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General
Spínola

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PORTUGAL/COVER STORY

A Book, a Song and Then a Revolution

The future of Portugal depends on an adequate solution to the war in which we are involved ... it is not national unity that is at stake but imperial unity, and today's conscience does not accept empires.

General António de Spínola,
(in *Portugal and the Future*)

Those ringing words, buried between the covers of a thoughtful, 243-page book that appeared less than three months ago, last week pulsed from the heart of a revolution in Portugal. Convinced that the endless African wars in defense of Europe's last empire had become an intolerable burden, a military junta toppled the arch-conservative regime of Premier Marcello Caetano and whisked him into exile. As new leader of Portugal the officers selected the crisp, bemonocled António de Spínola, 64, the soldier-hero whose book has proved to be the death knell of a tragic national failure. For the time being at least, the author of *Portugal and the Future* is the key to Portugal's future.

The well-planned and nearly blood-

less coup was accomplished in less than a day. As tanks rumbled through the narrow, cobbled streets of Lisbon's old quarter and took up positions around major government buildings, Caetano and his Ministers desperately sought the protection of the paramilitary Republican Guard. But after the rebels sprayed brief rounds of automatic fire into his hiding place in the downtown Carmo barracks, the Premier realized that his time was up. Meekly he told Spínola, whom he sacked two months ago as Deputy Chairman of the nation's Joint Chiefs of Staff: "I am in a position to hand power over to you so that the street mob does not take over."

Basic Rights. The crowd outside was in less a howling than a holiday mood. Onlookers spent much of the day staring curiously at the tanks and feeding cigarettes and sandwiches to soldiers. When Spínola arrived at the barracks—ostensibly as a De Gaulle-like figure who had not plotted his assumption of power but merely answered the call of those who did—thousands were on hand to cheer wildly. Spínola later appeared on television to introduce the seven-man "Junta of National Salvation." They included his old boss, General Francisco da Costa Gomes, who had been fired with Spínola; three other army generals and a colonel; and two navy commanders. Spínola declared that the junta was committed to restoring "fundamental rights," that elections for a representative legislature would be held within a year, and that the African wars would be ended in such a way

as to guarantee "the survival of the nation as a sovereign country in its multi-continental entirety."

By the standards of most nations in the free world, that was not so revolutionary. Except for providing basic civil rights at home and seeking an end to the war in Africa, the new junta did not seem to be advocating any major changes in Portuguese life. Most diplomats expected foreign policy to remain much the same, and Spínola specifically declared that Portugal would remain a NATO member in good standing, presumably allowing the U.S. to continue using its strategic airbases in the Azores.

Moreover, just how Spínola planned to translate his program into deeds was not clear. Portugal's powerful right wing is not likely to suffer gladly a period of disruption in Western Europe's most stagnant society, and so Spínola may still face serious opposition to his rule. Yet there was little doubt that last week's convulsive, if painless change in Lisbon would have major implications both in Portugal and far beyond.

Almost certainly, the equation has changed dramatically in Portugal's 13-year colonial war in Africa. Spínola, who made his reputation in Africa, is convinced that the wars are unwinnable by military force and that most blacks in the territories will consent to join a "Lusitanian community" in which they would gain control over almost all domestic affairs and have a voice in Lisbon's direction of international policy. Whether that solution proves workable, a military stand-down by Portugal



SOLDIER RESPONDS TO CHEERS

ANTI-GOVERNMENT TROOPS GUARDING THEIR HEADQUARTERS ON FIRST MORNING OF COUP



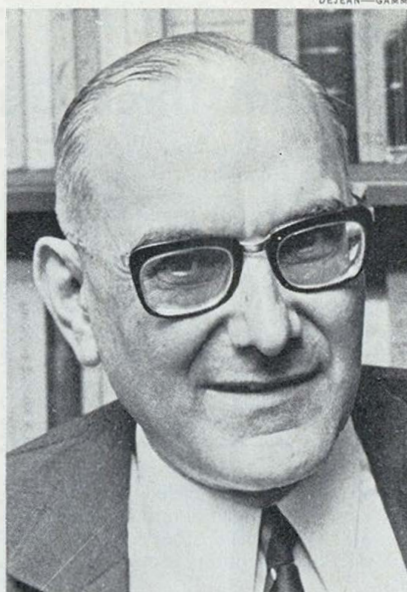
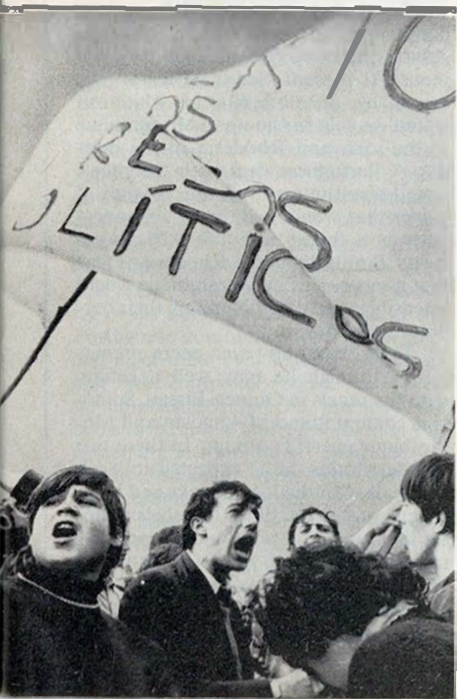
would affect not only its territories but also the rest of white-dominated Africa. Both Rhodesia and South Africa have helped Portugal wage its futile campaign, in part to pin down as many black guerrillas as possible outside their own borders. The news from Lisbon caused jitters in Pretoria and Salisbury, which feared that nationalist fighting might move another step closer to home.

The Migrants. Portugal's fellow Iberians in Spain were hardly less shocked. Though the government of Francisco Franco withheld any official comment on the Lisbon putsch, newspaper stories emphasized Portugal's new civil liberties. Said a Spanish socialist: "Now we see a nation regarded as a poor little brother actually proclaiming some sort of democracy."

For the 8.8 million people of "metropolitan" Portugal, the change of leadership represented an uncertain first step toward better times. Since nearly half of each year's budget of \$1.3 billion as well as 170,000 men have been necessary to fight the war, most Portuguese have missed out on Europe's prosperity of the '60s and '70s. Largely because of their thwarted economy at home, upwards of 1.6 million Portuguese have emigrated elsewhere; their remittances home form the nation's largest source of foreign income, even before tourism. In the course of living and working abroad, as Spínola noted in his book: "The Portuguese are getting a different view of the world" from that promulgated at home. The result only added to pressure for a change.

Clearly, a lot of pressure was needed. The Portuguese have claimed parts of Africa as their territory ever since the days of the historic exploratory voyages of Vasco da Gama and Henry the Navigator. Over the years thousands of Por-

FRIENDS OF FREED POLITICAL PRISONERS



FALLEN PREMIER MARCELLO CAETANO

After We Say Goodbye, followed in two hours by the words "dark city."

tuguese emigrated to Africa to become farmers, mine operators and businessmen—and to a far greater extent than most other European settlers, many of them married natives. As a result, the strikingly handsome, coffee-colored people of mixed origin—many of whom live in Portugal—have seldom borne the opprobrium of "half-breed" or "quadroon." Indeed, as more than one U.S. black has noted with irony, Portugal has established one of the world's better records for racial tolerance.

Nevertheless, Portuguese Africa could hardly escape the pressure of *uhuru* (freedom) as the movement spread unrelentingly across the face of the continent in the '50s and early '60s, with the departure of the British and the French. Not surprisingly, independence-minded Portuguese Africans quickly ran afoul of António Salazar, the austere and iron-willed bachelor who ruled Portugal for nearly 40 years before his death in 1970. In 1961 Salazar ordered the first Portuguese combat troops to Africa in an effort to quell a growing threat by the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (F.N.L.A.). To finance the growing costs of the fighting, Salazar's obedient National Assembly slapped a 15% "war tax" on many consumer goods. Moreover, it required nearly every Portuguese male to serve a four-year term of conscription.

Portugal's fortunes in Africa suffered an indirect setback later in 1961, when Indian troops overran the tiny Portuguese viceroyalty of Goa. The Portuguese defenders surrendered with no loss of life, and the defeat caused not only acute embarrassment inside Portugal's aristocratic military establishment but a loss of morale among troops fighting elsewhere. Thereupon, the aging Salazar vowed to give not an inch to anyone else. In response to a handful



SPÍNOLA AS MILITARY GOVERNOR

of critics who complained that the war in Africa was causing economic atrophy at home, the dictator lavished funds on a few prestige projects—for example, Europe's longest suspension bridge, now named in Salazar's honor, which spans the Tagus estuary, but he never deviated from the hold-on-forever policy in Africa.

"Shadowy Canton." Into this military maelstrom in 1968 stepped a brigadier general named António de Spínola, who had been sent from Lisbon to serve as commander and military governor of Guinea-Bissau. The son of a wealthy businessman who frequently advised Salazar on financial matters, Spínola grew up in Lisbon and the resort city of Cintra and at 20 entered the *Escolado Exército*, Portugal's West Point. He served as a volunteer on the side of Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War. In 1941, as a young and promising officer in a country sympathetic to fascism, Spínola was sent for training with Adolf Hitler's Wehrmacht and visited, but did not fight on, the Leningrad front. After World War II he served in the Azores, commanded the key Lisbon unit of the National Republican Guard and volunteered for service in Angola almost as soon as war broke out there. Between assignments, Spínola on his favorite horse Achilles frequently competed in national and international equestrian contests. As rigid in his personal habits as in his military bearing, Spínola lunched every day in Lisbon at the same rooftop hotel restaurant and faithfully went to the same barber for 30 years. He was—and still is—a teetotaler.

Arriving in the steamy jungle and impassable swamplands of Guinea, Spínola found the military morale dismally low. In five years of service there, he became an enduring MacArthur-esque legend to troops, settlers and reb-

Search for an Exit from Three Guerrilla Wars

As Africa's first colonists, the Portuguese have been a presence in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands and the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe since the 15th century. For the past 13 years, that presence has been contested in a three-front guerrilla war that has impoverished the Portuguese nation. TIME's Nairobi Bureau Chief Lee Griggs, who has traveled extensively throughout Portuguese Africa, cabled this assessment of the impact of the Lisbon coup and the new possibilities for peace in Africa:

The news spread like a grass fire among the 160,000 Portuguese troops fighting in the three mainland territories, bringing more often than not a

"the most motivated. We use most of the white conscripts from Portugal on garrison duty, guarding ammo dumps and motor pools. For this kind of war in this place, give me a black soldier every time."

Still to be heard from at week's end were the hard-liners in top military command positions, in all three territories, who are deeply committed to the 15th century Portuguese concept of a "civilizing mission" in Africa. In a move clearly designed to head off any attempts at secession, the junta fired the civilian governors of the overseas territories at week's end and replaced them with their deputies. As for the military commanders, they seemed faced with the choice of either accepting the new regime's pol-

democracy and autonomy, and thus tame antagonisms in all three territories.

In Angola, three key rebel movements continue to squabble among themselves—enabling the government to remain firmly in control of the country despite an increase in the number of minor clashes. Spínola's concept of a federation seems to be particularly well suited for Angola, which is rich enough to prosper without Portugal. In fact, talk of a unilateral declaration of independence is still rife in the capital city of Luanda, whose businessmen would rather reinvest their profits in their own country than send the money to the Lisbon government. Angolan whites, moreover, maintain comparatively good relations with the blacks, who no longer sympathize with guerrilla terror. Encouraged by Spínola, whites and blacks might be able to work out a multiracial agreement for an autonomous Angola without having to concede too much to the quarreling rebels, who command so little grass-roots support.

In Mozambique, the irony is that the war against the Frelimo (Mozambique Liberation Front) has been going reasonably well recently despite an increase in terrorist attacks. Sentiment for a multiracial settlement there is not so strong as it is in Angola. For one thing, the country cannot economically survive at present without support from Lisbon. That may change, however, when the huge Cabora Bassa Dam is completed next year, enabling Mozambique to sell millions of kilowatts to power-starved South Africa, next door, at a substantial profit.

For the other two remaining white-dominated governments in southern Africa, the news from Lisbon was ominous. At present, South Africa is protected by an umbrella of white-run states: Angola in the west, Mozambique in the east, and Rhodesia in the middle. A Portuguese deal with the rebels would result in a shift in the balance of power that would be seen in Johannesburg as a threat to South Africa's security. Similarly, white Rhodesians fear that a settlement in Mozambique would intensify guerrilla problems on their borders intolerably.

Their fears, however, seem premature. Although he may well negotiate with the rebels in Guinea-Bissau, Spínola is contemptuous of Angolan and Mozambique guerrilla groups. In these two vast territories, he is expected to work out deals with the local blacks and then, if he is successful, dare the rebels to upset them in the face of united and non-racial opposition to terrorism. It would be a bold gamble, worthy of the cavalryman that he is.



smile of open delight. If anybody could find a way to end the slogging wars of attrition in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, it was the dapper, monocled and swashbuckling General António de Spínola. Among the black soldiers, who regard him as a hero, the hope was that Spínola might devise some sort of negotiated settlement and an end to the fighting. For the white conscripts from Portugal, there was suddenly the prospect that the brutalizing military service abroad might be ended someday soon.

It is hard to exaggerate the devotion that Spínola inspires among the troops—especially the black soldiers, who always mistrusted Lisbon but gladly fought under his command. Significantly, blacks now form the majority of the army's combat forces in all three territories. "They are by far the best fighters," says a commander in Angola,

icy or risking military mutinies from the ranks in support of Spínola.

Ironically, the coup in Lisbon came at a time when Portugal's military situation in Africa was improving. In Guinea-Bissau, government forces are free to go virtually anywhere at will—as long as they move in convoys with air cover and are preceded by sweeps through the jungles and swamps. In any case, this country is of no earthly use to Portugal; it could be handed over to the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (P.A.I.G.C.) without great loss of face if there were safeguards to prevent reprisals against the 2,000 whites who live there. Until now the difficulty has been that a settlement in Guinea-Bissau would heighten pressure for concessions in Mozambique and Angola, which have much larger white populations. But a government headed by Spínola would presumably open the door to multiracial

els alike. Monocle clamped securely in his right eye, riding crop tucked jauntily under his arm, the dashing Spínola seemed to be everywhere—on the front line of skirmishes, inside native villages, on remote farms. He shouted encouragement to his troops, urged blacks to advise the military government on administrative matters, and successfully badgered Lisbon for funds to set up health clinics and schools in native villages. The closer he got to the natives, the more convinced he became that the hit-and-run rebels could never be completely beaten, but that the vast majority of colonial blacks could be won over to the government side by a fair deal. Spínola has never advocated full independence for the colonies, contending that without them Portugal would become merely a "shadowy canton of Europe."

Reportedly, he even held secret meetings with the late rebel leader Amílcar Cabral, for whom he developed a grudging respect (and vice versa). "After all, Cabral is Portuguese," Spínola explained to an astonished visitor. "We should be able to solve the problem by reasoning together."

Another Answer. Returning home last fall, Spínola received an authentic hero's welcome. He was awarded the *Tôrre e Espada* (the Order of the Tower and the Sword), Portugal's highest decoration. Moreover, a new job as No. 2 man in the Joint Chiefs' office was created especially for him by Caetano, the ex-law school dean who succeeded Salazar in 1968. Yet the honors did not keep Spínola from growing increasingly frustrated. Despite sympathetic gestures from Caetano, government policy toward the African campaign grew ever more rigid. The final straw, according to some observers, was publication of *The Portuguese Answer*, a book by former Mozambique Governor General Kaulza de Ariaga that glorified the Portuguese soldier's performance in Africa. Spínola decided to reply by writing *Portugal and the Future*.

Far from glorious victory, Spínola wrote, the truth about the answer to the African dilemma was that there was "no viable military solution." Lisbon's present policy, he said, "will irretrievably compromise the survival" of Portugal because of the heavy financial burden, and thus must be changed. The colonial blacks "still believe in the possibility of an autonomous state within the Portuguese community" in which they can elect their own local governments and "feel completely equal." However, he emphasized that he intended the book to be not a call to revolution but rather a contribution to "open and rational discussion and—why not?—a consultation of the nation."

Spínola's book became an immediate bestseller (it went through two printings)—and political dynamite in Portugal. Among those who had no wish to foster rational discussion of the African situation was President Américo Tho-



GENERAL SPÍNOLA MARCHING THROUGH JUNGLE WITH HIS PARATROOPS IN GUINEA-BISSAU (1972) With monocle, riding crop and jaunty air, a MacArthur-esque legend.

maz, who considered himself the supreme repository of Salazarism and had the backing of Portugal's super-rich, the so-called 100 families. Under pressure from Thomaz, Premier Caetano last March called an unprecedented assembly of the nation's top military leaders, at which they were expected to acclaim a resolution pledging loyalty to the government. Neither Spínola nor General Costa Gomes made an appearance, and within hours both were summarily drummed out of the government.

Yet Spínola had made his point with one pivotal group: the restless, frustrated officers of the military. Aware that the wars in Africa could at best be stretched into an endless stalemate, they realized all too well that the military might eventually have to accept blame for what would be in reality a political failure. Says Francisco Pinto Balsemão, editor of the liberal weekly *Expresso*: "Career officers are fed up with the war and very concerned about the humiliation that followed Goa." In fact, the military's dissatisfaction seeped far below officer level. A whole generation of Portuguese conscripts returned to Lisbon disillusioned. Says a politician in one of Caetano's early governments: "The war is unpopular because one's life is disrupted for four years and then the soldier comes back in a state of shock. He is confused by the violence and by a war he doesn't understand."

On March 16, evidently

convinced that the moment of revolution was at hand, a quixotic band of 200 officers and enlisted men set out from Caldas da Rainha to march on Lisbon. They were rapidly disarmed by the Republican Guard, and even Spínola dismissed their deed as "puerile." But the Caetano regime sensed that a showdown—and for grownups—was in the cards. In the following weeks, many officers were arrested and troops of questionable

MOZAMBIQUE REBELS CALL FOR FREEDOM



loyalty were confined to their garrisons: eleven Catholic missionaries and the Bishop of Nampula were expelled from Mozambique, and dozens of Portuguese dissidents were arrested.

Forbidden by law to attend political meetings, an unusual number of Portuguese—especially military officers—took advantage of Lisbon's early spring weather to hold "family picnics." But the real business of these outings had less to do with sandwiches than with subversion. A key document passed among the conspirators—the "D.D. [for democratization and decolonization] manifesto." It was agreed that the time of the coup would be signaled over the national radio station: at 10:55 on the night before the junta was to move, an announcer would give the time and immediately play a recording of *Depois Do Adeus* (After We Say Goodbye) by Pau-

Geral de Segurança, or Directorate General of Security). Understandably fearing for their lives if they came out, officers barricaded themselves inside. At one point a group of them tried to escape in a truck, firing wildly at a crowd of onlookers from the charging vehicle. Five civilians died and 40 others were injured in the attack. One D.G.S. man was shot dead, and the would-be escapees were forced back into their redoubt. Eventually, the holdouts surrendered without further fighting and were escorted through a crowd shouting "Murderers!" It was the last known pocket of resistance to the coup. All together, by unofficial count, no more than a dozen people were killed.

President Thomaz, who had fled to the headquarters of a loyal regiment of lancers, was captured soon after Caetano's surrender. Along with five key ex-

of a D.G.S. suspect being interrogated—with his trousers around his ankles.

Perhaps the junta's most popular move was to order the immediate release of some 170 political prisoners held in the sprawling, somber Caxias prison on a hillside overlooking Lisbon. From the capital, TIME's Martha de la Cal witnessed the scene and reported: "At the head of the troops that liberated Caxias was Colonel Mario Abrantes da Silva, whose son was among the prisoners. The elder Da Silva's wife explained: 'The junta gave my husband the task of leading the liberation of Caxias because he felt so strongly. Every night for a year and a half he has wept over our son.' For years there have been rumors that the D.G.S. tortured political prisoners; today they were confirmed, both by workers in the prison and by the discovery of a torture building."

Among the torture victims was Hermínio da Palma Inácio, the famed "Scarlet Pimpernel" of Portuguese politics, who confounded authorities with bank robberies and other daring crimes for years before his capture last year. Fellow prisoners said that Da Palma had been severely beaten.

"Portugal is Free." At week's end, reported TIME's Steve Englund, the mood in Lisbon was still mostly one of unrestrained euphoria. Men discussed politics in cafés, students marched through Rossio Square carrying banners calling for the freedom of workers to strike or form independent labor unions—an unthinkable demonstration under Caetano. Said one: "Our long, long night is over. Portugal is free." Marveled a cab driver: "Who would ever have thought it possible in Portugal?"

Unhappily, the exuberance turned into ugly excesses in a few places. Claiming that the military was too slow in releasing political prisoners, a throng of onlookers outside Caxias grew visibly impatient. D.G.S. men, real or imagined, were attacked by several groups, and a crowd of demonstrators burst into the unoccupied state censors' headquarters in a converted mansion, then pitched furniture out of windows and ransacked filing cabinets. The editor of the pro-Caetano daily *Epoca* had to be rescued by soldiers.

Such incidents underscored the obvious danger that Spínola's almost entirely peaceful coup might still turn into something far less pleasant. Moreover, even if he manages to endure the first shaky days of a New Portugal without serious missteps, he faces the enormous challenge of making good on his promise of a workable solution in Africa. However thoughtful his plan for a federation, it will hardly be a simple matter to find one answer that satisfies the freedom fighters, the military and the settlers. "Self-determination should not be confused with independence," Spínola warned after the coup. Yet a man who launched his revolution by writing a book must have faith that reason, in the end, will prevail.



RELEASED PORTUGUESE POLITICAL PRISONERS REUNITED WITH RELATIVES

A mood of euphoria: "Who would ever have thought it possible in Portugal?"

lo Carvalho, Portugal's losing entry in last year's European song festival. Two hours later, the station would play a folk song that had the words dark city in its lyrics.

Spínola's role in these plans was unclear, though regular secret-police surveillance outside his home in a residential section of Lisbon presumably prevented him from participating actively. Whatever his part, the music was broadcast on schedule late Wednesday and early Thursday. Through the night, artillery and heavily armed infantry units in Jeeps rolled toward strategic targets in Lisbon and Oporto. Lisboans awoke to find tanks surrounding the Defense Ministry, the presidential palace, the national bank and Lisbon's Portela de Sacavém Airport.

Aside from the mini-siege of Carmo barracks, the loudest fireworks occurred at the headquarters of the Portuguese secret police, the hated D.G.S. (*Direcção*

Ministers, both men agreed to accept exile on the Portuguese vacation island of Madeira. In a moving display of compassion, Spínola accompanied the deposed leaders to their plane and embraced Caetano at the door.

Spínola lost no time in putting into effect some of D.D.'s "democratizing" aspects. At a press conference, Spínola announced dissolution of the old guard's National Popular Action Group, Portugal's only legal political party, and promised that there would be freedom of assembly, enabling voters to form new "political associations" in preparation for popular elections. Furthermore, he pledged that most censorship would be eliminated.

Saturday editions of most Lisbon dailies appeared with special notices that their contents had not borne official scrutiny. They hardly needed to explain; most ran huge stories on the freeing of political prisoners and showed a picture