

794 Rp

MARCELLO CAETANO
PRIME MINISTER

PORTUGAL
CANNOT YIELD

SPEECH DELIVERED
IN THE NECESSIDADES PALACE
ON OCTOBER 6th, 1969

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CANTON

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SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DA INFORMAÇÃO E TURISMO

1969



INCORPORAÇÃO

199
5/11/55

ROBERTO
CANTO DE ALMEIDA

CONSTITUÍDO

em 10 de Novembro de 1954

em conformidade com o

Decreto nº 10.000, de 10 de Novembro de 1954

A year ago I asked you to be a member of the government I then formed, thus remaining as Foreign Minister, a post you first took up in May 1961. Your agreement was given with great friendliness, but with a condition. Very important private reasons had long invited you to return to your professional activity and it was only an old friendship, which greatly honours me, that prevailed upon you to hold over the idea for some time and agree to collaborate with me for a few months.

During this period I have thus been privileged to benefit from your political and diplomatic experience, your culture, intelligence and exceptional working virtues, as you remained at the head of the Foreign Ministry. In all matters I have been able to appraise the qualities of your character: loyalty, honesty, integrity, patriotism, devotion to public service and an awareness of the dignity of your position.

In it you have been no cold, aloof administrator, confined within the privacy of a Ministerial study. Having shared in defining a foreign policy you have always believed in its truth and its virtues. Your faith in it has been a militant one. In daily

routine as in great moments of crisis, speaking in Portugal or in the course of debate in international assemblies, in bilateral conversations or amidst Portugal's enemies, enlightening Portuguese public opinion through Press conferences or in addressing world public opinion, in speaking as in writing, you, Dr Franco Nogueira, have been a fighting Minister, generously and fully devoted to the cause of Portugal.

You are the example of the leader who has risen through the ranks of the Portuguese diplomatic service, whose officials, scattered about the world and often in very uncomfortable situations, have always been ready and able to expound and defend, courageously, the rights of their country.

You are leaving the Government, but not abandoning the public service of your country. You are, so to speak, leaving one trench but continuing in the front line. I am sure that if the electorate is sensible enough to elect you to the National Assembly, as I hope it will, you will do your country further, most significant service there.

This does not seem to me a timely occasion to fill the vacancy you are leaving in this Ministry. For a short time I shall administer it, with the aid of Dr Rui Patrício, who has shown sterling intelligence and ability in the position of Under-Secretary of State for Overseas Development. This also means that the defence of the Portuguese Overseas Provinces will not weaken on the diplomatic plane, any more than it will internally.

I can understand the communist international violently attacking our defence of the African provinces, which they term a «colonial war». I understand why those who place the

interests of world communism above Portuguese interests seek by every possible means to break down the obstacle provided by the Portuguese presence in Africa, by hurling at it such names as «colonialist», «oppressor», «harmful to the working classes», and such other terms of abuse as may blacken it.

I can understand the countries interested in the existence of frail, incompetent, powerless governments in African territories, whose apparent independence they think they can manipulate to their advantage, viewing with hostility the Portuguese provinces overseas, where there is an authority to discipline the contribution made by all those who wish to share in their progress, without letting them be taken over by foreign interests.

What I do find difficult to understand is that there should be Portuguese people who advocate parleys with the leaders of the terrorist movements, negotiating with them over the surrender of territories where thousands of their fellow-Portuguese live and work, some white, others black, but all trusting in the protection of the common Homeland. I sincerely cannot understand those who, ingenuously or perversely, think that such negotiations would lead to any result except the annihilation and expulsion of hard-working Portuguese folk, a crisis in all the activities that make the provinces rich and are the token of their inhabitants' future, and political, economic and social chaos in regions where now peace, prosperity and harmony reign.

I know and love Africa and its people. I form my opinion on these matters by thinking about it and them. Meditating the drama of premature independence, the total lack of preparation

of the African peoples to set up and administer States of the type that it is sought to force on them, the democratic structures and foundations of which have nothing in common with age-old customs of tribal administration ; considering the inevitable tragedy that sowing revolutionary ideas and racial hatred would bring about in environments where, in a few years more, the balanced, patient development would lead to the consolidation of multiracial societies ; pondering the dangers of enslavement of men in the so-called African forms of socialism or in the handing-over of countries to irresponsible forms of neocolonialism avid to exploit them ; in thinking about these facts I support and maintain the truth and the need for the Portuguese presence in Africa.

When I hear it said that Portugal itself, freed from the responsibilities and liabilities of the Overseas Provinces, would experience a new age of prosperity, I begin to wonder whether those who say this can possibly believe and mean it.

I have never advocated the view that Portugal without the Overseas Provinces would necessarily lose its independence, but I would not like to think of the dark days of any such deprivation. What a scene would it be if the Portuguese of Angola and Mozambique, expelled from their homes, came to Portugal in search of a new way of life, yet feeling furious at the failure of the efforts made to keep the Portuguese flag flying in Africa ! I do not dare to imagine how sorely the moral wound would hurt, which for long years would remain a livid, bleeding gash in the country's conscience by the abandonment or surrender of the Overseas Provinces.

Handing over to whom? There are several, rival heads and movements, only to be distinguished by the foreign powers that supply them with weapons and financial and diplomatic support. What if those movements and leaders, who lack an authority of their own, who have no roots in the territories and no kind of legitimacy for their pretensions, had only in the negotiations the voice and the voting power dictated by the powers that support and manipulate them? And if, in the last analysis, the negotiations were finally to be effected, not with the inhabitants or their representatives, but with countries which would covertly dominate them so that later, equally covertly, they could be the lords, masters and exploiters of the territories concerned?

For the truth is this: contrary to what insidious propaganda would have us believe, no movement since the Congo uprising in 1961 has arisen spontaneously, developed and taken root on Portuguese territory. They have all been encouraged, supported and directed by foreign countries.

No, the handing over of the Overseas Provinces to the subversive movements would not bring happiness to the Africans, nor, quite certainly, would it be a cause of prosperity, nobility or national pride for the Portuguese.

Portuguese India was neither abandoned nor handed over. Against the military might of the Indian Union we knew that our garrison could do no more than serve as a guard of honour for the Portuguese flag. The self-proclaimed pacifists of New Delhi thus found themselves obliged to mount a conquering invasion. This act of violence burnt Nehru's hands and discredited all the doctrine he had proclaimed. The Portuguese

citizens of Goa, militarily occupied by a foreign power, have not been handed over by the Motherland, for they belong to it still. We cannot say that they are now in a worse plight, from the cultural point of view, than the inhabitants of the former French possessions in India.

That lives are lost in resisting subversion? No one can deplore the fact more than those occupying responsible positions of government, whose duty it is to be sparing of the blood of the people. But should we then yield like cowards to the first assault of our assailants? Should we then apply a policy of renunciation and withdrawal every time we are challenged? Should we then passively look on, to avoid getting involved in any struggle, at the major evils of anarchy, civil war, assassination and massacre, the destruction of property and the razing of civilization?

It is an illusion to suppose that to fold one's arms passively is the way to prevent violence. We may deplore the fact, but if violence is unchecked it can only incite more violence and crime. The certainty of going unpunished encourages the criminal. Crime, disorder, subversion destroy far more lives and property than would be the cost of timely prevention and effective repression. There is thus no choice: we must use force to avoid violence. We have to sacrifice ourselves in the struggle for order if we want to be protected from disorder. We must be ready actively to defend all that civilization has constructed unless we want to see it crumble into chaos. This attitude is challenged by bourgeois love of comfort, which is always short-sighted except when it suffers in itself the consequences of its errors of understanding and action. And, of course, there is

the protest of the revolution, which loudly condemns as unjust all that stands in its way. But sane nations cannot relapse into bourgeois inertia, nor can they let themselves be deluded by revolutionary catcalls.

These are the reasons why Portugal cannot yield, cannot compromise, cannot capitulate in the struggle being waged in the Overseas Provinces. We must be ready to do all that can pacifically be done to further the natural development of the great African provinces. But we must be intransigent as to a withdrawal which would imperil for tens of years all that we have done and got ready in the course of centuries, in Europe and in the World at large, at the cost of immeasurable effort, continual suffering and the shedding of our national blood.

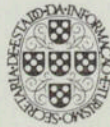
The World must understand that this is the only way to progress and peace. But first the Portuguese themselves must proclaim it: I am sure that they will do this, with energy, with enthusiasm, with faith.

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