosperity, and that of their respective communities and homelands.

I well realise the sacrifice — and in any case the hardship — which it must have meant to many to leave work and family, interests and activities, in order to undertake the long voyage to the heart of the Empire and thence to the capital of Catholicism. But if we have ventured on so hazardous and costly an enterprise, it was because we had two things at heart : one, to reveal our community of sentiment in the light of one of the highest expressions of Portugal's «mission», at the moment when the Church has considered it meet that St. João de Brito should be admitted to the honours of the Altars ; the other, to show how we are united around the hearth of the paternal mansion by ties of kinship, of economic and political life, of culture, and of faith, the while that the world seems to be crumbling and is certainly divided by intolerance

and hatred. Amidst the present convulsions we stand as a brotherhood of peoples, cemented by centuries of peaceful life and Christian understanding, as a community of peoples who, whatever may be their differentiations, help each other and seek their own development and progress, proud to call themselves and to be Portuguese.

This idea of brotherhood and of sharing in a common destiny in the midst of all other peoples on earth we never for one moment forsook, either when we were festively celebrating the eight hundred years of our independent existence, or in the solemn hour of the consecration in Rome of Portugal's missionary efforts, or, before that, during the truly sad years of war when Macau, and, even more harshly, Timor, had to suffer privations and threats, or even the rigours of invasion and of foreign occupation. But now we have healed our wounds and, very simply, we are continuing on our way.

From time to time echoes reach me of distant and impassioned campaigns concerning the ties which link Portugal to her provinces in the East; and it grieves me to see involved in them, on occasion, nationals of ours who have allowed to wither in their hearts the affection which should bind them to the Portuguese family. Though injustices may distress us, even if they can to a certain extent be explained by the passions which have been unleashed in this convulsed moment in the world's history, they do not suffice to disquiet us unduly. In the first place, we must rely on the spirit of justice and of respect for the rights of others on which it is being sought to build the society of the future; secondly, we maintain loyal and friendly relations with those nations closest to our own small communities. And I need not mention that, as we are a brotherhood of peoples, as I have called it, we are bound together by a true fraternity rather than by any slender political solidarity. After all, if anyone has pro-

claimed and put into practice the principles of racial equality, of freedom, of high moral and material standards for peoples, it is we. We have not now to set sail on a favourable wind, but to keep to a course set down the centuries. If, for example, we feel ourselves to be indissolubly bound to the territories of Portuguese India, it is not on account of material interests which indeed are slight both for us and for others — but because, with Macau, they constitute a monument to the Western spirit, which we had the glory, which we were bold enough, and which we suffered to erect, thereby paving the way for St. Francis Xavier and, with him, the splendid flowering of the highest Christian spirituality.

This visit of yours to European Continental Portugal, these weeks of life in common, of intense observation and of national exaltation will strengthen still further, if that be possible, our solidarity as peoples, brothers already through centuries of history as also through many common sufferings and aspirations.

May that fire never die out! May the spirit not lose its course! May the cult of Portugal be no less ardent in the overseas provinces than it is here. We who are present are a mere link in the chain of Time; the Motherland alone asserts itself in the perennity of the centuries.

Godspeed! Godspeed!

Speech by the President of the Council of Ministers on July 11th, 1947, before the delegations from all Portuguese territories, which attended the ceremony of the canonization of João de Brito in Rome.

Another point. The events of the war and of the post-war period in the Far East — the disturbances in Indonesia, the liberation of China, the independence of India and Pakistan — have all had their repercussions in our small territories in those areas and have caused the Government some anxiety, in spite of the devotion and fidelity of the local populations. In the meantime, Timor is returning to normal administrative conditions and is making satisfactory progress toward an economic recovery made possible by the financial grants placed at the disposal of the local government to repair the damage caused by enemy occupation and devastation. It is to be hoped that a careful administration will seize the opportunity to reconstruct the economy of Timor and to take advantage of her geographical position, of the wealth of her soil and sub-soil and of the qualities of her people.

On the fringe of China, a haven of rest and refuge for her people, Macau has not always enjoyed, since the war, the tranquillity which she deserves for having accomplished her mission as the standard-bearer of Europe in the Orient.

China has freed herself, and very rightly, by her sacrifices and her contribution to victory, from all the restrictions imposed for many years now on the full exercise of her so-

vereignty. As a signatory to the treaties which had established them, Portugal took great pleasure in giving her consent to the abolition of certain institutions and privileges which could not but damage the prestige and wound the susceptibilities of the Chinese nation on its own soil. Owing to incomplete information or to exacerbated feelings, certain Chinese newspapers drew, at the time, inferences which did not fit the facts and which showed lack of appreciation of our position. But the excellent relations which prevail between China and Portugal, their mutual friendship and their reciprocal helpfulness were not disturbed as a result of these incidents.

On the other hand, Portuguese India has been a great source of worry. The fall of the Indian Empire and the setting up of two vast dominions which for the time being remain incorporated in the British Commonwealth, but may become independent nations tomorrow, belong doubtless with the great events of our day. We may well understand that repercussions should occur beyond the frontiers, in countries which are not under British rule.

On the flank of Greater India are Goa, Damão and Diu. From this small province hundreds of thousands of people have emigrated in the course of time. Retaining their Portuguese nationality, or until quite recently acquiring British nationality, they earned their living in Greater India protected by English liberty, just as Indians have done in our African possessions or Portuguese from Portugal have done in Brazil. On the other hand, we own Mormugão which, as the finest port on the West Coast, offers or can offer, convenient and economical facilities to large regions of Hindustan. All this exchange of population and service is usual in international life and no great difficulty need be experienced in finding solutions conforming to the interests of both parties.

It doubtless does great honour to Portuguese culture and to her civilising genius in the Orient that the Portuguese are appreciated in India. They shed lustre on Goa and can serve in the local administration, even attaining to high positions. It is simply unthinkable that this same superiority should now be turned against us.

If Goa is geographically India, from the social, religious and cultural points of view she is Europe. The Westerners, Indo-Portuguese and Indians who live there are, politically speaking, Portuguese citizens, that is to say, they are members of a civilized community which makes no distinction between them, which has existed for centuries, and which they serve not only in the land of their birth but also in Portugal itself and in the whole of the Portuguese Empire.

It is natural that the gale which has swept India should have stirred up the people of Goa as well and should have upset some of the Goanese who work in India and who were worried — without any reason, for that matter — about the prospects of their livelihood, or who imagined that under certain conditions a bigger future might open up to them. It is understandable that part of the press should be carried away by the zeal of neophytes, but we cannot but be taken aback at the affirmations flung about by responsible people who, because they are responsible, should know where to draw the line.

India — whose independence we, who have for over four centuries had dealings with her, are able to hail with emotion — could run no greater risk than to invoke a vague racialism and to seek to found a State on the very errors against which she herself has fought.

If new circumstances or the yearnings of the population wishing to see their responsibilities increased justify changes in status or in the administrative system, that is a problem

which concerns Portuguese India and ourselves and for which a solution will be found in due course, since it is already under examination.

On the other hand we must have confidence in the patriotism of our people whose religious, cultural and even civic heritage can only be safeguarded by loyalty to the State which, working through the ties of blood, integrated into Europe a portion of India, and made it part of the Portuguese Empire.

Extract from a speech by the President of the Council of Ministers in the Library of the National Assembly, on the 21st November 1947.

I referred at the outset to the delicate position of the Portuguese territories in the Far East. I must now develop this point a little and it will be seen how the difficulties which are being experienced there are connected with the subject-matter of this speech.

The Asiatic Continent is undergoing one of its millenary transformations before our very eyes. One knows not why, but it would seem to be a law of History that the vanquished should leave to the victors the implementing of their own plans. The hegemony under which the Liberation of Asia was to have been effected may not be the same by reason of the defeat and downfall of Japan ; but it is her ideas and her programme that it will be sought to realize : the solidarity of the Continent against any position of dominion alien to it. It is true that in years gone by the Republics of the American Continent took the same road, having merely endeavoured, in practice, to adapt the new ideals to the prevailing circumstances and to the existing rights of the European nations.

The three outstanding realities of present-day Asia are the emergence of two great States in India, the changes which are to be foreseen as the result of the Communist victory in China, and the creation of the Republic of Indonesia. Geogra-

phically, Goa is in India, whilst Macau is imbedded in Chinese territory, and Timor borders on Indonesia. Hence the worries, if not the difficulties already apparent. Force alone will not suffice to overcome them; there is indeed a problem in knowing whether reason can prevent resort to violence and lead to respect for Law and the conciliation of interests.

Appeals from abroad in the name of the rising nationalisms and through the voice of their propaganda have not exerted the slightest influence on the minds of the people of Timor, engrossed as they are, under our guidance and with the help of our resources, in the task of repairing the ruins of the recent Japanese «Liberation». But, when the situation becomes stable in those regions, it is to be expected that the same principle in the name of which the Dutch Empire was destroyed will begin to reveal its power of expansion or of contagion.

Macau does not provide an example of conquest or of military domination; it is a monument to the first contact of Europe with the East, and has historically been respected as a symbol of the possibility of understanding and friendship among different races. There they mingle and fuse, and there they cooperate in peace and mutual respect. It is not possible to foresee the attitude the new authorities will take nor what their intentions are for the immediate future. It is reasonable to suppose that, on embarking on the reconstruction of their huge Empire, so long rendered unhappy by wars and civil strife, the wielders of power will attach greater value to the maintenance of good relations with other States than to ideologies the foundations and practical scope of which are doubtful. But because proximity to the scene of great events counselled us to be prudent, the local garrison has been reinforced so that it may be prepared for the more pressing needs.

The case of Goa is the most delicate and serious owing

partly to strong external pressure and partly to the bewilderment which exists in the minds of our people. I am not referring to the campaign in the Indian press, which is free and without responsibility, but rather to the official pronouncements of representatives of the established power who are apt to talk of the integration of Goa in Greater India so cavalierly as to justify surprise, to say the least.

It may be said that India is in a position indefinitely to create difficulties and complications for the life of Goa : territorial contiguity, economic dependence, the labour and savings of our emigrants, all are weapons she can effectively use against us. But that is not the issue. The issue is whether she can resort to these weapons and yet remain within the bounds set by those juridical and moral principles which govern the relations between civilized countries, and hitherto she has considered that she cannot.

India feels herself to be impelled by an ideal of geographical unity — an ideal, be it said, unattained and already frustrated, even apart from us. It is an ideal, a point of view, but it is not a reason and much less a right, because the right lies in the fact of Goa's having been for centuries integrated within Portuguese sovereignty. India has racial problems but she cannot lay this charge against us who are free from them within our territories and everywhere raise our voice against discriminations such as victimise her own sons. India has frontier problems which are problems of security ; it would be absurd to say that such exist in Goa. That is, escape from difficulties is not to be found through the absorption or the forcible integration of this Portuguese State in Greater India ; through good neighbourliness and friendly co-operation many and easy would be the ways out.

Thus the Delhi Government have placed before the Portuguese Government their objections to the exercise of

ecclesiastical patronage («Padroado») as constituting foreign political intervention in the nomination of ecclesiastical authorities with jurisdiction in Indian territory. Notwithstanding that this is not the meaning of the «Padroado» and that it has not been used for political ends, and even though it goes against our feelings, we understand that susceptibilities may be wounded by the exercise of this right of patronage and consider that we should concert with the Holy See with a view to giving to India such satisfaction as may be due.

Mormugão costs us millions of Escudos annually and is of greater service to India than to the Portuguese territory. It is a situation which exists elsewhere and which can be largely improved to the benefit of both parties. And so on : both in the moral and in the economic fields there is scope for understandings. Let us hope that the coming establishment of Indian diplomatic representation in Portugal will enable all these problems to be clarified in the common interest.

Now, as to internal questions. There is no doubt but that the events in India greatly disturbed some of our people. The very magnitude of the historic occurrence across the frontier, the opportunities which it seemed to offer, the cultural superiority of our people, their widespread employment in administrative posts under British rule, their experience of autonomy, all this gave rise to aspirations which were but a false mirage. The truth is this : Goa could only choose between being a State within Portugal and a small district of India, with the complete undermining of present situations. The Portuguese or Indo-Portuguese culture accumulated down the centuries would itself stand no chance of survival. The Hindu population would naturally look at things in a different way. In the end, there came to be a reaction in our favour.

But Goa has grievances and aspirations which, on examination, were seen to be incapable of satisfaction, even within



the limits of the reasonable, owing to the restrictions derived from the Colonial Act which, as is known, forms part of the Constitution. The revision which may be carried out will facilitate the solution of a number of outstanding problems.

These, however, are family matters which are neither sufficiently prominent nor grave to warrant the imprinting on the affairs of our Indian territories a course differing from that given to them by our forebears, under the shelter of the Portuguese flag.

Extract from a speech by the President of the Council of Ministers in the Library of the National Assembly, on the 20th October, 1949.

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