SALAZAR SAYS

THE ROAD FOR THE FUTURE

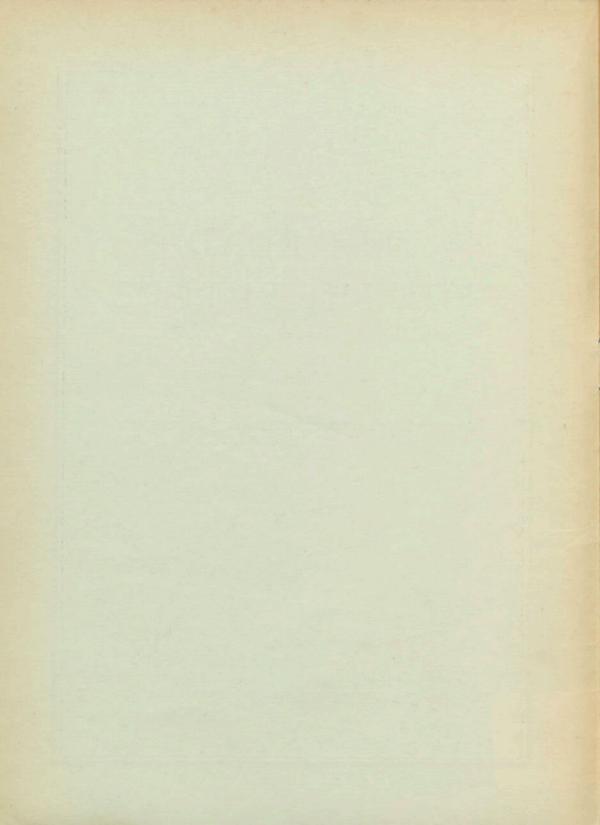
SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE PRIME MINISTER, PROF. OLIVEIRA SALAZAR, AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE NATIONAL UNION, ON JUNE 30th, 1958.

SECRETARIADO NACIONAL DA INFORMAÇÃO

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SECRETARIADO, NACIONAL, DA INFORMAÇÃO

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Gentlemen:

I had intented this gathering for the examination of certain political problems brought into public debate by the recent elections and which I believe interest the oppositions no less than we ourselves. But before I deal with them I would first fulfil my duty of once again thanking the Executive and all other committees of the National Union for their efforts and the sacrifices they have had to make to assure victory, even if here and there some lack of zeal or excess of trustfulness has been noted. The Ladies and the movement they organized deserve a special word of praise, and even more so if some of us reached the voting booths with their help. It is true there was no call for apprehension but duty can be correctly though coldly fulfilled while faith and enthusiasm are communicative, create supporters, sweep along the lukewarm and multiply energies. We should therefore be grateful to those who have given us such wide support and so useful a lesson.

The Supreme Court has already given its final verdict on the election and there can thus be no doubt that we won it; yet our being fully convinced of this fact should be our starting-point. It was clear to all that the oppositions' campaign was not really one of propaganda in favour of candidates for the office of President of the Republic, but the development of a subversive movement, such that attempts have been made to carry it on beyond the election: it would become permanent and more serious still if with weak mind and hand we allowed it to spread. It appears that the oppositions intend to stick to their complaint that the elections were not freely held and were stolen from them. I have never heard losing oppositions say anything different in Portugal. The difference in the votes cast is so great that nobody will believe it can have been obtained by underhand tricks, of which we were, moreover, victims in many places.

In spite of everything I believe that the holding of these elections and the participation of the oppositions in the voting was a great service to the country. Not because the choice of the Head of the State should continue to be made in this manner but because it is essential to create and root in for similar manifestations habits of tolerance and civic spirit of which the voting itself, despite what went before, was a model example.

The storm of violent criticisms that has assailed the Government and those who play a part in administration has so disturbed some minds that they have doubted the possibilities of the regime and have wondered about the security of the road we have so far followed. They did not realize that subversive cries would then have greater value than the votes cast and the clear statement of faith they were destined to express. Independently of the attention due to all criticisms, the road for the future should be defined on the basis of our victory and not on recriminations.

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Situated as we are only two ways are open to us, and no other has appeared in any way during the debate: one, that can be expressed as completing, renewing and continuing;

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and the other as making the regime develop into a different regime, that could be no other than a party one.

When I speak of 'regime' I am not referring to the Monarchy, which is no regime but an institution which in its own way may contribute beneficially to very different regimes. If we are to say anything useful about the problem we must be able to view it by the sole light of reason and what is uniformly understood to be the national interest. It is neither prudent nor necessary for my purpose to revive still active passions which would undoubtedly confuse our verdict. Let us then return to the party regime.

Many of the countries whose spiritual formation most closely resembles ours officially adopt the democratic regime and in many of them democracy has assumed the parliamentary form. Democratic regimes favour the flourishing of parties wheareas the demands of government call for at least a reduction in their number: in such regimes a tacitly accepted two-party system seems to be the least disadvantageous system. Yet for the time being only the Anglo-Saxon countries have managed to establish this formula, already known to us, moreover, from the alternation in power of two parties under the monarchy. This is why from abroad we sometimes receive discreet suggestions that the Government should create its own opposition and favour it; inside Portugal many support the idea and consider it practicable. What I am about to say is to show that it is possible to create political parties - and this was the confessed object of the oppositions after a new dictatorship - but that it is not possible nor advantageous to create an opposition party.

In Portugal since the beginning of the XIXth century many political experiments have been made, similar if not equal to those we see other countries embark on. We had the non-party monarchy, civil wars, insurrections, the personal command of the marshals, the alternation in power of two parties, the splitting-up of parties, the partyless republic of 1910, new

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division after the 1911 Constitution, attempts at union, the Presidential regime of Sidónio and finally the 28th of May movement. In the period preceding this movement there was in fact a strong, solidly constructed party faced by small political patrols or, to speak with greater propriety and respect, political general staffs without important forces to follow them. I have never believed that the latters' relative weakness resulted from the strength of the democratic party but merely from the impossibility of setting up a strong conservative party in the circumstances then obtaining : the monarchical question did not permit the recruitment of numerous forces on the right: and the revolutionary method that from time to time intervened to establish a dreamt-of balance can be said to have completely failed in its purpose. Yet the idea that there we could find the solution to the Portuguese political problem was shared by some who took part in the 28th of May movement, and the fact that ours has been a different path has been interpreted as a betraval and is still, as we have seen, considered to be a mistake. This obliges us to review the problem in 1958.

How can a valid opposition be formed and what would its characteristics be?

In order to mobilize 23 % of the electorate, the oppositions formed the greatest coalition and the most complete conjugation of efforts on record and had to accept the co-operation, if not the directive preponderance, of communist elements. Those who still survive from the so-called democratic party, liberal monarchists or 'integralists' gone astray, socialists, elements of the Seara Nova, the social-democratic group, remains of the moderate republican parties, some young men desirous of change, and the communists — all could unite, as they have done, but they could only unite to subvert, never to construct. You cannot be a liberal and a socialist at the same time; or a monarchist and a republican; or Catholic and communist; so that from this we may infer that the oppositions would in no circumstances be able to constitute a valid alternative and that their impossible victory would of necessity mean to the very people who shared in it a descent into chaos, launching out on a new chapter of national disorder.

Of all those aligned for the assault only some few have a doctrine, a faith and methods of action of their own, and they are the communists. So that, since at the same time, as it is logical to believe, the National Union would break up, that alternative is clouded by the appearance of a series of parties, of which the communist party, openly or disguisedly recognized, would be the inspirer and guide and finally the only dominant force. There are many examples of this in the world which we would do well to ponder.

The predominant tendency in the world, brought about by the difficulties of the internal and external problems of States, is already sufficiently evident in the non-party and anti-party directions: in the middle we find an effort at a combination or even a concert of parties in order to divide power up among themselves, as if they were one. Yet these are organizations with identical or similar philosophical and ethical foundations which are separated more on account of personal incompatibilities or preferences than by divergences of doctrine. But this is not what we find in Portugal; moreover, at the very moment others are making their toilsome way towards unity, we who have been able to conquer it were returning to dispersion.

Of all our wide experience of political experiments, that of the last 30 years is undoubtedly that best adjusted to our character, the one which has assured us a longer period of calm and public peace, which has brought forth the greatest benefits for the community. It was necessary to demand sacrifices, of course; naturally there are mistakes, cases of injustice, deficiencies, delays, misuse and all this we may admit because nothing is enough to destroy the value of the comparison. We agree that order, public calm, the decorum of political life, with the exception of the election periods, the prestige we have gained, general progress, the strengthening of national cohesion here and overseas could have been attained with other persons but never with other principles.

We should not confuse opposition with parties, nor should we believe that without parties expressly permitted or allowed for in the Constitution and held to be organizations indispensable to political life, the voices of disagreement cannot be heard or can have no influence on government, however numerous they may be. On the contrary. Only open and national governments independent of party organizations, can, without denying themselves, satisfy or embody in their achievements and even in their doctrine that part of truth and national interest to be found here and there, without dependence on party affiliations, political beliefs or groups. But the parties cannot do this without abdicating or without helping on their own destruction.

If the Nation behaves with common sense and does not pay excessive tribute to the abstraction of systems and personal ambitions, what is called for is not a return to parliamentary disorder and weak governments, not to destroy the experiment which has gained credit thanks to its efficiency, but to renew it if necessary in persons and methods and to go on ahead. This is the second road to which I referred above.

II

It must be recognized that some present difficulties have arisen from the fact that the corporative organization was not completed earlier and that as a result the Corporative Chamber does not stand forth as the direct emanation of corporatively organized economic, cultural and spiritual interests. As soon as this comes about, within the next few months we hope, the National Assembly will be able to alter the provisions of the Constitution as to the selection of the Head of the State, for it will then be possible to find a wider basis for this purpose than the Chamber of Deputies. Indeed, those who took the initiative of the 1933 Constitution did not consider it reasonable to entrust the choice of the President of the Republic to so limited an assembly, when the powers entrusted to him and his situation at the head of the organs of sovereignty, but independent of them all, called for his being chosen by the Nation as a whole. I owe this explanation to those who recall the promise made years ago that it should never again be possible to bring about a constitutional 'coup d'état'.

Whence two difficulties : one referring to the practicability of the corporative experiment, and the second to the existence of the National Assembly itself.

Let us begin with the latter. It is arguable whether, existing a true and genuine Corporative Chamber, that form of inorganic representation should be maintained, together with the direct suffrage which gives rise to it. The rigour of principles might lead to its extinction but practical convenience and the need for the general interest to be known and expressed through it may make its maintenance and perhaps also a widening of its composition advisable. The hybrid nature of the system is no objection, nor is it a thing to be rejected in politics. And if men independent of any party grouping or the representatives of sporadically constituted oppositions should take their seat there through possible election victories, there is nothing here to prejudice the working of the regime and its development. Although the National Union itself should be kept open to all who profess a healthy nationalism, there may be advantages if political life is made available to others by other paths. Media the bail has asale ching it exism that

Now for the corporative organization. Sound and abelia

Economic liberalism is dead and we are not therefore free to choose to have an organization or not. We have to adopt one. We decided on the corporative organization because we

believed it would provide us with the desirable synthesis of interests, the meeting-place of qualified representatives, the possibility of understanding replacing the class struggle. If we start from the principle that employers' and workers' interests are essentially contradictory and not at one and that, beyond these interests, there is no general interest of society or the consumer to be safeguarded, then we can recognized an organization in both fields and we can admit the struggle between the two without worrving about the consequences. But this notion is so clearly opposed to the general interest that communism, starting out as it does from the struggle of classes, aims at achieving the destruction of antagonisms by conferring on the State ownership of the means of production and denving at the same time the initiative of free enterprise and the workers' liberty. If the latter wish to remain free they must repudiate socialism or communism, but must then understand that it falls to the State to promote an organization in which struggle is replaced by collaboration and by the conciliation of interests. Herein lies the justification of the corporative organization.

Nevertheless floods of complaints come in about some organisms, caused either by the general deficiency of leaders which affects us in all sectors, or because some have thought that the corporative organization would be a means of multiplying middlemen, removing competition and safeguarding against all comers the positions acquired by some. This is neither our intention nor in the general interest.

At this moment we cannot take up any position because the question has not been sufficiently investigated: we must first make it quite clear and find out whether the discontent affects the principles or their bad application. There are complaints about the staff of many organisms which do not surprise me, although I am surprised they should be repeated without any satisfaction being given. In the public departments, sitting at his work-table, the good kind Portuguese sometimes becomes transformed and forgets that the poor people who seek advice or information and give their excuses for some omission or error are those who work and pay for us to defend their interests. That is why I myself have long since given up working at my desk!

III

Whatever turn events take, I think that there lies a hard task ahead of any government in the next six months. If, as we expect, the National Assembly approves the Bill of the Development Plan and the Corporative Chamber also approves it, the next budget will have to carry the weight of public enterprises and the aid that it is the place of the State to give. But as this is only a minor portion, clearly the Welfare Bodies, the Banks, the Insurance Companies and contractors in general must undergo the same craving for financing and achievements and prepare for them. In the next few months, also, we have to lay down the planned investment bank so that it can begin to function effectively with the beginning of the Second Development Plan. For private industry it will be not only a precious but an indispensable collaborator, as a supplier of credit and perhaps above all as counsellor and guide.

During the election campaign much was said about the small salaries of the lowest grades of civil servants. a fact which gave rise to much speculation; but all will understand what I am now going to say. It would not be honest for us to take steps or make promises in the matter, however just, however pressing the need, on the eve of a vast Development Plan, without calculating needs and available resources for both. Only after defining the overall panorama of means available and fixing the responsibilities of the State could anything be done in the matter of the salaries and pay of civil servants and the armed forces. Anyone making a speech devoid of real responsibility may speak airily and settle on increases or percentages, but experts on the matter know that here are three difficult and delicate problems to be solved. They are: to introduce a new structure of the grading of civil servants and their respective salaries, as present ones are out-of-date; to bring salaries up-to-date in relation at least to the cost of living; to benefit the humblest classes according to the differences that can be noted in the very living-standard of today. Preparatory studies are now so advanced that it is possible for the reform to come into effect with the new budget and the new Plan, that is, in January 1959.

We should not forget that in relation to civil servants two of the most pressing problems are housing and sickness benefits, both of which had already been taken into account in the 1958 budget. But we could not foresee that the election campaign would even exert its influence on the filling in of forms, for it was pointed out that nothing would be done, it all being nothing more than Government propaganda. But things have regained their normal course and will be fulfilled just like all others.

IV

If we intend to pursue the renovation or vivification of the regime, changes of staff will be called for at various levels. Power tires, wears out and displeases those who bear its weight, even when there is no reason for it. They are like sick people: they turn over in bed, suffer the same pains and yet seem to feel better. I am known to have been rather reluctant to make changes just for the sake of changing, and this springs from the hard lessons of experience and from a certain concept of public service that I know is not generally held. I can thus understand the impatience of political necessities, to the creation of which I do not wish to contribute. I am, moreover, convinced that the human channels through which influences of any kind are exerted should not always be the same. Fundamentally at every moment we have to weigh advantages and disadvantages, many of them born of our defective make-up. Were it not so, we would say that Switzerland is not a model country just because several of her ministers have remained in their posts for as long as twenty or thirty years, and died in them.

This question was presented in the election as an example of stagnation and is concerned to a greater degree with the Prime Minister himself. Indeed, after thirty years, we could have at our disposal in the old style some thirty Prime Ministers, to whose intelligence and honesty we would do justice, above all after their death, without avoiding their feeling in their lifetimes a personal sense of frustration because they had not time enough to put their ideas of government into practice. I would dare to say something more on this subject, because even among ourselves there is no exact idea of the question.

I am the first to understand that we should not bar more than is necessary the paths by which the finest intelligences may rise to high posts; quite apart from the fact that strength diminishes and the capacity of work no longer corresponds to the demands made upon it, the Nation will only benefit from the extension of such openings. Simply, although I have suggested retirement I have never insisted on it, in the hope of achieving a degree of structure and consolidation for the regime when it could make its own way without any major difficulties. No doubt many would do it as well as I can, or better, but we have to take into account a feeling which has brought about what we might call the catastrophic vision of events, and this in its turn has created a kind of inhibition in people's minds. This way of looking at things is not justified but it has acted as a grave political reality that we should strive to alter, giving to feeling that which belongs to it, but allowing reason to discern as it ought. In summary, I am a

man who is always ready to leave, I would not say without disappointments, but without disillusionment.

How much could I desire that all those who are raised to the height of honour and power and consider them their belonging or their right, or who have at some time enjoyed the favours of the multitude, should meditate a little on the Passion of Christ, as it is described in any of the Gospels. There are above all two points we should consider.

On one Sunday Christ makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. That multitude he had called about Him, consoling them in their misery or bringing them a ray of hope, spread their clothes before Him, filled His path with rushes, followed Him in an apotheosis. Within four days, as many as extend from Sunday to Thursday, the flowers dried, the palms and the laurels wilted, the hosannas and the hurrahs fell silent, and we are not told that even the marvelling multitude returned.

The second point refers to the Foremost of the Apostles. To me St. Peter appears as a pure emanation of nature, the son of the land or the sea, open, simple, loyal, as firm in friendship as a rock, and so much so that Christ decided to found on it His Church. Even in the Garden of Olives he still reacted energetically; then was caught up in the general fright; even so he mixed with the mob, wandered about, followed the stages of the trial like a stranger, trying to perceive what its result might be. At that point a serving-maid who was working thereabouts noted Peter's words, which made her think that he might have something to do with the events, and St. Peter not only denies but swears and swears again that he did not even know the Master. The Gospel tells us that immediately afterwards he left the courtyard and shed bitter tears. They must have washed away the ugliness of the act and his repentance was such that the leadership of the Church was not taken away from him or even placed in doubt. But that denial has remained for ever as the prototype of a pure betraval, that

is, one without aim, without reason, without any profit. His accuser had no official status or mandate; the imputation was not a grave one; besides, that moment was for the Master that of the infinite sadness that must flood into a soul accused without proof and condemned although innocent. We may admit that friendship might have diminished, that faith might cool, that the future should look uncertain for the acceptance of the new doctrine. But the personal knowledge of the Master was an unalterable fact that could not be denied, and it was only in fact so denied in those moments of misery in which the human soul sinks to the last stage of degradation.

Of course the fact is unique in history for its circumstances and the persons concerned, and it will never be repeated as it happened then. To we poor people of Christ only small things can happen, which amaze us without reason — that there should be someone who forgets the favours he has received, does not correspond to the services rendered to him, who is not satisfied with the satisfaction given to his interest or his vanity — things that mean nothing and are merely the expression of the weakness of this poor humanity of ours.

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No one can truthfully say that the liberties granted in the last election campaign were scanty. They even reached the point at which order threatens to be subverted and, when there is no order, we see that the same liberties are still insufficient for some, while they cease to be guaranteed for everybody. There are those for whom liberty has an essentially aggressive sense. Some support the thesis that the phenomenon took place precisely because that was not the normal regime and that there exist limitations which they desire to see removed. This conclusion seems to me an excessively simplified one, but I will not argue about it. Unlimited liberties are self-destructive and the limits within which law confines them depend on the possibilities of their being used without harm, and these possibilities are within us rather than in the will of the legislator. But let us proceed.

From some monarchical extremists to the democrats and the communists — it is delightful to see how in this country the communists make up to the former and call for liberties, no doubt in order to export them later to the other side of the iron curtain, where they seem to be sorely needed — the present press law or the existence of previous censorship has been considered as a contradiction of the constitutional principle of the freedom of expression. This is inaccurate, but the question has been left open, let us say, to be freely dealt with and discussed because it is of great interest and it may be that discussion will throw light on to it and allow us to take it up again so as to conciliate the various interest involved. Let us note from the beginning that the censorhip is so benevolent in our country that it allows itself to be discussed, not just in the mistakes it may make but in its principles and its function.

The only aspect I have recently seen fully dealt with is the intellectual dignity of the journalist, supposedly affected by the interference of a body foreign to the undertaking in which he works. But the matter is more complicated than it seems. Indeed, either the press with its younger sisters radio and television do not exert any influence on the formation of public opinion and we are wasting our time on these arguments, or they do have an influence, and then governments like ours, by which opinion is granted a constitutional function as a social force, have to prevent it from being distorted. And they also have to defend the national interest. The journalist's or writer's recognized privilege cannot be absolute and has to be framed within these two essential needs. The problem is extraordinarily difficult: nowhere has a satisfactory solution been found because, apart from the subjective aspect of my truth, your

truth that cannot be eliminated, there are very vast economic and political interests which disturb the formulation and sale of information and doctrine, later distributed to the home, against which countries have sometimes to be on their guard if they wish to save their souls and survive.

I can realise that the Censorship inconveniences newspapers a little, even independently of any slips or faults in appreciation, but there can be no doubt its existence has permitted a security of work and even a liberty of action - seemingly contradictory but not really so - that we do not find in other supposedly more liberal regimes. There is now no case of seizure of a newspaper, much less of assaults or wrecking newspaper offices as in the past, and it can be said neither suspension of publication nor crimes to be judged in courts. There are monarchical newspapers and republican ones, Catholic and Protestant, political or simply factual, neutral, favourable or obstinately in opposition, and everyone knows that they can only be what they are because they are not dependent on the Government. Already well informed of the limits as they are, they do not in any way feel hampered in their activity either. The press must know that there are many possible paths of administrative activity by which their legal liberty can be «innocently» denied, diminished or distorted in practice; but that is a sphere forbidden to us, so that the public interest has to be defended without its obliging us to such interference. We must recognize that he who governs holds serious responsibilities in relation to the national interest which he cannot pass on to others and in cases of doubt his verdict must necessarily prevail. In this kind of interregnum which extends until the new Head of the State takes office we can go no further; but should it later prove possible to draft a law to suppress or diminish the reasons of complaint presented, while naturally safeguarding the public interest, nobody will oppose it from a mere whim or obstinacy.

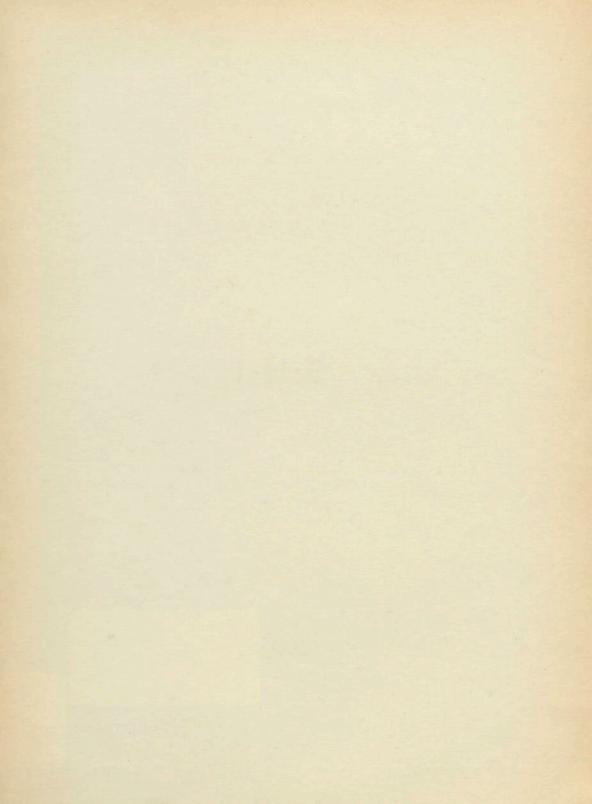
This is as far as the central point at stake is concerned. for in relation to points of secondary importance, such as criticisms of general or local administration or economic organisms, no reason has ever been found not to permit them. I am a great reader of the newspapers and a witness to the benefits to be had by getting to know through them the aspirations or complaints of peoples and the motives of their discontent. On the basis of their news, I can often ask the services concerned for information, spur them on and get some benefit from my intervention. The newspapers should, however, understand their own limitations, a result of many causes, even some foreign to their goodwill and economic sacrifices. They are sometimes in these appreciations the involuntary vehicles of personal animosities which cannot escape from a kind of «puffing--up» that things undergo in Roman letters when compared with what we observe or what official documents show us. I think it would be very useful to study forms of contact to help the press to get timely information on politics and public administration. Whatever efforts are made I do not think that its path in relation to great problems will be easy beyond a plan of a mere approach.

To lighten my exposition a little I will tell you a story. Many years ago in the old Grilos Monastery in Coimbra we were talking about the information value of the press, with reference to a piece of news in the paper that concerned me personally. I had not gone out that day, I had not travelled by that train, I had not been to that district, I had not been absent for that space of time. Where then was the truth of that item of information? The Cardinal Patriarch, who was always of a more liberal mind than I, concluded that the truth, the essence of the news, was *that I had left* Coimbra. I was not convinced, but life later taught me that even that small fragment of truth can be useful, for through it we may get to know and view the rest in its proper perspective. I would end with two short notes.

Some agitators have tried to lead industrial and rural workers into strikes of political protest. The elections are over and to strike is a crime in our country. We cannot allow a finished process to be prolonged indefinitely in this manner, and even though our hearts bleed at the consequences that result therefrom for people who are generally poor, we are obliged to face these events with the greatest severity. We believe it absolutely essential that the worker should live in the sound conviction that only order can assure him work and that from this conviction he should draw the force of mind, no other being necessary, to resist the enslaving impositions of those who conduct a campaign of social agitation that we consider to be devoid of hope or future.

In all its aspects the world is undergoing a great and rapid transformation. The grave problems facing us will not therefore become less serious but more so. And the task is so great that I do not know how there can be anyone who does not realize it and wish to work at it. Apart from that we are a small country with a small population, modest resources and certain structural weaknesses. Two things we shall always need are a strong government and a nation united in the thought of perpetuating and strengthening itself. Whence my intransigence towards all regimes, activities, political agitation that make governments barren, without distinction of persons, or which create great divisions in the nation as a whole. I believe that they will do a disservice to our interests as a nation and that as a result everything will tend to disintegrate beyond all hope of recovery.

There are no laws, no constitutions, no political regimes, no strong organization that in themselves can guarantee the national aim in view once it is not shared, pursued and defended by individual minds, each one in its own sphere. There will always be some lack of understanding and discontent in secondary things, yet they are counterbalanced by faithful devotion and disinterested minds, capable of sacrifices and of struggle for higher causes. The votes cast and the many thousands of anxious or dramatic appeals recently received from Portuguese people both in Portugal and in the remotest regions of the world, do not seem to me to have a different meaning from the one I have expressed here.







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